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Pantelis Golitsis,
Katerina Ierodiakonou (Eds.)

ARISTOTLE AND HIS COMMENTATORS

COMMENTARIA IN ARISTOTELEM GRAECA ET BYZANTINA

Aristotle and His Commentators

Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca et Byzantina

Quellen und Studien

Edited by
Dieter Harlfinger, Christof Rapp, Marwan Rashed,
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Aristotle and His Commentators

Studies in Memory of Paraskevi Kotzia

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Preface

Paraskevi (Voula) Kotzia died on 13 July 2013 at the age of 62. By some kind of meaningful coincidence, she died at the same age as Aristotle, to whom she devoted a great deal of her scholarly life. Voula Kotzia studied Classics at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (BA 1975) and continued her postgraduate studies in Classics, Philosophy and Palaeography at the Freie Universität Berlin (1980 – 1982) under the tutelage of Paul Moraux. With her PhD dissertation (*Ο σκοπός των "Κατηγοριῶν" του Αριστοτέλη. Συμβολή στην ιστορία των αριστοτελικών σπουδών ως τον 6ο αιώνα*, Thessaloniki 1992), she introduced the study of the Aristotelian commentators and the Neoplatonic exegetical tradition to the academic life of Greece. Voula was a marvellous teacher, with a broad knowledge of antiquity and an exemplary knowledge of Ancient Greek. In her classes, she combined the rigour of classical philology with a strong interest in the history of Aristotle's philosophy and writings, which shaped a younger generation of modern Greek scholars. Her research interests did not only include philosophy but also ancient theories of language, ancient grammar and medicine. The cancer did not let her finish a work she was long working on about the status of women in Greek philosophy (for a first publication of hers in this field of study see below, "List of publications" n° 25).

The Departments of Classics and Philosophy of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, at which Voula Kotzia taught from 1976 until her death (and where she was the scientific coordinator of the *Centre for Aristotelian Studies*), celebrated her memory by organizing on 25 – 27 September 2014 an international conference (organized by Evanthia Tsitsibakou-Vassalos, Maria Mike, Stephanos Matthaios, Georgios Zografidis, Katerina Ierodiakonou and Pantelis Golitsis). According to Voula's own research interests, the papers held at the conference of Thessaloniki had a thematic variety that could not meet the minimum of unity that is necessary for a scientific publication. In the present volume, we have gathered the papers dedicated to philosophy, in particular those that dealt with Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition. To the papers presented at the conference (Agiotis and Ierodiakonou, Balla, Chriti, Golitsis, Kalligas, Lisi, Nikitas, Papachristou, Wildberg), three further studies have been added by Sten Ebbesen, Stavros Kouloumentas and Christof Rapp.[1] They are all papers of philosophical and historical interest, dealing with issues from Aristotle's political philosophy to twentieth-century Aristotelian scholarship through various interpretive problems in the Aristotelian tradition in Late Antiquity and Byzantium.

We wish to thank Dieter Harlfinger, a long life friend of Voula's, as well as the *CAGB* committee, for accepting this volume for publication. Also we would like to

1 Christof Rapp's paper was first published in German as "Der Erklärungswert von Entwicklungshypothesen. Das Beispiel der Aristoteles-Interpretation", in: M. v. Ackeren – J. Müller (eds.), *Antike Philosophie Verstehen*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006, 178 – 195.

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thank Nicolas Pilavachi for his invaluable help in correcting the English of some of the papers, and François Nollé for producing the indices.

The editors

Publications by Paraskevi Kotzia

Books

1. *Ο σκοπός των* Κατηγοριῶν *του Αριστοτέλη. Συμβολή στην ιστορία των αριστοτελικών σπουδών ως τον 6ο αιώνα*, Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης (ΕΕΦΣΘ), Τεύχος Τμήματος Φιλολογίας, Παράρτημα αριθμ. 2, Thessaloniki, 1992.
2. *Περὶ τοῦ μήλου ἢ Περὶ τῆς Ἀριστοτέλους τελευτῆς* (*Liber de pomo*), Thessaloniki: Thyrathen, 2007.
3. Γαληνός, *Για την αποφυγή της λύπης (η πραγματεία* Περὶ ἀλυπίας*)*. Μετάφραση-σχόλια: Παρασκευή Κοτζιά, εισαγωγή: Σοφία Ξενοφώντος, επίμετρο: Ιωάννης Πολέμης, Thessaloniki: Thyrathen, 2016.

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5. G. Zografidis, P. Kotzia and C. Balla (eds.), "Θάνατοι φιλοσόφων στην αρχαιότητα", *Υπόμνημα στη φιλοσοφία 9* (2010).

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9. "*Τὸ μέλι πικρὸν τοῖς ἰκτεριῶσι φαίνεται*", *Hellenica* 37 (1986), 242–259.
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Contents

ARISTOTLE

Christof Rapp

1 The explanatory value of developmental hypotheses as exemplified by the interpretation of Aristotle

1 Introduction

That a philosopher who has been active as an author for several decades should continue to develop his viewpoint or sometimes even change his stance on key philosophical issues is hardly surprising. To the contrary, it would be remarkable if this were not the case. One is rather inclined to view it as evidence of an author's philosophical potential when he advocates more than one approach or applies it to more than one field in his lifetime. Of course, the extent of these changes may vary greatly. At times one speaks only of a continuous development, while at other times of a fundamental change of course, as in the transition from the "pre-critical" to the "critical" works of Immanuel Kant or in the turn that Ludwig Wittgenstein seems to have taken between writing his *Tractatus* and working on the *Philosophical Investigations*. Consequently, philosophy deals quite often with the phenomenon of development, and the question remains what value should be accorded to this phenomenon and what approach should be taken with regard to it.

2 Developmental hypotheses and the notion of development in philosophy

In general one might wonder to what extent the notion of development can legitimately be taken into consideration in philosophy. For, when assessing a philosophical argument, it is hardly relevant at what stage in the life of a philosopher the argument was developed. For example, as a philosopher one would like to know whether Kant's categorical imperative *actually* constitutes the basis of all morality, whereas the question of how old Kant was and in what circumstances he found himself when he began to view the categorical imperative as an important moral principle is of secondary importance. A distinction drawn by Gottlob Frege regarding the relevance of the origin and development of philosophical propositions is well worth citing here: if we follow Frege in consistently distinguishing between laws of being-true and laws of taking-to-be-true, then the latter, which concern how someone came to *take something to be true*, can hardly play a decisive role in the former, in assessing the *truth or validity* of a conception. For, it is just as possible in principle to arrive at a correct notion via random or irrational factors as it is to come to false or even absurd

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conclusions by taking a systematic approach. However, if our primary concern is to determine whether or not other philosophers' conceptions are tenable, then philosophy can only take a secondary interest in the question how and under what circumstances a given philosopher *came to hold a thesis as true*. On this view, it would be easy to quickly dismiss questions regarding philosophical development. But the matter is not quite so simple – in part, for the following reasons:

(1) Not all philosophical theses reveal themselves readily and – so to speak – "of their own accord." The main theses of the Hegelian philosophy, for example, can hardly be understood without at least basic knowledge of the philosophical debates that took place prior to Hegel, including those involving Kant and Fichte. And it is precisely here that the *history* of philosophy comes into play. In order to clarify the sense or significance of a philosophical thesis alone, the *historian* of philosophy often has to examine how an idea came about, which in turn frequently requires exploring larger coherences that are relevant to the emergence of an idea; this may include the political sphere, along with general, social or personal circumstances, but it applies in particular to school memberships, discussion contexts and critical references to the thinker's own philosophical premises. It is therefore only natural that this effort should include an inquiry into an author's development, insofar as this is important for the *understanding* of a philosophical thesis. For, it may be the case that earlier assumptions and earlier theories are just as much a part of the background of a thesis as the views of contemporaries, teachers or critics.

(2) The object of philosophy is to penetrate through to those assumptions that we presuppose when we make a particular assertion or make use of a particular term. What do we assume, for example, when we speak of "things" or when we allege that there exist "things that remain identical"? In order to answer these types of questions, a philosopher often has to begin by clarifying his own assumptions, so as to be able to subject them to critical scrutiny. Consequently, progress in philosophy often takes the form of disengagement from premises that a given philosopher may himself have shared up to a certain point in time – regardless of whether he learned to accept these assumptions as part of a specific tradition or by virtue of belonging to a certain school, or whether he explicitly defended them himself. When a development from one philosophical position to another occurs by means of a well-founded critique of the premises underlying the former position, then the reasons for this development partially coincide with the reasons that can be cited in favor of the new position. For example, the arguments that Wittgenstein ultimately began to invoke against the "ideal language" premises of the *Tractatus* are an important part of the justification for his later "ordinary language" position. When development is understood in this sense, in other words, as the result of a critical examination of one's own theoretical assumptions, then the philosophical relevance of the notion of development should remain beyond dispute. However, it is also possible to imagine developments that are motivated in a different manner; we cannot rule out the possibility that, for example, an unsuccessful journey to Sicily, frustration over being held in low esteem by one's colleagues, or a novel sexual experience could influence the

tenor of one's philosophical thought. But because such factors can hardly serve to justify a philosophical thesis, they should be distinguished from the previously mentioned type of reasons for development.[1] In keeping with the terminology introduced above, the latter are solely psychological factors relevant to taking-to-be-true and have nothing to do with the *being*-true or the justification of a philosophical thesis.

(3) An old maxim, commonly referred to as the 'hermeneutic circle', states that individual parts can only be understood if the whole is grasped, while the whole can only be understood in reference to many individual parts. Assuming it were our task to comment on an unedited collection of notes by Wittgenstein, we would no doubt often be reminded of the first part of this maxim. For, if we didn't know whether an individual note belongs in the context of Wittgenstein's early, middle or late period, it would be difficult if not impossible to determine its meaning. Let us further assume we knew nothing of Wittgenstein's philosophical development, had none of his edited works at our disposal, and were constantly confronted with notes that seemed to contradict each other. How then could we draw conclusions about the whole from the individual parts? We would be prevented again and again from arriving at a consistent whole by individual statements that do not fit within the whole or require an entirely different whole. We would probably be forced to sort the notes into different stacks and postulate distinct theoretical backgrounds for different stacks. However, if the juxtaposition of different theoretical backgrounds were to prove confusing due to the appearance of inconsistency, we could ask ourselves whether this troublesome juxtaposition of incompatible theories might not be resolved into a more favorable succession (step 1). But in this case we would not yet be dealing with a *developmental hypothesis*, because we only speak of a "development" when something has developed out of something else. In order to demonstrate this, we would also have to supplement the claim of temporal succession by postulating a development *motive* (step 2) capable of showing not only that the theories in question are different, but that one of them could actually have developed out of the other (step 3).

Consequently, the notion of development is not philosophically significant as such, but it does appear that there are at least three respects in which possible developments should not be dismissed when examining past authors. The thought experiment outlined above has further shown that developmental hypotheses may be introduced as an explanation for the phenomenon of inconsistency; this entails not only assigning the mutually incompatible theory fragments to different theoretical frameworks, but also establishing relationships between these frameworks through the assumption of a development motive.

That's the theory. In point of fact, however, the history of the developmental paradigm – at least in the case of Aristotle interpretation – has taken a somewhat different course.

1 In what follows, I will refer to factors that can also serve as arguments in the philosophical analysis of a thesis as "philosophical", and all other motivations as "biographical" factors of development.

3 Werner Jaeger's developmental interpretation of Aristotle

In 1923 Werner Jaeger (1888 – 1961) published a study entitled *Aristoteles. Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*,[2] in which he sought to supersede the hitherto predominant scholastic conception of the Aristotelian philosophy as "a static system of conceptions".[3] According to Jaeger, the scholastic interpretation neglects the forces that drive Aristotle's approach to research; it does not take into account "his characteristic interplay of keen and abstract apodictic with a vivid and organic sense of form".[4] In the jargon of his time, which was heavily influenced by the so-called philosophy of life, Jaeger contrasts the "purely conceptual" scholasticism with a "living understanding of Aristotle",[5] which views Aristotle's philosophy as "the product of his special genius working on the problems set him by his age."[6] He carried out this program by representing Aristotle's philosophy as a development that is divisible into different stages and is fundamentally characterized by the continuous debate with his teacher. Jaeger tied the stages in question to familiar biographical events (Aristotle's stay at Plato's Academy, his years of travel, his second stay in Athens, i. e. his years as a master) and postulated that Aristotle underwent a development from being a Platonist to being a metaphysician critical of Plato, only to end up an empiricist. Jaeger then applied philological methods in attempting to assign various works to these three phases and in seeking to identify various strata of development in several works. In the first, Platonic phase Aristotle is alleged to have composed the (mostly lost) exoteric writings, such as the *Protrepticus*, which were intended for a wider audience; in so doing, he is supposed to have largely appropriated the philosophical standpoint of Plato's Academy. The middle phase, which corresponds to his years of travel, is characterized by a disengagement from Plato. This is expressed, among other things, in his criticism of Plato's theory of forms. By distinguishing what he called "several strata of composition", Jaeger ascertains the emergence of an original *Metaphysics* (*Metaph.* A, α, Γ, E 1, K, Λ, M 9 – N), an original *Politics* (*Pol.* II, III, VII, VIII) and an original *Ethics* (*EE*) together with the foundation for a speculative physics and cosmology (*Phys.* I-II, *Cael.*). In his last phase, his "master period", he not only expanded the *Metaphysics* by writing the presumably empirically oriented Books Z, H, Θ and Λ 8, but also composed works such as *Parva Naturalia* and *De Anima*.

2 English: *Aristotle. Fundamentals of the History of His Development*, translated by R. Robinson, New York: Oxford University Press, 1934.

3 Jaeger [2]1955, 4.

4 *Ibid*.

5 Jaeger [2]1955, 5. The "*living* understanding" clearly corresponds to the supposedly "full-blooded vitality of the fourth century."

6 *Ibid*.

Jaeger's development-oriented approach played a major role in the interpretation of Aristotle in the twentieth century.[7] Several authors have attempted to apply these ideas concerning Aristotle's biographical development to subsections of his works. Jaeger's student Friedrich Solmsen (1904 – 1989) reconstructed the development of Aristotelian logic based on the *Analytics*, the *Topics* and the *Rhetoric*.[8] Franciscus Nuyens (1908 – 1982) distinguished three phases of Aristotelian psychology, in the course of which Aristotle is supposed to have distanced himself step by step from the theses of his teacher.[9] Other authors, for example Hans von Arnim (1859 – 1931), adopted Jaeger's approach on the one hand,[10] while on the other hand becoming embroiled in controversies with him over the ordering of individual writings and purported levels. Then there were authors who explicitly sought to refute Jaeger's history of development, for example Franz Dirlmeier (1904 – 1977), who attempted to show on the basis of the ethical writings that in a certain sense Aristotle remained a Platonist at all times.[11] Finally, there were interpreters who rejected or consciously dismissed Jaeger's biographical scenario, while nonetheless speaking of a development in which Plato remained the most important reference point.

The extraordinary success of Jaeger's developmental Aristotle interpretation can no doubt be attributed to more than one cause. For example, Jaeger himself points out that the idea of development had already been applied successfully to the interpretation of Plato. Furthermore, Jaeger understood how to give development a philosophical dimension, and his insistence on taking Aristotle's personality into consideration – thus imbuing the interpretation with life – was very much in the style of his era. It may also be that many researchers in this period viewed the paradigm of systematic interpretation, which Jaeger termed "scholastic", as obsolete. At the same time, it should also be emphasized that Jaeger's approach didn't simply fall from the sky but was already being prepared in a certain sense by the historicist style of philology in 19th-century Germany; it can be shown that different compositional and editorial measures were already being implemented in relation to certain aspects of Aristotle's works.[12] Therefore, a better understanding of Jaeger's success can perhaps be achieved by viewing his works as the provisional climax of an already existing tendency.

7 On Jaeger's effect on 20th-century Aristotle research see Flashar [2]2004, 169 – 171.

8 Solmsen 1929.

9 Nuyens 1948. This work was originally published in Dutch: *Ontwikkelingsmomenten in de zielkunde van Aristoteles. Een historisch-philosophische studie*, Nijmegen/Utrecht: Dekker & v.d. Vegt, 1939.

10 von Arnim 1924; von Arnim 1927.

11 Dirlmeier 1950.

12 The tendency towards psychological and biographical explanations can also be traced to the 19th century.

Criticism of Jaeger's developmental approach

In Plato scholarship, the treatment of questions of chronology and development has led to a relatively uncontroversial, rough classification of the works into early, middle and late dialogues. With Aristotle, however, the kind of developmental research pursued by Jaeger has not managed to produce a verified chronology of works; hardly any of Jaeger's attempts to assign particular parts of works to certain developmental stages have avoided (justified) opposition. The end result of this has been to considerably weaken faith in the effectiveness of the developmental approach. This outcome, which is rather disappointing when compared to the state of Plato scholarship, is no doubt partially a product of the editorial status of the Aristotelian corpus. After all, Aristotle left several manuscripts in an editorially unfinished condition; in a few cases, it is clear that the texts were not compiled into works until after his death,[13] while other cases involve an editorial process consisting of several steps and subsequent additions. This often makes it difficult to determine whether, for example, one is dealing with an earlier text with later additions, or an altogether later text.[14] Furthermore, given the difficulty of the initial situation, the assumption of several strata of composition led to a strange increase in the number of strata. Whereas, for example, the pioneers of this procedure were able to manage with only two strata, later interpreters discovered four or more strata, which obviously could no longer be brought in line with the three phases assumed by Jaeger.

In general, the three-phase model seems to be the decisive weak point in Jaeger's theory. On the one hand, it has the advantage of being the only way to link Aristotle's presumed philosophical development (Platonist – metaphysician critical of Plato – empiricist) to his external living conditions (Academy period – years of travel – second stay in Athens), while on the other hand it contains several problematic assumptions. In principle, the practice of deriving philosophical development from biographical factors is questionable.[15] Even without dramatic events occurring in his external life, a philosopher can arrive at the conclusion that the assumptions he made in the past are in need of correction or differentiation. For, even assuming that a philosophical development took place, this need not be interpreted as a psychological reaction to specific living conditions; sometimes such a development can simply and plainly be attributed to the fact that certain theoretical accomplishments

13 The compilation of various works under individual titles can most likely be attributed to Andronicus of Rhodes, the publisher of the first edition of Aristotle.

14 For example, chapters 23–24 of *Rhetoric* II contain three references to historical events that took place during a relatively late creative period in Aristotle's development. What exactly can be concluded from this? That the entire *Rhetoric* is a late work? That the *Rhetoric*, though admittedly an early work, was revised again at a later date? That both of these chapters were inserted later on? Or can we merely conclude that these three references were later additions?

15 See n. 1.

take time. Thus, in the case of Aristotle one can hardly expect that the main features of syllogistic logic simply occurred to him overnight.

Even if one were to concede that biographical factors played such a prominent role, why should the relationship with Plato be the only factor worth mentioning? Might not other material circumstances – his flight from Athens, his relationship with Alexander, his natural-scientific observations on Lesbos, etc. – be just as important? One begins to suspect that the preferential treatment of the biographically conditioned teacher-pupil relationship is already accompanied by a preliminary decision in favor of a specific model of philosophical development, namely that of a progressive distancing from the viewpoint of the teacher.

And even if one wanted to view the teacher-pupil relationship as the decisive developmental motif, why should one then assume that it has necessarily taken the form of a progressive distancing? Isn't there also the phenomenon of the rebellious pupil, who throughout his youth revolts against everything that comes from his teacher,[16] and only later recognizes that the differences were not nearly as large as he had supposed? Finally, even if one were to admit that Aristotle was a Platonist in his youth,[17] why should his further development necessarily proceed along the romantic course of "years of travel/master years?" Why shouldn't it follow any number of other models, for example, that of the young genius and his subsequent decline?

All of these objections have to be considered as well, if one fundamentally shares Jaeger's conviction that Aristotle's development is important to an understanding of his works. However, many critics do not share even this premise; either they deny that anything like a significant development occurred, or they object that questions of development have no bearing on questions of interpretation, or that an excessive interest in development pushes the really interesting philosophical questions into the background. This is why every kind of developmental hypothesis has met with increasingly strong objections, especially among schools that are primarily interested in an objective analysis of Aristotle.[18] The fact that for Aristotle in general, as well as for individual works, the developmental approach had yielded few uncontroversial results was pointed to with increasing frequency as evidence of the impracticality of the method as a whole. The result was that the heyday of the developmental interpretation was followed by diverse projects that emphatically defended the

16 Cf. Barnes 1995, 17.

17 Even this apparently harmless assumption touches a sore point in Jaeger's model: Not only must he extend the period of Aristotle's philosophical dependence to an implausible twenty years, but he also must ground the supposed Platonism primarily in the exoteric works, which are known to us only indirectly. And in general, can texts that were written to present a school to the world at large serve as a basis for conclusions about the actual views of their author? On the last point see also Wieland 1970, 24.

18 This holds equally for the Aristotle exegesis that was influenced by analytical philosophy in Great Britain and for the hermeneutic tradition inspired by Heidegger and Gadamer; early criticism of Jaeger can even be traced back to Gadamer 1928.

unity of individual works, general areas of his thought, or even the Aristotelian oeuvre as a whole.

4 Developmental approaches in the post-Jaeger era

Was the application of the developmental method in Aristotle scholarship therefore only a temporary, fashionable phenomenon? In point of fact it would be questionable – in light of the critique outlined above – for someone today to attempt to reintroduce a history of development in the style of Jaeger. However, it would be rash to bid farewell to the use of developmental hypotheses along with Jaeger's project. We have seen that there are sometimes good philosophical reasons for considering an author's development and formulating developmental hypotheses. The question is therefore not whether developmental hypotheses should be ruled out in general; the question is rather what we can learn from criticism of Jaeger's developmental method and what form a more suitable treatment of such hypotheses would have to take.

4.1 Developmental hypotheses without biographism

The πρῶτον ψεῦδος in Jaeger's theory proved to be his three-phase model. His commitment to this model was clearly connected with the desire that the philosophically relevant stages of development should find parallels in biographical events; and since the first stage was characterized by spatial proximity to Plato, while subsequent stages involved an increasing temporal distance, the thesis of a progressive philosophical distancing is therefore assumed.

Fixating on the biography in this way leads us to forget what is really at issue when we attempt to investigate a philosopher's development: we are searching for the arguments that led a philosopher to change his position on an issue and that could be used as a justification for the modified position. While biographical findings can suggest such arguments or make the assumption of a development generally plausible,[19] they cannot replace what we are actually searching for: the philosophical grounds for development. In addition, one has to decide whether such biographical factors are known and generally recognized as relevant to a subject's philosophical development,[20] or whether they first have to be postulated in attempting to explain a

19 For example, a biographical event involving a journey to southern Italy that facilitates contact with the Pythagoreans could make it plausible for a philosopher living in Athens to rethink and possibly change his position on questions regarding metempsychosis and the metaphysics of numbers.
20 In Aristotle's case, there are really only a few biographical circumstances that are uncontroversial in this sense; his acquaintance with Plato and the Academy is naturally one of these, as is the fact that parts of his biological writings clearly describe flora and fauna that are typical of the island of

philosophical problem. Only in the first case do they have any sort of explanatory value. In the second case we are dealing rather with tales that could potentially help us *imagine* that the development in question took place; hence, they should be classified primarily as a rhetorical device. Moreover, since very few substantial details are verified in Aristotle's case apart from the familiar three phases, and since the three-phase model is far too crude to help explain nuances,[21] the biographical interpreter more often finds himself in the situation corresponding to the second case: he must interpret biographical events as relevant that are known to us only accidentally or deduce unknown events; because this process primarily taxes the imagination of the interpreter, it has a marked tendency to spiral out of control[22] and cannot under any circumstances serve as a serious basis for a developmental hypothesis.

Developmental hypotheses that wish to avoid losing themselves in the abyss of biographism, by contrast, understand themselves as proposed solutions for specific problems of consistency,[23] and these types of problems initially require a much more regulated treatment than references to biographical turning points can provide. In Aristotle's case, they typically arise in connection with the following phenomena:

(1) Aristotle wrote on various subjects more than once, and his findings differed to some extent. For example, there are two works on ethics, the *Nicomachean* and the *Eudemian Ethics*,[24] and two treatises on pleasure that make no reference to one another.[25]

(2) In some cases, the same terms are used quite differently or defined differently in various works,[26] and at times they even seem to necessitate a completely different background theory.[27]

Lesbos. But questions such as whether Plato's death effected a noteworthy change in Aristotle's approach to Platonism or whether the fact that his father practiced medicine influenced how he did philosophy are far from uncontroversial.

21 As for the others, the established alternatives to the three-phase model are straight out of the repository of biographical stereotypes: "Radical as a youth, moderate later on", "first youthful and speculative, then ripe with experience", "first critical, then with an eye for human weaknesses", "in the throes of death, the desire to achieve something quickly," etc. Of course, each of these *topoi* contains a seed of truth; the evident arbitrariness underlying the choice of such stereotypes should merely serve as a warning.

22 An example of a thesis that seems to have gotten somewhat out of control is that of a German philosopher from the 1980s alleging that Aristotle only wrote *Metaphysics* Γ 1–2 to ingratiate himself to Speusippus, whose post as head of the Academy he coveted at the time.

23 See point (3) in section 2. It appears that in Jaeger's case as well, the primary concern was to overcome inconsistencies. As the following discussion has shown, however, his interpretive method might serve rather to increase than decrease the number of perceived problems.

24 There may even be three: the *Magna Moralia* has been handed down as the work of Aristotle, although today most scholars contend that Aristotle himself is not the author of the treatise.

25 One in *EN* VII 11–14 and the other in X 1–5.

26 An example is the concept of φρόνησις (reasoning, intelligence, wisdom, practical rationality), which is restricted entirely to the aspect of practical rationality in the sixth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, yet can also mean an unspecified intellectual faculty.

(3) Terms that appear frequently in some works are entirely absent in others, as if they had only been discovered later.[28]
(4) Some of Aristotle's works contain additions that thematically fit the context in one way or another, yet their background theory seems to differ from that of the main text.[29]

These phenomena require some kind of explanation, if the philosophical theses in question are to be adequately understood. When other approaches fail,[30] developmental hypotheses come into consideration as possible explanations. However, these hypotheses can remain entirely neutral with respect to biographical conjectures; it seems unlikely that biographical factors could help explain the terminological variations mentioned above.

4.2 Internal and external developmental factors

Thus far we have distinguished between biographical and philosophical development factors; the latter can now be further subdivided into external and internal factors.[31] One can speak of purely internal development factors when a problem that has existed for a philosopher up to a certain point in time can be overcome at a later time by a newly developed method or approach. By contrast, external factors come into play when a development is initiated from without by encounters with colleagues and rivals, by becoming acquainted with a new theory, or due to other intellectual influences. If we are interested in making transparent use of developmental hypotheses, then in light of this differentiation the following points seem to be of importance:

(1) The four problems posed in Section 4.1 above can often be explained only in terms of internal development factors. An explanation based on internal factors has the undeniable advantage of not being dependent on any non-philosophical assumptions.

27 One example is the concept of συλλογισμός: in the *Prior Analytics*, Aristotle undertakes to show that every valid συλλογισμός can be reduced to the four figures of syllogistics, whereas in other texts such as the *Topics* or the *Rhetoric* he admittedly uses the term συλλογισμός, but applies it to arguments that clearly have nothing to do with the syllogistic figures.
28 The conceptual pair "form-matter" (εἶδος-ὕλη) plays a prominent role in Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, yet does not appear in the logico-methodological treatises that are combined under the title *Organon*. A similar situation obtains for the pair "potentiality-actuality" (δύναμις-ἐνέργεια).
29 There are quite a few books and chapters that are suspected of having been added to a work later on, possibly by someone other than Aristotle; well-known examples include Books α, Δ, K and Z 7–9 of the *Metaphysics*; examples of additions that might belong to a different background theory include *De Interpretatione* 14 and *Rhetoric* III 13–19.
30 See section 4.5 below.
31 Cf. Witt 1996.

(2) External factors, such as the influence of a specific doctrine or thesis, are typically connected with biographical events, but should not be confused with the biographical event itself or with its psychological effect. We can assume such an external factor without possessing knowledge of the corresponding biographical details; a connection exists only insofar as the biographical facts can prove that a specific influence is possible or probable.
(3) External factors seem to have a particularly close connection to personal circumstances, as has already been shown in the previous point. However, individual facts from the life of a philosopher do not yet justify assuming a particular external development factor if the facts are not demonstrably reflected in the works in question. For example, the fact that Aristotle's father was a physician has been used and exploited in various ways; but proving that Aristotle was influenced by the medicine of his day is a much more difficult project that cannot be managed through biographical evidence alone.

4.3 Sectoral rather than global developmental hypotheses

In advancing a global thesis on Aristotle's philosophical development, Werner Jaeger wanted to supply a schema that could be applied to different groups of work and disciplines. This is why his development schema had to operate with very general concepts, such as "metaphysician" and "empiricist." These categories are most likely justified for the disciplines of metaphysics, physics, political philosophy and ethics; however, if one takes into account that the aspect of development also comes into play for other subdisciplines represented in Aristotle's works, then it is clear from the outset that *these* categories at any rate are no longer helpful. Assuming that a development took place in the field of logic, it would hardly be helpful, for example, to pit a metaphysical phase against an empirical one. By the same token, the schema of nearness-to-Plato vs. distance-from-Plato can hardly contribute to research areas for which there is not any Platonic precedent. It therefore appears that in principle there are difficulties for which the comprehensive character of Jaeger's development schema was to blame. To put it another way: if one wishes to follow Jaeger in relying on a global developmental hypothesis, then one has to take into account at the very least that the explanatory value of this hypothesis is not equally high for all subareas.

The fact that global assessments of this kind meet with resistance today is also primarily a result of the general development that Aristotle scholarship has undergone; in many areas, the degree of specialization has increased sharply, and focused analysis of individual arguments is generally treated more seriously than speculations about the works as a whole. Nonetheless, if one wishes to apply the developmental hypotheses primarily in connection with the types of inconsistencies outlined above, it is only reasonable to point out that different sub-areas such as logic, ethics, and natural philosophy face different problems, and that in order to solve these

problems, different types of development processes have to be taken into consideration. Consequently, if any progress is to be expected regarding questions of development in Aristotle's philosophy, then it is surely to be made only for those developmental hypotheses that are based on thematic sectors of Aristotle's work. And in point of fact, the discussion that followed the publication of Jaeger's book on Aristotle quickly applied itself to just such a sectoral developmental account. Even the most important early attempt to formulate a comprehensive history of development takes the form of multiple sectoral approaches.[32]

From the outset, the sectoral approach is clearly demarcated from the approach based on global development history. Areas such as ethics/politics, metaphysics, logic/dialectic, philosophy of science, physics, astronomy, biology, and psychology, at the very least, receive differentiated treatment. This does not rule out the possibility of parallel developments being attested on the conceptual level in different sectors. For example, the term *energeia* appears in very different sectors, and may be among the terms that are assigned entirely different definitions in the course of Aristotle's creative activity; however, corresponding observations concerning the use of concepts of a transsectoral character should still clearly be distinguished from claims in favor of a global developmental hypothesis.

Because in Aristotle's case fundamental philosophical disciplines such as metaphysics or ethics are composed of completely different subprojects[33] in which relatively independent developments can occur, it may be sensible to apply the sectoral developmental approach not only to fundamental disciplines, but also to these subprojects; thus, when discussing metaphysics one has good reason to ask, for example, whether Aristotle's concept of an unmoved mover changed, or, when discussing ethics, whether the conception of pleasure underwent development. Even if one disregards the general distrust associated with broad theories, this fine-grained developmental approach still seems to have the advantage of dealing with consistency problems "on the spot", as it were, without drawing speculative conclusions regarding larger units of meaning. However, this tendency towards finer-grained developmental hypotheses has its limits too. In the first place, developmental postulates for particular problems also have to be assessed in terms of their relationship to the respective theoretical framework; conformity with the theoretical development of the thematic framework is possibly the most important verification criterion for a specific development hypothesis. However, if the developmental hypotheses are so highly specialized that factual correlation to the respective thematic area is no longer possible, then this ultimately boils down to immunization of the hypothesis. Secondly, the use of developmental hypotheses for smaller units of meaning carries the risk

32 Cf. Rist 1989.

33 In the first case, one could distinguish between the notion of *ousia*, the unmoved mover, the several meanings of being and the *pros-hen* relation, etc., and in the second case, between the definition of virtue, the concepts of happiness and pleasure, the explanation of the notion of ἀκρασία, the role of practical judgment, etc.

that the number of supposed "developments" might increase drastically; and the higher the number of developmental hypotheses, the lower their individual explanatory value.

4.4 Chronological uncertainty

A chronology of works can be based on purely philological indications or on the content of philosophical discussions. But the methodologically sounder chronology is no doubt one capable of remaining neutral in philosophical controversies over interpretation. This kind of philological dating makes use of dateable sources (if available) from other authors that refer to the work to be dated, references to historical events or personalities in the work in question, cross-references to other works, and analysis of stylistic changes (stylometry). Because Aristotle's writings were not fully edited in some cases and were clearly reworked again and again, these philological methods are not truly effective. References to historical events are mostly limited to the political writings, and even there they are not reliable. The *Rhetoric* contains numerous examples from the period of Aristotle's second stay in Athens, yet researchers agree that the book could not have been written in this period. Nor are cross-references to other works a reliable guideline; oftentimes they are even misleading. Cross-references like this may have been added later by editors or by Aristotle himself; and a reference to, for example, the *Politics* need not necessarily mean the work that has come down to us, and certainly not *the entire* work known to us.[34] Finally, stylometry too has not yielded any uncontroversial results.[35]

Let us assume that we know of two treatments of the same subject, one an early work and the other a later work. This already places considerable limits on the options for interpretation. For, if the treatises exhibit differences that are to be explained by a development, then it is no doubt already clear which one must be the point of departure and which the endpoint of the development; the interpreter would then still have to name developmental factors that could explain the transition from the former position to the latter. However, if the background knowledge assumed above concerning the relative chronology of the two treatises were lacking, we would find ourselves in a completely different initial situation. We would not know, for example, whether the time that elapsed between the writing of the first and second treatise played a role in the differences we observed, much less whether the first treatise was actually written before the second. In this situation, we could only arrive at a conclusion regarding which came first by examining the texts in question; in other words, the postulated development would have to be such that one of the cor-

34 Accordingly, the attempts made by Thielscher 1948 and Rist 1989 to establish a chronology on the basis of cross-references remain unconvincing.

35 Kenny 1978 in particular cited stylometric results for the relative dating of the two *Ethics*; however, these have remained controversial due to content-based arguments.

related viewpoints could be shown to have necessarily preceded the other. In the absence of a clear chronology of works, the developmental hypothesis would therefore have to help bear the burden of proof for the relative chronology.

The problem described above is characteristic of the situation that Aristotle scholars face when debating about development. Because hopes of arriving at a chronology of works by purely philological means have largely been disappointed, the dating process has to be supported by textual comparisons; this results in developmental hypotheses that are twice as hazardous and can easily become circular. The risk of circularity is especially high when a purported development assumes a specific chronology and this chronology was originally established by means of the selfsame development thesis. Consequently, the initial situation that one faces when employing developmental hypotheses is admittedly difficult; much has already been achieved, however, if this problem is recognized and questionable ad-hoc datings are abandoned.

4.5 Alternatives to developmental hypotheses

Developmental hypotheses can help deal with inconsistencies that arise; but not every inconsistency has to be explained in terms of a development. When Aristotle comes to different conclusions on the same question or uses the same term in different ways in two different treatises, his reasons for doing so may often have nothing to do with a development. Upon closer examination it may turn out that he stated the problem in a slightly different matter in different places, that he chose a different methodological approach to answering the question, that the different answers are aimed at different target groups or are adapted for different opponents; individual concepts may sometimes be used in a terminological sense other times in an unterminological sense and still other times in a terminological sense with an alternative definition. Finally, Aristotle refers time and again to a didactic order in which the knowledge contained in his works *should* be presented; obvious inconsistencies can therefore be attributed at times to this didactic arrangement. For example, one treatise may present the solution to a problem, while the other may only formulate the problem or work out premises for solving it. A critical review of various prominent developmental hypotheses in the light of these alternative types of explanations is able to show that (a) it is possible to avoid resorting to a developmental hypothesis in many cases, and (b) even when two treatises were written at different periods, the aspect of development has no additional explanatory value. This can be illustrated by three concluding examples:

(1) A familiar, if controversial, example of how supposedly incompatible positions can be “reconciled” through evidence relating to different issues is provided

by Owen's interpretation of the two treatises on pleasure in *EN* VII and X.[36] He explains that one of the treatises describes the objects of pleasure, while the other delineates the pleasure-sensation process.

(2) In *Politics* III, Aristotle distinguishes three good and three bad types of constitutions and adds that no other constitutions are possible. In Book IV of the *Politics*, however, he speaks of other constitutions that were not mentioned in Book III. One common explanation of this difference is to claim that Book IV was written later. The decisive factor, however, is that Book IV pursues a different project: it seeks to define the elements of the *polis* based on different duties so that various subspecies of constitutions can be delineated in terms of the characteristics of different functionally defined groups. In Book III, by contrast, the only relevant point is whether the government is in the hands of one person, a few people, or the masses. Book IV may well have been written later, but the actual explanation does not hinge upon this fact.

(3) Aristotle's concept of substance (*ousia*) is a classic dispute. In the *Categories* Aristotle says that the "first *ousia*" is the individual things, while the "second *ousia*" is the *eidos*, the type or species. In book Z of the *Metaphysics*, by contrast, he says that the *eidos* is the "first *ousia*", and no mention is made of a "second *ousia*". The contradiction seems obvious; this has even led some interpreters to conclude that the *Categories* is a spurious work. A much more common view, however, is that the *Categories* is an early work, while *Metaphysics* Z represents a later Aristotelian treatise. That the latter treatise, which seems far more difficult and complex, represents Aristotle's "mature position" is one of the most commonly cited stereotypes concerning Aristotle's philosophical development. But even here the claim that they were written at different periods does not explain the differences. The following observations are more helpful: firstly, the *eidos* that is referred to in *Metaphysics* Z as "first *ousia*" signifies not the type or species but the form; secondly, in recent years various interpreters have emphasized that concrete, individual things are indeed defined as "*ousia*" in the *Metaphysics* as well, and that Book Z in no way attempts to call this into question, but rather asks what the *ousia* of ordinary substances (taken in the sense of the *Categories*' first *ousia*) is.[37] It is therefore entirely unnecessary to assume a development; and even if one does assume a development, the contradiction is nonetheless resolved not by the development, but by differences in the question being posed.

36 Owen 1971/72.

37 See Wedin 2000; Burnyeat 2001.

Francisco L. Lisi

2 About the specificity of the Aristotelian *Politics*

Introduction

As a first step, I am going to clarify the meaning of the title of my contribution. I shall not attempt to pinpoint all the characteristic features of the Aristotelian *Politics*. There are many books and papers about this issue and a lot of research has been dedicated to it. I rather wish to follow another path, particularly concerning the *vexata quaestio* of the relationship between Plato and Aristotle. I also intend to reconsider the question of the specificity of the Aristotelian *Politics* from the point of view of the essential difference between their political doctrines. I would like to anticipate that I do not support any hypothesis about a supposed intellectual development or change in the political thought of neither Plato nor Aristotle, I mean one that can be observed in their preserved writings. In this paper I can only take this as an axiom, but I have explained my position on several occasions for Plato[1] and for Aristotle[2] alike.

More than half a century ago, Hans Joachim Krämer remarked that what is specifically Aristotelian can only be detected when the common traits between the Academy and the Peripatos have been outlined.[3] I will try to go in the contrary direction, by first determining what I consider to be the most essential feature of Plato's political thought in order to later find out what I believe Aristotle considered the most substantial difference between his thought and his teacher's doctrine. I think that this approach will also help us to shed some light on the apparent coincidences and differences regarding many substantial points set forth by both thinkers.

1 Plato's rule of law

The kernel of Plato's political theory could be resumed in the rule of mind (νοῦς) in both individual and society. This has its most characteristic expression in the perhaps most well-known features of his doctrine, which are not opposites, as it has been and is still interpreted, but rather complementary: the rule of the philosopher king and the rule of law. Generally, the first is supposed to be the central point of the

1 Lisi 1985; Lisi 1998; Lisi 2002.

2 Lisi 2000.

3 Krämer 1959: 13: "Solange die Gattung nicht bestimmt ist kann von der Definition der spezifischen Differenzen nicht eigentlich die Rede sein".

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state built up in the *Republic*, Callipolis. The second one is attributed to Magnesia, the polis projected in the *Laws*. In the *Republic* the philosopher acts directly as an intermediary between the World of Forms and the order in society, which he produces on the normative level through his *nomoi* and by carrying out the normative order in society through the action of the guardians who control the right fulfilment of the norm contained in the *nomoi*. Both the guardians and the Third Estate are summited to the order of the norms coming from the philosopher king, who in his mind has an order that reflects the order of the Ideal World with which he is periodically connected through contemplation of the Form of the Good.[4] The *Republic* does not give any information about the way in which the philosopher enacts his *nomoi*, which are also a reflection of the order existing in his mind. Many passages in the dialogue suggest that this point is of secondary importance to Plato. However, I believe we can conclude that the actual executive power is not exercised by the philosopher kings, but by the guardians. This conclusion can be drawn from another very characteristic feature of Callipolis, i. e. the exact parallelism between the state and the soul, as it is axiomatically stated in the second book and maintained through the whole dialogue.

The *Laws* offer a similar social and political structure, as T. J. Saunders proved more than half a century ago.[5] In them, the rule of the philosopher king is apparently supplanted by the rule of law. Nevertheless, there is an institution that exercises a form of indirect rule through the laws, the nocturnal council. The Athenian Guest compares this institution with the head, the soul, and especially with the mind (νοῦς).[6] The final part of the dialogue explicitly shows the parallelism between soul and *polis*, which is present in the whole dialogue, since the nocturnal council is likened to the mind and the better younger guardians to the sensations that control what happens in the rest of the city.[7] The final rule of state is delivered to the nocturnal council, which has the function of preserving the city. If the older members of the nocturnal council correspond to and have the function of the mind, the task of the guardians as the institution enacting the laws coming from the nocturnal council is similar to the job the irascible soul has in the individual. The likeness with the head that the Athenian Guest uses is not coincidental, if we consider the anatomy of the *Timaeus*. In this dialogue the seat of the mind is separated from the rest of the body and united to it through an isthmus, the throat. This separation has the purpose of avoiding the contamination of the divine element in man through the other kinds of soul. In a similar way, the nocturnal council has no direct relationship politically with the rest of the state. Its norms, laws and dispositions (its *nomoi*) are enacted through the young guardians co-opted in it, who act as intermediaries also between the nocturnal council and the rest of the magistrates. These have to ensure the right performing of the norms among the population. A similar model can be

4 Plato, *Republic* VII, 540a4-c2.
5 Saunders 1962.
6 Plato, *Laws* XII, 961d1sqq.; 969b2-c3, esp. b7.
7 Plato, *Laws* XII, 964 d3 – 965a7.

found in the description of the way in which the different kinds of soul act in the *Timaeus:*

> That part of the inferior soul which is endowed with courage and passion and loves contention they settled nearer the head, midway between the midriff and the neck, in order that it might be under the rule of reason and might join with it in controlling and restraining the desires when they are no longer willing of their own accord to obey the word of command issuing from the citadel.[8]

The description of the appetitive kind of soul in the *Timaeus* offers a clear overview of the political implications of the parallelism between *polis* and *psyche*. Further points in the description also shed light on the relationship between the *nous* and the other kinds of soul:

- The highest and strongest (71a1 τὸ κράτιστον) should deliberate/take counsel with itself about what is convenient for all in common and privately for himself (71a1–2 περὶ τοῦ πᾶσι κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ συμφέροντος).
- The appetitive kind of soul cannot understand reasoning (71a5 λόγου) but is only guided by images and visions (71a5–6 εἰδώλων καὶ φαντασμάτων).
- Therefore, the power of the thoughts coming from the mind reflect on the liver's surface as in a mirror producing fear, pain and its contraries in the lower kind of soul (71b5-e3).

As in the case of the human soul, the *Laws* are organized in such a way that the leading part of the city is set apart from the rest of the community and leads it through the intermediation of the magistrates: the nocturnal council deliberates about the norms it should deliver to the community and also develops philosophical inquiry, so that it can "advise quietly for the good of the whole".[9] In fact the *nous* is the master not only of the body (34c5) but also of everything that is in it (44d5–6 ὃ θειότατόν τε ἔστιν καὶ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν πάντων δεσποτοῦν[10]). The conception that the body and the lower parts of the soul should be slaves of the higher soul-kind is not exclusively found in the *Timaeus*; it appears everywhere in Plato's work.[11]

Plato establishes a similar relationship in the case of Gods and human beings. Gods (a superior kind of *nous*) are masters over human beings,[12] and the law as prod-

8 Plato, *Timaeus* 70a2–7: τὸ μετέχον οὖν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀνδρείας καὶ θυμοῦ, φιλόνικον ὄν, κατῴκισαν ἐγγυτέρω τῆς κεφαλῆς μεταξὺ τῶν φρενῶν τε καὶ αὐχένος, ἵνα τοῦ λόγου κατήκοον ὂν κοινῇ μετ' ἐκείνου βίᾳ τὸ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν κατέχοι γένος, ὁπότ' ἐκ τῆς ἀκροπόλεως τῷ τ' ἐπιτάγματι καὶ λόγῳ μηδαμῇ πείθεσθαι ἑκὸν ἐθέλοι. Translation by Jowett 1892.

9 Plato, *Timaeus* 71a1–2. Translation by Jowett 1892.

10 Note the meaning of δεσποτοῦν that already points to the relationship between lord and slave.

11 Cf., e.g., *Phaedo* 80a1, a5; *Republic* VIII, 561c3; *Laws* V, 726a4–5. In *Republic* IX, 577d 1–5, Socrates represents the contrary situation, where in the tyrannical man the lowest part of the soul enslaves the upper one (cf. also 587b14-c3, 589c6–590a2).

12 Cf. *Laws* V, 726e6–727a2.

uct of the *nous* is the real master of the good citizen.[13] The requirement that the inhabitants of the city and the magistrates should be the "slaves of the laws" (*Leg.* IV 715d5) is not to be interpreted metaphorically: the content of normal citizen's intellect has to be the ideology expressed in the legislation and in all the recommendations pronounced by the lawgiver. As it happens in the relation between master and slave, this *douleia* implies awe (αἰδώς) or even fear (φόβος), which the slave feels towards the master. Such an attitude is characteristic of right political systems, as it was in Athens at the time of the Persian invasions.[14] Precisely, refusing to serve the laws and the magistrates is the origin of the decadence of Athens.[15] This is expressed concisely in the sixth book of the *Laws:*

> Indeed every man must think about every human being that he could not become a praiseworthy master unless he has been a slave, and that he must pride himself more on being a good slave than on being a good ruler, first of the laws, since this is an enslavement to the gods, thereafter comes always the enslavement of the young to the older who have lived honourably.[16]

The master/slave relationship that is here set up between law and human being is parallel to the relation between the highest kind of soul and the lower ones. As I have tried to show elsewhere,[17] the Platonic rule of law implies this enslavement of the individual to the norms established by the rulers or, if you prefer, by the state. If the rulers play the role of the *nous*, they need some kind of direct contact with the source of all *nous* and of the whole reality, just like the sensible world needs this contact with the Ideal World, which it reflects, and with the Good, the source of every reality. The rulers are thus mediators between the world order and the society. This slavish relation between the rulers and the rest of society ensures the preservation of order in the community. This feature of the Platonic political philosophy has to be taken into account, if we want to understand what the Rule of Law means for Plato.

In Classical Greek, *nomos* has a much wider field of meaning than the English word 'law'. The Greeks were more aware than the individualistic modern man about the fact that the social context shapes the individual. According to Plato, if the political system is to be a good one, it needs rulers who possess a true knowledge of the reality to which they should adapt their cities. Such rulers cannot make a mistake in the general norms, and the normal citizen cannot criticize them or have an independent thought; he should obey the norm as the slave obeys the order of the

13 Cf. *Epistles* VIII, 354e5 – 355a1.

14 Cf. *Laws* III, 698b2-c3; 699c3 – 4; 700a4 – 5.

15 Cf. *Laws* III, 701b5 – 8.

16 Plato, *Laws* VI, 762e1 – 7: δεῖ δὴ πάντ' ἄνδρα διανοεῖσθαι περὶ ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων ὡς ὁ μὴ δουλεύσας οὐδ' ἂν δεσπότης γένοιτο ἄξιος ἐπαίνου, καὶ καλλωπίζεσθαι χρὴ τῷ καλῶς δουλεῦσαι μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ καλῶς ἄρξαι, πρῶτον μὲν τοῖς νόμοις, ὡς ταύτην τοῖς θεοῖς οὖσαν δουλείαν, ἔπειτ' ἀεὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις τε καὶ ἐντίμως βεβιωκόσι τοὺς νέους.

17 Lisi 2013.

master. The burden of this system lays primarily on the quality of the rulers, but also on the quality of the inhabitants of the state. This explains the importance that Plato gives to the selection of both, i. e. normal citizens and rulers. Since Plato establishes such a close link between soul and society, it is obvious that *the most important task of the political sciences is the choice of the best characters to act as the highest instance of the political order and to promote the reproduction of the best natures in the polis so far as possible*, as the last part of the *Statesman* and the beginning of the *Republic* show.

If my interpretation is right, Plato *de facto* reduces the political power relationship to the relation between master and slave, and this is also the consequence of the analogy between individual soul and society. This assimilation leads him to try to annihilate any individuality so far as possible and to make the state the best possible reflection of the One.[18] There are two consequences of this eagerness for unity:

- The family disappears and the state is based on the repetition of an individual adapted to the general norm as far as possible.
- Rulers and the ruled have different natures, as masters and slaves have according to the usual view of the Greeks.

The second consequence implies that, in a social organisation κατὰ φύσιν, the normal citizen has a weaker *nous* and must be ruled and enslaved:

> "And why do you suppose that 'base mechanic' handicraft is a term of reproach? Shall we not say that it is solely when the best part is naturally weak in a man so that it cannot govern and control the brood of beasts within him but can only serve them and can learn nothing but the ways of flattering them?" "So it seems," he said. "Then is it not in order that such an one may have a like government with the best man that we say he ought to be the slave of that best man who has within himself the divine governing principle, not because we suppose, as Thrasymachus did in the case of subjects, that the slave should be governed for his own harm, but on the ground that it is better for everyone to be governed by the divine and the intelligent, preferably indwelling and his own, but in default of that imposed from without, in order that we all so far as possible may be akin and friendly because our governance and guidance are the same?"[19]

18 Cf. *Laws* V, 739a-e.

19 Plato, *Republic* IX, 590c2-d7: βαναυσία δὲ καὶ χειροτεχνία διὰ τί οἴει ὄνειδος φέρει; ἢ δι' ἄλλο τι φήσομεν ἢ ὅταν τις ἀσθενὲς φύσει ἔχῃ τὸ τοῦ βελτίστου εἶδος, ὥστε μὴ ἂν δύνασθαι ἄρχειν τῶν ἐν αὑτῷ θρεμμάτων, ἀλλὰ θεραπεύειν ἐκεῖνα, καὶ τὰ θωπεύματα αὐτῶν μόνον δύνηται μανθάνειν; Ἔοικεν, ἔφη. Οὐκοῦν ἵνα καὶ ὁ τοιοῦτος ὑπὸ ὁμοίου ἄρχηται οἵουπερ ὁ βέλτιστος, δοῦλον αὐτόν φαμεν δεῖν εἶναι ἐκείνου τοῦ βελτίστου καὶ ἔχοντος ἐν αὑτῷ τὸ θεῖον ἄρχον, οὐκ ἐπὶ βλάβῃ τῇ τοῦ δούλου οἰόμενοι δεῖν ἄρχεσθαι αὐτόν, ὥσπερ Θρασύμαχος ᾤετο τοὺς ἀρχομένους, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄμεινον ὂν παντὶ ὑπὸ θείου καὶ φρονίμου ἄρχεσθαι, μάλιστα μὲν οἰκεῖον ἔχοντος ἐν αὑτῷ, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔξωθεν ἐφεστῶτος, ἵνα εἰς δύναμιν πάντες ὅμοιοι ὦμεν καὶ φίλοι, τῷ αὐτῷ κυβερνώμενοι; Translation by Shorey 1930. Similar statements can be found in the *First Alcibiades* 135b7-c2. The need to accept as master the best appears *passim* in Plato; cf., e. g., *Phaedo* 62c9 – 63c7. This also characterises the period of Cronos (cf. *Laws* IV, 714c7-e3) and explains the absolutist definition of the statesman in the homonymous dialogue.

A similar idea can be found in the *Laws*, when Cleinias denied that slaves have *nous*.[20] However, Cleinias expresses only a common opinion that can be found also in Aristotle. New in Plato is the fact, as we have seen, that he extends this to the citizens and lets the ruler's commands become the content of their mind.

Finally, before I leave Plato, I would like to point to another consequence of his reduction of political power to the master/slave relationship, namely the meaning of what has been called the gnostic nature of politics. The mind does not act directly on the body, but only does so through the mediation of the lower kinds of soul. The appetitive soul is controlled through the will, which helps the mind to enact its commands. The *nous*, therefore, has no direct practical implication in the process of enacting the commands. On the social level, this means that the task of *nous* is limited to the quest for the best general norm for a precise society in a concrete moment; this is expressed as *technê:*

> The consideration of all these arts which have been mentioned leads to the conclusion that none of them is the art of the statesman. For the art that is truly kingly ought not to act itself, but should rule over the arts that have the power of action; it should decide upon the right or wrong time for the initiation of the most important measures in the state, and the other arts should perform its behests.[21]

Consequently, politics is beyond and over the auxiliary sciences, which have particular goals in society in order to enact the general commands of the royal science in their particular fields:

> Therefore those arts which we have just described, as they control neither one another nor themselves, but have each its own peculiar sphere of action, are quite properly called by special names corresponding to those special actions.[22]

In fact, asserts the Eleatic guest, by the force of his hands and his body the king can do very little to keep his rule; this is the reason why politics is more theoretical than practical.[23]

Once we have highlighted the rather absolute correspondence between the human soul and the social organization and noted the significance of the parallelism built by Socrates in the *Republic,* we may set forth, I think, some important points for

20 Cf. *Laws* XII, 966b3.

21 Plato, *Statesman* 305c10-d5: τόδε δὴ κατανοητέον ἰδόντι συναπάσας τὰς ἐπιστήμας αἳ εἴρηνται, ὅτι πολιτική γε αὐτῶν οὐδεμία ἀνεφάνη. τὴν γὰρ ὄντως οὖσαν βασιλικὴν οὐκ αὐτὴν δεῖ πράττειν ἀλλ' ἄρχειν τῶν δυναμένων πράττειν, γιγνώσκουσαν τὴν ἀρχήν τε καὶ ὁρμὴν τῶν μεγίστων ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἐγκαιρίας τε πέρι καὶ ἀκαιρίας, τὰς δ' ἄλλας τὰ προσταχθέντα δρᾶν. Translation by Fowler 1921.

22 Plato, *Statesman* 305d7–10: διὰ ταῦτα ἄρα ἃς μὲν ἄρτι διεληλύθαμεν, οὔτ' ἀλλήλων οὔθ' αὑτῶν ἄρχουσαι, περὶ δέ τινα ἰδίαν αὐτῆς οὖσα ἑκάστη πρᾶξιν, κατὰ τὴν ἰδιότητα τῶν πράξεων τοὔνομα δικαίως εἴληφεν ἴδιον. Translation by Fowler 1921.

23 Cf. *Statesman* 259c6-d1.

the understanding of Plato's political thought. Plato's doctrine of the Rule of Law depends on his metaphysical conception of the relationship between the Ideal World and the sensible reality; and this means:

(1) The law is a third-degree reflection of the order existing among the Forms.
(2) It functions as mind in normal citizens, that is, it puts limits on their unlimited pains and pleasures, determines lines of action and reaction, opinions about good and bad, etc.
(3) Plato speaks of parts of the soul in the same sense in which he states the parts of virtue. They are parts of a more general class, but are in some sense independent entities with substantial differences in nature.
(4) There is a master-slave relationship between the mind and the other kinds of soul.
(5) This situation is projected onto politics, insofar as the relations existing in society are understood under the master-slave model.
(6) This does not mean that Plato did not accept different kinds of relations in society.
(7) The fact that the ability to acquire the science of politics is limited to only a few people[24] points to the circumstance that the general population does not have a sufficiently strong *nous*.

2 The central issue in Aristotle's political theory

In the following pages, I will try to outline what I consider the most specific characteristic of the Aristotelian *Politics*. As I have stated in the beginning of this paper, I do not intend to list all the innovations Aristotle has introduced into the Socratic Platonic political theory. We know too little about the debates within the Academy and about the possible theoretical models on political issues to have a clear notion of everything Aristotle owes to them. Nevertheless, we can appreciate the importance of Plato's influence almost in every page of the *Politics*.

Aristotle shares, for instance, with his teacher the attempt to restore the value of the law against the relativist criticism. Like Plato, Aristotle makes the vinculum of law with the *nous* the basis of his theory, in which he defends a position very similar to Plato's. Aristotle states that to maintain the superiority of the rule of a human being implies defending the addition of the passions of the lower part of the soul.[25] Still he accepts, as did Plato, that the exceptionally virtuous man stays beyond the rule of law, since he is the law.[26] Nonetheless, human intervention is necessary to emend the essential failure of law. The general rule contained in it cannot

24 Cf. *Statesman* 292e.
25 Cf. *Pol.* III 10, 1281a34–36; III 15, 1286b17–20.
26 Cf. *Pol.* III 13, 1284a3–13.

correspond exactly to the particular case.[27] The same idea is expressed by Plato in the *Statesman* (294a-c). However, Aristotle accepts the corrective intervention of the magistrates because the law cannot resolve the particular instance exactly. Nevertheless, for him the law must be always present and serve as a guide for the magistrates in the particular cases. Thus, the fact that the law is the expression of pure reason makes it superior to every human nature; it constitutes the general frame according to which the magistrates should judge the particular case.[28] Up to this point, Aristotle's claims about the value of the law do not differ from the Platonic view of the social norm. We could mention many other points that show the fundamental agreement between both thinkers, but this is not the place to insist upon this point.[29]

There is an issue where the Aristotelian approach is completely different from his master's position, namely what kind of rule is the properly political one. It has already been observed that the first book of the *Politics* implies a direct criticism of Plato's view.[30] In fact, Aristotle's definition of *polis* as ἡ πασῶν κυριωτάτη (*sc*. κοινωνία) καὶ πάσας περιέχουσα τὰς ἄλλας (I 1, 1252a5 – 6) implies a radical difference with Plato's starting point, since the order existing in the individual (soul-body, different kinds of soul, etc.) does not offer the model for understanding the political organisation. Indeed, the *polis* is a complex association of different human groups[31] and has the family as the first community and the basis of social organisation. Each level in the city requires a different kind of unity and, as such, different kinds of art in order to preserve it. The *polis* is seen as the whole of exchanges or relations between citizens.[32] This is the origin of the criticism expressed in the second sentence of the *Politics:*

> Those then who think that the natures of the statesman, the royal ruler, the head of an estate and the master of a family are the same are mistaken. They imagine that the difference between these various forms of authority is one of greater and smaller numbers, not a difference in the kind – that is, that the ruler over a few people is a master, over more the head of an estate, over more still a statesman or royal ruler, as if there were no difference between a large household and a small city; and also as to the statesman and the royal ruler, they think that one who governs as sole head is royal, and one who, while the government follows the principles of the science of royalty, takes turns to govern and be governed is a statesman; but these views are not true.[33]

27 Cf. *Pol.* 11, 1282b1 – 6.

28 Cf. *Pol.* III 15, 1286a16 – 20; IV 4, 1292a32 – 34.

29 On the common features and differences between Plato and Aristotle in Aristotle's theory of law, see Lisi 2000.

30 See Cherry 2008.

31 Cf. *EN* VIII 9, 1160a8 – 18 and 21 – 23.

32 Cf. *Pol.* III 9, 1281a 1; III 4, 1276b 29 *et passim*.

33 Aristotle, *Pol.* I 1, 1252a7 – 16: ὅσοι μὲν οὖν οἴονται πολιτικὸν καὶ βασιλικὸν καὶ οἰκονομικὸν καὶ δεσποτικὸν εἶναι τὸν αὐτὸν οὐ καλῶς λέγουσιν· πλήθει γὰρ καὶ ὀλιγότητι νομίζουσι διαφέρειν ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ εἴδει τούτων ἕκαστον, οἷον ἂν μὲν ὀλίγων, δεσπότην, ἂν δὲ πλειόνων, οἰκονόμον, ἂν δ᾽ ἔτι πλει-

On the basis of *Statesman* 259a-d some commentators see Plato as the target of this criticism.[34] In fact, there is also a passage of the *Laws* (III, 690a1–4), where the same thought is even more clearly expressed. However, this is rather a common Socratic conviction as it is expressed in some passages of Xenophon, which point to the fact that this issue was very debated in the Socratic circles:

> I mean that, whatever a man controls, if he knows what he wants and can get it he will be a good controller, whether he control a chorus, an estate, a city or an army.[35]

The passage from the *Statesman* appears in the first attempt at defining the politician, which ends in a failure because it leads to the confusion between the human statesman and the god as shepherd of the human herd, i.e. a clear confusion in the ways of ruling. Further, the main point of the passage of the *Statesman* is not whether the science of politics is the same as the science of the household, but rather whether a private individual can have it regardless of whether he exercises power or not. This is confirmed by what the Guest from Elea asserts: "The man who possesses the kingly science, whether he rules or not, must be called kingly, as our previous argument showed".[36] There is also another important reason, I think, to exclude a direct reference to this passage of the *Statesman* in Aristotle's sentence. The plural seems to indicate that he does not have a concrete passage of any writing in mind, but rather a general allusion to a stream of thought, probably of Socratic origin. In the case of Plato, as we have seen, though he reduces the best kind of rule to the δεσποτεία, he distinguishes between different kinds of rule and makes a characterisation of them in the *Laws* that is very similar to the Aristotelian one: rule of the master over the slave, of the father and elder over the young, of the better over the worthless (ἥττων), of the noble over the ignoble and the rule of law.[37]

On the other hand, the main difference between Plato and Aristotle lays in the fact that Aristotle abandons Plato's projection of the structure of the soul on the social order. In his discussion of the monarchy in the third book of the *Politics* Aristotle does not only criticizes Plato's ideology of the philosopher king; he also states that the rule of law is better than the rule of man, because it is the rule of god and mind,

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όνων, πολιτικὸν ἢ βασιλικόν, ὡς οὐδὲν διαφέρουσαν μεγάλην οἰκίαν ἢ μικρὰν πόλιν· καὶ πολιτικὸν δὲ καὶ βασιλικόν, ὅταν μὲν αὐτὸς ἐφεστήκῃ, βασιλικόν, ὅταν δὲ κατὰ τοὺς λόγους τῆς ἐπιστήμης τῆς τοιαύτης κατὰ μέρος ἄρχων καὶ ἀρχόμενος, πολιτικόν· ταῦτα δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθῆ. Translation by Rackham 1944.

34 See Newman 1897–1902, II, 98–99; Saunders 1995, 56–57; Cherry 2008, 2.

35 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* III 4,6: λέγω ἔγωγ', ἔφη, ὡς, ὅτου ἄν τις προστατεύῃ, ἐὰν γιγνώσκῃ τε ὧν δεῖ καὶ ταῦτα πορίζεσθαι δύνηται, ἀγαθὸς ἂν εἴη προστάτης, εἴτε χοροῦ εἴτε οἴκου εἴτε πόλεως εἴτε στρατεύματος προστατεύοι. Translation by Marchant 1923. Cf. III 4,12: ἡ γὰρ τῶν ἰδίων ἐπιμέλεια πλήθει μόνον διαφέρει τῆς τῶν κοινῶν, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα παραπλήσια ἔχει, τὸ <δὲ> μέγιστον, ὅτι οὔτε ἄνευ ἀνθρώπων οὐδετέρα γίγνεται οὔτε δι' ἄλλων μὲν ἀνθρώπων τὰ ἴδια πράττεται, δι' ἄλλων δὲ τὰ κοινά.

36 Plato, *Statesman* 292e9–293a1. Translation by Fowler 1921.

37 Cf. *Laws* III, 690a1-c8.

while the rule of man also implies the rule of passions.[38] Aristotle's refusal of the rule of one man also implies the most important change in the political theory. *While Plato's theory was based on the natural superiority of the rulers, for Aristotle the main principle is that political issues imply equality among the members of society.* The extraordinary personalities of the philosopher-kings posited by Plato cannot, according to Aristotle, belong to a political community:

> But if there is any one man so greatly distinguished in outstanding virtue, or more than one but not enough to be able to make up a complete state, so that the virtue of all the rest and their political ability is not comparable with that of the men mentioned, if they are several, or if one, with his alone, it is no longer proper to count these exceptional men a part of the state; for they will be treated unjustly if deemed worthy of equal status, being so widely unequal in virtue and in their political ability: since such a man will naturally be as a god among men. Hence it is clear that legislation also must necessarily be concerned with persons who are equal in birth and in ability, but there can be no law dealing with such men as those described, for they are themselves a law; indeed, a man would be ridiculous if he tried to legislate for them.[39]

The references to Plato's central belief are evident in this passage:

(1) There are literal reminiscences of a central passage in the *Laws* (V, 739a1-e7):
   (i) Plato speaks of a city ὑπερβολῇ πρὸς ἀρετήν (739d4), while Aristotle mentions a man διαφέρων κατ'ἀρετὴν ὑπερβολήν (*Pol.* III 13, 1284a4).
   (ii) For Plato his dwellers are gods or sons of gods (739d6) and for Aristotle a man of such conditions is a god among human beings (*Pol.* III 13, 1284a10 – 11 θεὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις).
   (iii) Aristotle repeats the Platonic turn of "more than one" (739d7; cf. *Pol.* III 13, 1284a4).

(2) Plato often uses the characterization of the philosophers as divine creatures.[40]

(3) The statement that they are themselves the law is also a clear reference to the Platonic view.

In this context, Aristotle directly refuses the idea that legislation for philosophers and extraordinary people could be made, because all legislation presupposes equality in race and power (*Pol.* III 13, 1284a12 – 13 τὴν νομοθεσίαν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι περὶ

38 Cf. *Pol.* III 16, 1287a29 – 34.

39 Aristotle, *Pol.* III 13, 1284a3 – 15: εἰ δέ τις ἔστιν εἷς τοσοῦτον διαφέρων κατ' ἀρετῆς ὑπερβολήν, ἢ πλείους μὲν ἑνὸς μὴ μέντοι δυνατοὶ πλήρωμα παρασχέσθαι πόλεως, ὥστε μὴ συμβλητὴν εἶναι τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ἀρετὴν πάντων μηδὲ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῶν τὴν πολιτικὴν πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνων, εἰ πλείους, εἰ δ' εἷς, τὴν ἐκείνου μόνον, οὐκέτι θετέον τούτους μέρος πόλεως· ἀδικήσονται γὰρ ἀξιούμενοι τῶν ἴσων, ἄνισοι τοσοῦτον κατ'ἀρετὴν ὄντες καὶ τὴν πολιτικὴν δύναμιν· ὥσπερ γὰρ θεὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις εἰκὸς εἶναι τὸν τοιοῦτον. ὅθεν δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τὴν νομοθεσίαν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι περὶ τοὺς ἴσους καὶ τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ δυνάμει, κατὰ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστι νόμος· αὐτοὶ γάρ εἰσι νόμος. καὶ γὰρ γελοῖος ἂν εἴη νομοθετεῖν τις πειρώμενος κατ' αὐτῶν. Translation by Rackham 1944.

40 See Lisi 2004; Lisi 2015.

τοὺς ἴσους καὶ τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ δυνάμει). Like the gods, exceptional individuals cannot constitute a complete state and are not born to live in a political community.

As we have seen, Plato had projected the model of the human soul on the city by distinguishing different groups in it according to the various kinds of souls and had considered all of society like an individual. Aristotle, on the contrary, takes the family as a model for society, or better, the family is conceived like a reflection of the social order. This order implies that there is a main distinction, the difference between freemen and slaves. The citizen who is the *pater familias* has different relations according to the position the members have in the family order. Towards the slaves, he acts as master; in the administration of the family and with his children, he acts like a king,[41] while with his wife he has a relation that is similar to the political one.[42] The political relations in a proper sense are possible in the family only by analogy, but not in strict sense, because Aristotle uses the term "political" only to designate the relations that take place in a city, i.e. among equals and freemen.[43] The political rule implies not only equality but also the alternation in ruling and being ruled:

> But there exists a form of authority by which a man rules over persons of the same race as himself, and free men (for that is how we describe political authority), and this the ruler should learn by being ruled...Hence there is much truth in the saying that it is impossible to become a good ruler without having been a subject. And although the goodness of a ruler and that of a subject are different, the good citizen must have the knowledge and the ability both to be ruled and to rule, and the merit of the good citizen consists in having a knowledge of the government of free men on both sides.[44]

This notion of equality in the political system goes directly against the Platonic approach. Aristotle continuously underlines the significance of equality for the cohesion and harmony of the city. Excessive differences in wealth produce a city of slaves and masters, but not a real *polis*, since this requires equal and alike citizens.[45] The citizen is mainly defined by his participation in the juries and in the rule.[46]

We can conclude, I believe, that Aristotle considers his differentiation of the kinds of rule his most important contribution, which is related to the fact that the unity of the *polis* is different from the unity of a human being. He changes the explanatory analogy from the individual soul to the family, where he finds *in nuce*

41 Cf. *Pol.* I 7, 1255b19.

42 Cf. *Pol.* I 12, 1259a37–1259b17.

43 Cf. *Pol.* 7, 1255b20.

44 Aristotle, *Pol.* III 4, 1277b7–16: ἀλλ' ἔστι τις ἀρχὴ καθ' ἣν ἄρχει τῶν ὁμοίων τῷ γένει καὶ τῶν ἐλευθέρων· ταύτην γὰρ λέγομεν εἶναι τὴν πολιτικὴν ἀρχήν, ἣν δεῖ τὸν ἄρχοντα ἀρχόμενον μαθεῖν [...]. διὸ λέγεται καὶ τοῦτο καλῶς, ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν εὖ ἄρξαι μὴ ἀρχθέντα. τούτων δὲ ἀρετὴ μὲν ἑτέρα, δεῖ δὲ τὸν πολίτην τὸν ἀγαθὸν ἐπίστασθαι καὶ δύνασθαι καὶ ἄρχεσθαι καὶ ἄρχειν, καὶ αὕτη ἀρετὴ πολίτου, τὸ τὴν τῶν ἐλευθέρων ἀρχὴν ἐπίστασθαι ἐπ' ἀμφότερα. Translation by Rackham 1944.

45 Cf. *Pol.* IV 11, 1295b25–26: βούλεται δέ γε ἡ πόλις ἐξ ἴσων εἶναι καὶ ὁμοίων ὅτι μάλιστα.

46 Cf. *Pol.* III 1, 1275a22–23, 1275b17–21; III 2, 1276a4–5.

the main forms of rule. The *Politics* begins precisely with the statement that this differentiation of the kinds of government as central point of its program and that it is necessary to get a vision of the core basis in order to understand the political organisation.[47] Just as significant is Aristotle's main criticism to Plato's *Republic,* namely that he confuses the kind of unity existing in a city, in the family and in the individual.[48] According to Aristotle, Plato has not understood that the one, like the good, is a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον.

Specifically, Aristotle's position also criticizes the Platonic approach insofar as he considers that Plato's reduction of the relation of ruler and ruled to the analogy of the relationship master-slave does not correspond to the reality and to the goal of social organisation. The *polis* as *telos* of the social organisation requires equal individuals with a similar nature, something contrary to Plato's theory that underlines the eugenics and selective principles of politics. For Aristotle, a natural difference does exist, namely between freeman and the other members of the city: slaves, children and women. The greatest one is the difference between freemen and slaves:

> For he that can foresee with his mind is naturally ruler and naturally master, and he that can do these things with his body is subject and naturally a slave; so that master and slave have the same interest.[49]

The link between master and slave is a natural link and beneficial to both, but it is not a political relation, since for Aristotle a political relation is a specific one that includes freedom and equality, i.e. the Greek concept of citizenship. The despotic rule cannot be considered a form of politic organisation. Aristotle's effort in the *Politics* is precisely to define the political partnership (ἡ κοινωνία πολιτική) as a community of people who are equal by nature, i.e. the only specific kind of relationship where such equality takes place. This is precisely what characterises the *politeia*, which presupposes a community of equals and alike citizens: "From what has been said, it is clear that among people who are alike and equal it is neither expedient nor just for one to be sovereign over all".[50]

Aristotle's refusal of Plato's theory is based on the distinction of the different forms of rule and of the different meanings of *archê*, a *pollachôs legomenon.* As already stated, it is not the intention of this paper to highlight all the differences between the Aristotelian and the Platonic political theory, but to point to what I believe Aristotle considered the most crucial point that distinguished his political approach from the Platonic one: the kind of rule that should be considered political. In a pas-

47 Cf. *Pol.* I 1, 1252a8 – 22.

48 Cf. *Pol.* II 2, 1261a15 – 22.

49 Aristotle, *Pol.* I 2, 1252a31 – 34: τὸ μὲν γὰρ δυνάμενον τῇ διανοίᾳ προορᾶν ἄρχον φύσει καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει, τὸ δὲ δυνάμενον [ταῦτα] τῷ σώματι πονεῖν ἀρχόμενον καὶ φύσει δοῦλον· διὸ δεσπότῃ καὶ δούλῳ ταὐτὸ συμφέρει. Translation by Rackham 1944.

50 Aristotle, *Pol.* III 17, 1287b41 – 1288a2: ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων γε φανερὸν ὡς ἐν μὲν τοῖς ὁμοίοις καὶ ἴσοις οὔτε συμφέρον ἐστὶν οὔτε δίκαιον ἕνα κύριον εἶναι πάντων. Translation by Rackham 1944.

sage of book VII, Aristotle criticizes what I consider to be the centre of the Platonic theory. In it, Aristotle establishes a clear difference between the rule of slaves and the rule of free people.[51] As we have seen, Plato refers the best form of government to the rule of mind over the other kinds of soul, i. e. to the relationship of master and slaves. As Aristotle rightly points out, the master communicates with the slave through commands about what is necessary (ἡ ἐπίταξις ἡ περὶ των ἀναγκαίων), and the slave has no share in what is beautiful and good. It is also one way of organisation proper of Barbarians.[52] In his criticism of Plato's *Republic* in chapters 2 to 5 of book II, Aristotle points to the inadequacy of Plato's project as a goal, especially to his interpretation of the social unity and the fact that there is no real participation of all estates in the government of the city.[53] I consider, therefore, that Aristotle's real criticism of Plato is that the political theory of the latter is not for free citizens but for slaves. Aristotle's starting point is completely different. He has a very specific notion of *polis* and of politics, which is opposite to Plato's model of master and slave. For him, the polis is not only a conglomerate of people or a community of interests but also the administrative structure similar to the Greek state organized with the purpose of εὖ ζῆν. Politics is important to achieve happiness, because theoretical activity can be achieved only in the frame of the city and among friends. Therefore, it is important to participate in the government and in the political activity of the *polis*. This becomes clear when we consider Aristotle's criticism of Plato's city of pigs in the *Republic*.[54] There is a *polis* only when there is some instance for administering justice.[55] The administration of justice presupposes not only a judge but also the subjects to whom justice can be administered and those must necessarily be citizens. Political, i. e. real, justice according to Aristotle's conviction can exist only among equal and alike citizens, all other forms are only *per similitudinem* (καθ'ὁμοιότητα).[56] This is an utterly different concept from the Platonic one.

51 Cf. *Pol.* VII 3, 1325a16 – 30.
52 Cf. *Pol.* III 14, 1285b23 – 25.
53 Cf. *Pol.* II 5, 1264a6 – 15.
54 Cf. *Pol.* IV 4, 1291a11 – 24.
55 See Schütrumpf 2003, 67.
56 Cf. *EN* V 6, 1134a24 – 31.

Chloe Balla

3 The debt of Aristotle's collection of *politeiai* to the sophistic tradition

According to Diogenes Laertius, Aristotle's works included 158 *politeiai*, divided to democratic, oligarchic, tyrannic, and aristocratic.[1] We cannot be certain that this classification originated with Aristotle, but it seems reasonable to think so. This is roughly the same classification that we find in *Politics* IV 7, in *Rhetoric* I 8 (a passage that we will consider in more detail), as well as in Plato's account of the degenerate states in the *Republic*.[2] Be that as it may, it seems possible that Aristotle's interest in the study of constitutions was shaped in Plato's Academy,[3] both in terms of a more abstract, theoretical discussion about the types into which particular constitutions could be classified, but also in more empirical terms concerning the way in which these constitutions are implemented in particular city-states, which, in turn, could serve as examples for the student of political philosophy. It is also clear that particular city-states were connected with particular types of constitutions.[4] Interest in the more empirical side of the matter permeates Plato's *Laws*, a dialogue on the constitution of a new colony, which is supposed to take place on Crete among an unnamed Athenian, the Cretan Cleinias and the Spartan Megillus. It may be tempting to think that it was Aristotle who, coming to the Academy, influenced Plato in the direction of exploiting concrete historical examples. But the study of constitutions seems to originate, at least implicitly, in an earlier tradition, whose importance in the formation of Aristotle's interest in the topic, to the best of my knowledge, has not been sufficiently appreciated. The tradition I have in mind is described, if only for the sake of convenience, as sophistic.[5] In what follows, I propose to explain the significance of certain aspects of this tradition with respect to the development of Aristotle's interest in the study of constitutions.

1 Diogenes Laertius V 27. Cf. Hesychius (*Vita Menagiana*) in Düring 1957.

2 We might further raise a question of nomenclature with regard to 'tyranny', a term that both Aristotle and Plato use to refer to the degenerate counterpart of monarchy. The term 'tyranny' is used in a pejorative sense, and this is probably the reason that in the classification of the *Politics* and the *Rhetoric* Aristotle speaks instead about 'monarchy'. Oligarchy, which again both Plato and Aristotle treat as a perversion of aristocracy, is mentioned in *Politics* IV. 7, 1293a35-40, alongside monarchy democracy and aristocracy as part of a current fourfold classification. The currency of this classification is also reflected in the *Rhetoric* (cf. Kennedy, 1991, 75).

3 Cf. Jacoby 1949: 6 n. 51.

4 See, e. g., *Republic* 544c2–3.

5 A broader study of Aristotle's debt to the earlier tradition with regard to the constitutions should also take into account authors like Isocrates (see *Nicocles* 12–26, but also the *Areopagiticus* and the *Panathenaicus* on the *patrios politeia* of ancient Athens) and, of course, Thucydides. Some of this material is discussed in connection to Plato's *Republic* in Menn 2005, a text to which the present study is deeply indebted.

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For the purposes of my argument, I will set aside the question of the definition of the term 'sophist', and hence also that of the demarcation between, on the one hand, individuals so described and, on the other hand, authors who are marked off as philosophers, rhetoricians, or historiographers. I shall adopt the term 'sophistic' to refer to the fifth century milieu that the historiography of philosophy has described as such, and I shall draw attention to three interrelated aspects of this tradition that, as I propose to argue, are relevant and enlightening with respect to Aristotle's project of the collection of the constitutions:

(a) the sophists' interest in accumulation of empirical evidence;
(b) their commitment to the value of such evidence for argumentative practice;
(c) the often aporetic, open-ended character of such argumentative practice, which was related to a striking tolerance toward counterintuitive, challenging and even paradoxical ideas.

I will try to explain how these three aspects of sophistic thinking contribute to the development of early reflection on the constitutions, and how they tie in with Aristotle's project of the συναγωγὴ πολιτειῶν.

Commitment to the value of empirical evidence is a distinguishing mark of sophistic inquiry.[6] The ability to access a large pool of information – possibly drawn on written records that a distinguished public speaker was able to memorize –[7] allowed the skilled speaker to support his own thesis, to produce counterexamples, but also to draw attention to the complexity of a situation. Allusions to this practice can be found in the following the following speech that Plato attributes to Protagoras:

> I know of many things that are disadvantageous to humans, foods and drinks and drugs and many other things, and some that are advantageous; some that are neither to humans but one or the other to horses; some that are advantageous only to cattle; some only to dogs; some that are advantageous to none of these but are so to trees; some that are good for the roots of a tree, but bad for its shoots, such as manure, which is good spread on the roots of any plant but absolutely ruinous if applied to the new stems and branches. Or take olive oil, which is extremely bad for all plants and is the worst enemy of the hair of all animals except humans, for whose hair it is beneficial, as it is for the rest of their bodies. But the good is such a multifaceted and variable thing that, in the case of oil, it is good for the external parts of the human body but very bad for the internal parts, which is why doctors universally forbid their sick patients to use oil in their diets except for the least bit, just enough to dispel a prepared meal's unappetizing aroma...[8]

6 See Wallace 2007.

7 Direct evidence concerning this practice is rather limited. On the recognition of the value of memory and the development of techniques that supported it, see Thomas 1992, ch. 6; on the titles of early works that listed particular cases of a general category, see Kahn 2003.

8 Plato, *Protagoras* 334a3-c6: οὐδαμῶς, ἔφη· ἀλλ' ἔγωγε πολλὰ οἶδ' ἃ ἀνθρώποις μὲν ἀνωφελῆ ἐστι, καὶ σιτία καὶ ποτὰ καὶ φάρμακα καὶ ἄλλα μυρία, τὰ δέ γε ὠφέλιμα· τὰ δὲ ἀνθρώποις μὲν οὐδέτερα, ἵπποις δέ· τὰ δὲ βουσὶν μόνον, τὰ δὲ κυσίν· τὰ δέ γε τούτων μὲν οὐδενί, δένδροις δέ· τὰ δὲ τοῦ δένδρου ταῖς μὲν ῥίζαις ἀγαθά, ταῖς δὲ βλάσταις πονηρά, οἷον καὶ ἡ κόπρος πάντων. τῶν φυτῶν ταῖς μὲν

The opening phrase of Protagoras' statement (ἀλλ᾽ ἔγωγε πολλὰ οἶδα) points to the authority of the speaker, who is able to produce an impressive list of cases in support of his argument. Protagoras' argument addresses Socrates, who seems committed to the idea that certain things can be advantageous in an unconditional sense. Protagoras' rich vocabulary combined with the wealth of information that he is able to produce is a further sign of his wisdom, but also of his ability to challenge his interlocutor. The student of Plato can imagine how this kind of speech could allow someone like Protagoras to derail the typically Socratic attempt to reach a definition of a term like 'good' or 'beneficial';[9] but also, and conversely, to appreciate Plato's interest in turning that technique into a foil for his own quest for knowledge of things that bear a certain predicate in an unconditional way.

Much can be said about the effect Plato's polemic had on the reception of early rhetorical practice, or about how lack of evidence concerning early rhetorical textbooks prevents us from appreciating the contribution of early practitioners. Setting aside these broader questions, here I just wish to establish a connection between the implementation of concrete cases drawn from experience, possibly organized systematically in written lists, and the interest in argumentative practice that is a salient characteristic of sophistic thought. This enables us to see how (a) the sophists' interest in accumulation of empirical evidence ties in to (b) their commitment to the value of such evidence for argumentative practice.

The way that individual cases, concrete examples possibly organized in the form of lists, could be used by an orator both as examples but also as counterexamples that allow him respectively to corroborate or to refute a certain thesis brings us to the second feature of the sophistic tradition. We know that Protagoras maintained the thesis that it was always possible to contradict whatever another says.[10] To use Nick Denyer's eloquent statement of this practice: "Whatever you assert, I can always deny, with equal correctness; but my denial can never be so correct as to rule out your assertion".[11] The spirited tone of such practice explains the expression Καταβάλλοντες, knock-down arguments, which appears as a variant title to Protago-

ρίζαις ἀγαθὸν παραβαλλομένη, εἰ δ᾽ ἐθέλοις ἐπὶ τοὺς πτόρθους καὶ τοὺς νέους κλῶνας ἐπιβάλλειν, πάντα ἀπόλλυσιν· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ἔλαιον τοῖς μὲν φυτοῖς ἅπασίν ἐστιν πάγκακον καὶ ταῖς θριξὶν πολεμιώτατον ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων πλὴν ταῖς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ταῖς δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρωγὸν καὶ τῷ ἄλλῳ σώματι. οὕτω δὲ ποικίλον τί ἐστιν τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ παντοδαπόν, ὥστε καὶ ἐνταῦθα τοῖς μὲν ἔξωθεν τοῦ σώματος ἀγαθόν ἐστιν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, τοῖς δ᾽ ἐντὸς ταὐτὸν τοῦτο κάκιστον· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οἱ ἰατροὶ πάντες ἀπαγορεύουσιν τοῖς ἀσθενοῦσιν μὴ χρῆσθαι ἐλαίῳ ἀλλ᾽ ἢ ὅτι σμικροτάτῳ ἐν τούτοις οἷς μέλλει ἔδεσθαι, ὅσον μόνον τὴν δυσχέρειαν κατασβέσαι τὴν ἐπὶ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι ταῖς διὰ τῶν ῥινῶν γιγνομένην ἐν τοῖς σιτίοις τε καὶ ὄψοις. Translation by Lombardo and Bell 1992.

9 Derail, rather than refute: Plato's presentation of the sophists tends to focus on the debunking spirit of their argumentation. On the importance of the invocation of *many* different examples in the particular context of the *Protagoras*, in connection to a broader rhetorical tradition, see also Denyer 2008, *ad loc.*

10 See DK 80 A19 – 20, B6a.

11 Denyer 2008: 2.

ras' *Ἀντιλογίαι*, reasonings pro and con. It has been argued that the title *Περὶ πάλης*, *On wrestling* also referred to the training not in physical but rather in linguistic competition.[12] The range of techniques that could be described as 'antilogical' could vary. We can find important evidence for the currency of such techniques in Antiphon, an author who seems to have cultivated 'antilogical' argumentation in a number of different contexts, ranging from the practice of forensic oratory to the epideictic set-pieces known as the *Tetralogies* (providing material for both prosecution and defence in an imaginary rhetorical situation), but also, at least under one interpretation, to the 'sophistic' treatise *On Truth*, a work presented in the form of a juxtaposition of two opposed spheres, νόμος and φύσις respectively.[13] By the same token, the treatise *Double Arguments*, can be seen as an important pool of particular cases, where statements can switch their truth value depending on the framework in which they are examined. As we shall presently see, likewise, with regard to the study of the constitutions, concrete examples could train a prospective public speaker to argue persuasively in front of different audiences, allowing him to appreciate how what is considered expedient or appropriate within one system or regime may be considered harmful or unacceptable within another. This aspect of sophistic training accounts for what I claim to be the third way in which this tradition affects Aristotle's project of the collection of the constitutions: the often aporetic, open-ended character of argumentative practice, which was related to a striking tolerance toward counterintuitive, challenging and even paradoxical ideas.

One question that arises is whether the cultivation of such practice further implied that its practitioners had no commitment to a certain positive view about the good; or whether, in a juxtaposition between the 'Stronger' and the 'Weaker' argument, the terms 'Stronger' and 'Weaker' should be taken as merely conventional descriptions of what people *believe* to be 'Stronger', in the sense of sound, arguments often because they are not able to scrutinize and challenge traditional values in the way Sophists do. An important piece of evidence in this regard comes from the *Clouds*, where Aristophanes presents Socrates as a teacher of argumentation. The prospect of exploiting this skill in the popular law courts fosters Strepsiades' hope that, after the relevant training, his son Pheidippides will be able to win a case in court against his debtors. To what extent can we use the comic episode that Aristophanes presents in the *Clouds* as evidence not just for a widespread practice, but also for a morality that characterized the group of professional teachers described as 'the Sophists'? Setting aside the question of Aristophanes' choice of Socrates as a character who represents the 'new learning', the image of the teacher who has no ambi-

12 For a detailed account of the evidence, see Lee 2005: 24–29.

13 Cf. Gagarin 2002. The implementation of this antithetical scheme in argumentative practice is stressed in Plato's *Gorgias*, where Callicles accuses Socrates for acting as a popular orator in the sense of a demagogue (*δημηγόρος*), who is practicing his skill in shifting the tables of the realms of νόμος and φύσις respectively, in any way that might suit his refutation (482c-e). On this point, see further Balla 2018.

tion to reach any positive, 'objective' statement becomes a distinguishing mark of the sophist in Plato: we can think of the presentation of Gorgias, in the dialogue that bears his name, but also of the account of the practitioners of *antilogike* in the *Phaedo* (90c) as people who draw satisfaction from their ability to show that there is nothing stable, either in language or in reality. The theme of flux is further exploited in the *Theaetetus*, where Plato presents the purportedly Protagorean view that "in matters that concern the city", such as questions of "what may or may not be fittingly done, of just and unjust, of pious and impious",

> whatever view a city takes on these matters and establishes as its law or convention, is truth and fact for that city. In such matters neither any individual nor any city can claim superior wisdom.[14]

But Plato further attributes to Protagoras an interest in reconciling the above claim with a commitment to the value of experts such as doctors or gardeners who can restore health to the organism (of humans or plants respectively), and, by the same token, of "wise and efficient politicians", who are able to restore health to the body of citizens by "making wholesome things seem just to a city instead of pernicious ones".[15] To proceed with the respective treatment, the doctor, the gardener, but also the politician, must accumulate empirical evidence both for the pathological state of the subject under consideration and for the 'normal' condition to which each of them needs to be restored.[16]

Unlike the politician, the doctor or the gardener can postulate a certain condition of objective 'health', to which the expert aims. From the point of view of Plato's *Republic* or the *Politicus* the relevant restoration would be the task of the philosopher or the royal man, who would offer sound judgements about the best state. Sophists like Protagoras, however, were committed to the value of deliberation among the members of a community. At least this is the impression we get, not only from the evidence in the *Theaetetus* cited above, but also from the *Protagoras*, where Protagoras seems to agree with Socrates that in a democracy everyone can advise the assembly in matters of the state (*Protagoras* 319b-d).

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14 Plato, *Theaetetus* 172a1–5: οὐκοῦν καὶ περὶ πολιτικῶν, καλὰ μὲν καὶ αἰσχρὰ καὶ δίκαια καὶ ἄδικα καὶ ὅσια καὶ μή, οἷα ἂν ἑκάστη πόλις οἰηθεῖσα θῆται νόμιμα αὐτῇ, ταῦτα καὶ εἶναι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἑκάστῃ, καὶ ἐν τούτοις μὲν οὐδὲν σοφώτερον οὔτε ἰδιώτην ἰδιώτου οὔτε πόλιν πόλεως εἶναι. Translation by Levett and Burnyeat 1992.

15 Plato, *Theaetetus* 167c2–4: τοὺς δέ γε σοφούς τε καὶ ἀγαθοὺς ῥήτορας ταῖς πόλεσι τὰ χρηστὰ ἀντὶ τῶν πονηρῶν δίκαια δοκεῖν εἶναι ποιεῖν.

16 An interesting problem that undermines the analogy between the doctor or the gardener on the one hand and the politician on the other, is that, unlike the former, where the healthy state of a natural organism serves as a guide for the expert, there seems to be no such clear equivalent in the case of a politician. Of course this problem is not raised by Protagoras, who offers the analogy as a justification of his own activity.

But if anyone in a democracy can play the role of the physician or the gardener, what is the need for an expert rhetorician? One way to solve this problem is by suggesting that the expert rhetorician is in fact a 'facilitator', someone who is able to direct his audience, on the basis of the views *they* hold, to implement policies that will be appropriate given their views. So one should take into account how things *seem to be* to a certain population, in order to communicate with that population, in a way that will allow him to replace ill-founded beliefs; while in the case of plants or human beings, a gardener or a doctor respectively will take into account the peculiarities of the organism under consideration.

This is not a trivial task. It involves the careful observation of the different ways in which different organisms function – which is presupposed in the analogy of the *Theaetetus*. Such careful observation may have been a characteristic of Protagoras' thought, and, as I have argued above, may have been valued by a broader intellectual tradition that we describe as sophistic. The *Theaetetus* focuses on pathological cases, possibly because those would fit the particular analogy (restoration of healthy beliefs within a population, thanks to the technique and wisdom of an expert like Protagoras himself). In a similar vein (though now within the framework of the different ways in which different organisms *naturally* function), we find in the *Protagoras* some very interesting evidence of the sophistication with which the sophist was able to account for bio-diversity, in particular with regard to the mechanisms that allowed the various kinds of animals to secure their survival and propagation:

> To some [Epimetheus] assigned strength without quickness; the weaker ones he made quick. Some he armed; others he left unarmed but devised for them some other means for preserving themselves. He compensated for small size by issuing wings for flight or an underground habitat. Size was itself a safeguard for those he made large. And so on down the line, balancing his distribution, making adjustments, and taking precautions against the possible extinction of any of the races.[17]

The mythical form in which the text is cast should not prevent us from appreciating the wealth of scientific information it contains, in terms both of the amount of empirical evidence and of the analytical scheme (including some kind of theory of ecological equilibrium[18]) that lies behind it. One is tempted to think of the currency of a similar pool of information concerning the various constitutions which would enable a speaker to appreciate the different mechanisms that preserve each type but also to understand the dynamics between the various city-states; but also of how an orator could benefit from information about the different values espoused by different cities

17 *Protagoras* 320d8 – 321a2: νέμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἰσχὺν ἄνευ τάχους προσῆπτεν, τοὺς δ' ἀσθενεστέρους τάχει ἐκόσμει· τοὺς δὲ ὥπλιζε, τοῖς δ' ἄοπλον διδοὺς φύσιν ἄλλην τιν' αὐτοῖς ἐμηχανᾶτο δύναμιν εἰς σωτηρίαν. ἃ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν σμικρότητι ἤμπισχεν, πτηνὸν φυγὴν ἢ κατάγειον οἴκησιν ἔνεμεν· ἃ δὲ ηὔξε μεγέθει, τῷδε αὐτὰ αὐτὰ ἔσῳζεν· καὶ τἆλλα οὕτως ἐπανισῶν ἔνεμεν. ταῦτα δὲ ἐμηχανᾶτο εὐλάβειαν ἔχων μή τι γένος ἀϊστωθείη. Translation by Lombardo and Bell 1992.

18 For emphasis on this aspect of the myth, see Beresford 2013; cf. Bonazzi 2010: 87 – 90.

or constitutions. Aristotle's familiarity with, but also endorsement of, this practice is clear in the following passage from his *Rhetoric:*

> The most important and effective qualification for success in persuading audiences and speaking well on public affairs is to understand all the constitutions and to discriminate their respective customs, institutions, and interests. For all men are persuaded by considerations of their interest, and their interest lies in the maintenance of the established order. Further, it rests with the sovereign body to give sovereign decisions, and this varies with each constitution; there are as many different sovereign bodies as there are different constitutions. The constitutions are four – democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy. The sovereignty to judge and decide always rests, therefore, with either a part or the whole of one or other of these governing powers. [...] We must also notice the ends which the various forms of government pursue, since people choose such actions as will lead to the realization of their ends. The end of democracy is freedom; of oligarchy, wealth; of aristocracy, the maintenance of education and national institutions; of tyranny, the protection of the tyrant. It is clear, then, that we must distinguish those particular customs, institutions, and interests which tend to realize the end of each constitution, since men choose their means with reference to their ends. But rhetorical persuasion is effected not only by demonstrative but also by ethical argument; it helps a speaker to convince us, if we believe that he has certain qualities himself, namely, goodness, or goodwill toward us, or both together. Similarly, we should know the character of each form of government, for the special character of each is bound to provide us with our most effective means of persuasion in dealing with it. We shall learn the qualities of governments in the same way as we learn the qualities of individuals, since they are revealed in their acts of choice; and these are determined by the end that inspires them.[19]

It is quite likely that Aristotle's collection of constitutions served –though, as we shall presently see, was not confined to – that kind of practical purpose. What I

19 Aristotle, *Rhet*. I 8, 1365b21–1366a16: μέγιστον δὲ καὶ κυριώτατον ἁπάντων πρὸς τὸ δύνασθαι πείθειν καὶ καλῶς συμβουλεύειν <τὸ> τὰς πολιτείας ἁπάσας λαβεῖν καὶ τὰ ἑκάστης ἤθη καὶ νόμιμα καὶ συμφέροντα διελεῖν. πείθονται γὰρ ἅπαντες τῷ συμφέροντι, συμφέρει δὲ τὸ σῴζον τὴν πολιτείαν. ἔτι δὲ κυρία μέν ἐστιν ἡ τοῦ κυρίου ἀπόφανσις, τὰ δὲ κύρια διῄρηται κατὰ τὰς πολιτείας· ὅσαι γὰρ αἱ πολιτεῖαι, τοσαῦτα καὶ τὰ κύριά ἐστιν. εἰσὶν δὲ πολιτεῖαι τέτταρες, δημοκρατία, ὀλιγαρχία, ἀριστοκρατία, μοναρχία, ὥστε τὸ μὲν κύριον καὶ τὸ κρῖνον τούτων τι ἂν εἴη μόριον ἢ ὅλον τούτων. ἔστιν δὲ δημοκρατία μὲν πολιτεία ἐν ᾗ κλήρῳ διανέμονται τὰς ἀρχάς, ὀλιγαρχία δὲ ἐν ᾗ οἱ ἀπὸ τιμημάτων, ἀριστοκρατία δὲ ἐν ᾗ κατὰ τὴν παιδείαν· παιδείαν δὲ λέγω τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου κειμένην. οἱ γὰρ ἐμμεμενηκότες ἐν τοῖς νομίμοις ἐν τῇ ἀριστοκρατίᾳ ἄρχουσιν. ἀνάγκη δὲ τούτους φαίνεσθαι ἀρίστους, ὅθεν καὶ τοὔνομα εἴληφεν τοῦτο. μοναρχία δ' ἐστὶν κατὰ τοὔνομα ἐν ᾗ εἷς ἁπάντων κύριός ἐστιν· τούτων δὲ ἡ μὲν κατὰ τάξιν τινὰ βασιλεία, ἡ δ' ἀόριστος τυραννίς. τὸ δὴ τέλος ἑκάστης πολιτείας οὐ δεῖ λανθάνειν· αἱροῦνται γὰρ τὰ πρὸς τὸ τέλος. ἔστι δὲ δημοκρατίας μὲν τέλος ἐλευθερία, ὀλιγαρχίας δὲ πλοῦτος, ἀριστοκρατίας δὲ τὰ περὶ παιδείαν καὶ τὰ νόμιμα, τυραννίδος δὲ φυλακή. δῆλον οὖν ὅτι τὰ πρὸς τὸ τέλος ἑκάστης ἤθη καὶ νόμιμα καὶ συμφέροντα διαιρετέον, εἴπερ αἱροῦνται πρὸς τοῦτο ἐπαναφέροντες. ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐ μόνον αἱ πίστεις γίνονται δι' ἀποδεικτικοῦ λόγου, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἠθικοῦ (τῷ γὰρ ποιόν τινα φαίνεσθαι τὸν λέγοντα πιστεύομεν, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἂν ἀγαθὸς φαίνηται ἢ εὔνους ἢ ἄμφω), δέοι ἂν τὰ ἤθη τῶν πολιτειῶν ἑκάστης ἔχειν ἡμᾶς· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἑκάστης ἦθος πιθανώτατον ἀνάγκη πρὸς ἑκάστην εἶναι. ταῦτα δὲ ληφθήσεται διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἤθη φανερὰ κατὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις ἀναφέρεται πρὸς τὸ τέλος. Translation by Rhys Roberts in Barnes 1984, modified. I use the term 'constitution' to translate πολιτεία and the term 'sovereign' to translate κύριον.

would like to suggest is that the seeds of this project can be traced in 5th century sophistic practices. We have already considered the idea that Aristotle's collection of the constitutions was part of a single implicit agenda that underlines Plato's *Laws*. But it is instructive to trace a further continuity between this agenda – at least with regard to the study of concrete cases – and earlier sophistic authors. Drawing on evidence from Diogenes Laertius, some scholars have suggested that Protagoras' work *Περί πολιτείας* formed part of his *Ἀντιλογίαι*, a text that presumably presented arguments for and against particular constitutions.[20] An important difference in scope separates Aristotle's collection and the possibly more isolated '*politeia* case studies' that we can trace in the sophistic tradition. But the spirit of studying particular cases is common.

An important piece of evidence which supports the view that the sophists developed an interest in the study of the constitutions is the claim that Plato attributes to Thrasymachus in the first book of the *Republic:*

> Every ruling power makes laws for its own good. A democracy makes democratic laws, a tyranny tyrannical laws, and so on. In making these laws, they make it clear that what is good for them, the rulers, is what is just for their subjects. If anyone disobeys, they punish him for breaking the law and acting unjustly. That's what I mean, my friend, when I say that in all cities the same thing is just, namely what is good for the ruling authority. This, I take it, is where the power lies, and the result is, for anyone who looks at it in the right way, that the same thing is just everywhere – what is good for the stronger.[21]

We cannot be certain that such an argument was in fact developed by the historical Thrasymachus,[22] though, in a way that has been rather overlooked, it clearly fits the spirit of the sophistic practice we have considered so far. It is quite possible that Plato adjusted this practice to the needs of his own composition. Thrasymachus was a contemporary of Socrates whose works did not survive; but the few extant fragments that have come down to us do not support the idea that the sophist had developed the argument Plato attributes to him in any serious, positive way. On the contrary, on the basis of the independent evidence that has survived, he appears to have been an early rhetorical stylist, and a speech-writer.

Another important piece of evidence regarding the development of an early interest in the comparative study of the constitutions is Herodotus' 'constitutional de-

20 Diogenes Laertius IX 55; cf. Menn 2005: 13.

21 Plato, *Republic* I, 338e1–339a4: τίθεται δέ γε τοὺς νόμους ἑκάστη ἡ ἀρχὴ πρὸς τὸ αὑτῇ συμφέρον, δημοκρατία μὲν δημοκρατικούς, τυραννὶς δὲ τυραννικούς, καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι οὕτως· θέμεναι δὲ ἀπέφηναν τοῦτο δίκαιον τοῖς ἀρχομένοις εἶναι, τὸ σφίσι συμφέρον, καὶ τὸν τούτου ἐκβαίνοντα κολάζουσιν ὡς παρανομοῦντά τε καὶ ἀδικοῦντα. τοῦτ' οὖν ἐστιν, ὦ βέλτιστε, ὃ λέγω ἐν ἁπάσαις ταῖς πόλεσιν ταὐτὸν εἶναι δίκαιον, τὸ τῆς καθεστηκυίας ἀρχῆς συμφέρον· αὕτη δέ που κρατεῖ, ὥστε συμβαίνει τῷ ὀρθῶς λογιζομένῳ πανταχοῦ εἶναι τὸ αὐτὸ δίκαιον, τὸ τοῦ κρείττονος συμφέρον. Translation by Griffith 2000.

22 Cf. Menn 2005: 15–17.

bate' (III, 80 – 82). Herodotus was a contemporary of Protagoras, whose role in the development of sophistic thinking has not always been sufficiently appreciated.[23] The debate takes place among three Persian 'conspirators', who have overthrown the previous regime and are introducing the views about the constitution that they should establish. A striking feature of the discussion, given the theoretical importance of the debate, is the absence of an introduction that would explain its content in more abstract terms. To introduce the classification, Herodotus remarks:

> the rebels against the Magi held a council on the whole state of affairs, at which sentiments were uttered which to some Greeks seem incredible, but there is no doubt that they were spoken.[24]

There is no mention of an abstract term such as πολιτεία, and the only constitutions that are named are μουναρχία and ὀλιγαρχία (the word δημοκρατία is not used; though there is explicit reference to ἰσονομία and to the use of lot). A further important characteristic of Herodotus' text is the absence of any remark about the author's own preference regarding the constitution in the particular context. On the other hand, we can think of how access to, and comparison between, the opposed views that Herodotus presented allowed his audience to engage in the topic under consideration in a reflective way in a spirit that ties in with the practice of *antilogiai* discussed above.

So far I have tried to sketch the broader 'sophistic' background within which Aristotle's interest in the study of particular πολιτείαι – in the sense of a collection of case studies – was conceived. There is no doubt that – despite the usefulness of this 'data-base' for the orator – Aristotle's project was developed alongside his commitment to the idea of the best constitution. One might think that such commitment is a mark of Aristotle's debt to his own teacher Plato: moving away from 'sophistic relativism' toward the 'philosophical' vision of the best πολιτεία or regime may be thought as a mark of a tradition that was initiated by Plato. The *locus classicus* of this move is of course Plato's *Πολιτεία*, whose translation in Modern languages often prevents us from noticing the connection of this text to a broader discussion – and possibly also a genre – on the question of the constitutions.[25] One way of reading this dialogue is as a juxtaposition of two radically different attitudes toward not only justice but also a theory of πολιτεία or constitution. Thrasymachus' thesis that 'might makes right' is supposed to be supported by the empirical observation that each different regime 'makes laws for its own good'. The latter view, which reflects some of the sophistic ideas we considered above, gives rise to Glaucon's challenge in the beginning of book II: does justice pay? This question, in turn, triggers Socrates' account

23 Herodotus III 80 – 82. For an important contribution in this direction, see Thomas 2000; Raaflaub 2002.

24 Herodotus III 80,1: ἐβουλεύοντο οἱ ἐπαναστάντες τοῖσι μάγοισι περὶ τῶν πάντων πρηγμάτων, καὶ ἐλέχθησαν λόγοι ἄπιστοι μὲν ἐνίοισι Ἑλλήνων, ἐλέχθησαν δ᾽ ὦν. Translation by Godley 1921.

25 See Menn 2005; Notomi, unpublished paper.

of the ideal regime. Of particular importance for our present discussion is the presentation of timocracy, oligarchy, tyranny and democracy *not just* as degenerate states, but as states that form part of a continuous succession of gradual decay, from the best regime to the worst. The presentation of different constitutions in the context of the *Republic* as a whole can be seen as an ultimate answer to Thrasymachus' challenge: far from being legitimate options for running one's state, these different 'frameworks' within which the term justice presumably acquired a different meaning, since it could be applied to radically different states of affairs (what is considered 'just' in a democracy can be considered 'unjust' in a tyranny and *vice versa*), are treated as deformations of the best regime. It is instructive to describe this model of degeneration to the way in which Timaeus presents various animal species as different states of devolution from the highest form of incarnated life, that is, the rational human being. For both the account of the constitutions and that of the different animal species share a similar agenda, at the center of which lies the idea of a hierarchy and an argument in favor of the superiority of an ideal πολιτεία and human rationality respectively.

Plato's agenda in the *Republic* can be seen as an important springboard that allows us to reflect on the different motives that lie behind the interest in the study of constitutions in different yet almost contemporary traditions. When we compare Plato's approach to that of the sophistic authors, we might think that the distinction lies on the fact that the latter, unlike Plato, had no interest to discuss the best regime, or even that there is no point in making such a judgement since all judgements are open to refutation. But, as I have already suggested, this impression calls for some qualification. On the one hand, there is no evidence that the kind of relativism Plato attributes to Protagoras in the *Theaetetus* reflects a doctrine that was fully-fledged by the historical Protagoras, let alone one that was endorsed by other members of the sophistic movement. As for the most provocative case of Thrasymachus, it seems very likely that the thesis Plato attributes to him in the *Republic* is not one that he himself had developed but rather one that could fit the author's purposes of juxtaposing sophistic 'shallowness' to Socratic/Platonic philosophical engagement. Moreover, setting aside the broader theoretical question of even being able to endorse a judgement about the best state of affairs that will not be open to refutation, to claim that the sophists had no interest in the question of the best regime is probably an exaggeration: of course being familiar with the characteristics of different systems allowed the public speaker to communicate his ideas more effectively; but that did not rule out that he also favored some type of constitution over another. What differentiates Plato's account of the ideal constitution is rather his own commitment to the value of describing such a blueprint, stressing the fact that it is only a blueprint in heaven, at the same time suggesting that such blueprints are important as tools for reflection.

The idea of a blueprint of a state is also present in Thucydides' Funeral Oration. He, however, picks the idea of a *particular*, albeit idealized, state, that is the state of Athenian Democracy in the age of Pericles, showing, at the same time how that ideal

was doomed to fail. Interest in concrete cases is likewise traced in works of members of certain members of the Socratic circle, 'Laconizers' fascinated by the Spartan constitution which they set out to present.[26] Here again, and regardless of the different type of constitution that is being described, the assumption seems to be that the study of a particular, existing state can form the basis of reflection. For the most part, accounts of particular states are intended as models for emulation. One single and intriguing exception is pseudo-Xenophon's *Constitution of the Athenians*, a text which describes the Athenian democracy in a negative light. It is conceivable that the author intended the particular piece as part of an 'antilogy', where the case of Athens would be contrasted to a positive counterexample.[27]

Before I proceed to the case of Aristotle, let me add a brief methodological remark. My intention here is to highlight the debt of Aristotle's *politeiai* project of the collection to the earlier sophistic tradition. One of the characteristics of that tradition that I consider crucial for my argument is its interest in accumulation of empirical evidence. This is a characteristic that this tradition shares with early natural science as well as with historiography. We have already traced a connection between sophistic thought and Herodotus' constitutional debate; drawing on the zoological observations in the myth of Prometheus, we can also think of Protagoras' debt to Atomist ideas about natural science; last but not least, we can think of authors like Xenophon and Critias, who can be seen as sharing the identity of the 'Socratic' tradition, but also of Thucydides, as authors who develop an interest in constitutional theory, in ways that shed some light on the sophistic tradition. One question that I have tried to avoid throughout is to define the very category 'sophistic tradition', using the term to describe the authors that are traditionally included in what, as more and more scholars point out, may well be a rather artificially constructed group. And yet, with all the difficulties that the application of this term involves, it is important to try to restore the value of this tradition and pay justice to its positive input in the history of thought. Due to the scarcity of evidence concerning the ideas of the persons that are labelled as sophists, such reconstruction is not an easy task, and it may occasionally involve the study of material that does not strictly speaking fall within the category of 'sophistic' thought, but is taken to reflect the broader intellectual framework within which sophistic ideas were developed.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, let us agree that aspiring to a vision of the best regime was ultimately compatible with what I have previously described as sophistic practice. If this is the case, then Plato's departure from the sophistic model does not so much concern the attitude toward establishing what is the best consti-

26 The best sample of such writing is Xenophon's *Spartan Constitution*, on which see further Lipka 2002. For a lucid presentation of the relevant 'genre' and its philosophical importance see Menn 2005.

27 I would like to thank Michael Gagarin for drawing this point to my attention.

tution but rather his typical commitment to the value of a blueprint.[28] Conversely, the sophists' commitment to concrete, empirical evidence coupled with the idea that human reason – as opposed to divine intervention – sufficed for its study often marked their attitude toward knowledge. At this point it may be instructive to contrast (a) Plato's vision in the *Republic* of a philosopher-king, whose skill in governing the state rests in mathematical training and involves a commitment to the idea of the best regime, to (b) more practically oriented sophistic education which takes into account concrete cases of government and teaches the student to reflect on, and implement, information gained from the study of particular examples.

Bearing these remarks on Aristotle's intellectual background in mind, let us finally turn to a brief passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* which is our only written piece of evidence concerning the author's understanding of the collection of *politeiai*. This passage occurs at the very end of the treatise, in the chapters that are considered as transitional to the *Politics*. What triggers the discussion is the remark that in dealing with practical projects one should not only pursue the relevant study in a theoretical way but further explore them in a way that involves action (X 9 1179b1–3). To the extent that there is an art of legislation, the next task is to identify the kind of training one needs in order to master it. Here Aristotle puts his finger on a peculiarity that distinguishes training in politics from training in any other subject matter:

> For in the others [sc. other subject matters], those who pass on the relevant capacities and those who practice them are plainly the same individuals, as with doctors and painters; but when it comes to things political it's the sophists who profess to teach, but no sophist is a practitioner – rather, the practitioners are rather the politicians, who would seem to do what they do by some means of natural ability and experience rather than by means of thought...[29]

Here Aristotle uses the term 'sophist' to describe those who made a career as professional teachers, stressing their lack of practical experience, and contrasting them to actual statesmen who have no interest to develop any account about political action. According to Aristotle, the problem with the former is that they are unable to convey their skills to others; whereas the problem with the latter is that they are simply unable to teach what they profess to do. Aristotle adds a very specific point of criticism: he attributes to the sophists the claim that legislation is an easy task, which involves no more than the ability to collect, and presumably to imitate, existing laws that are

28 It is also possible to use as a point of contrast the idea that Plato, unlike Thrasymachus, thinks of *politeia* properly speaking as an order that aims not at the interest of the stronger but rather at that of the whole (this idea is discussed extensively by Menn 2005). Although this is clearly an aspect of the distinction that Plato wishes to highlight, one can be sceptical about whether the view attributed to Thrasymachus was in fact one explicitly or broadly shared by the sophists.

29 *EN* X 9, 1180b33–1181a4: ἐν μὲν γὰρ ταῖς ἄλλαις οἱ αὐτοὶ φαίνονται τάς τε δυνάμεις παραδιδόντες καὶ ἐνεργοῦντες ἀπ' αὐτῶν, οἷον ἰατροὶ γραφεῖς· τὰ δὲ πολιτικὰ ἐπαγγέλλονται μὲν διδάσκειν οἱ σοφισταί, πράττει δ' αὐτῶν οὐδείς, ἀλλ' οἱ πολιτευόμενοι, οἳ δόξαιεν ἂν δυνάμει τινὶ τοῦτο πράττειν καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ μᾶλλον ἢ διανοίᾳ. Translation by Rowe in Rowe and Broadie 2002.

considered good. This criticism is what finally leads Aristotle to make some methodological comments regarding the use of 'case studies', like the ones that form his collection.

It has been suggested that Aristotle's criticism at this point is addressed to Isocrates, who indeed had argued that the task of the legislator is easier than that of the orator, because all he needs to do is to collect the best among the laws enacted by others.[30] This suggestion is very plausible: the scope of the term 'sophist' in Aristotle's time was much broader than what we assume it to be when we use the term to refer to fifth century professional teachers. Moreover, it is reasonable that whatever rivalry Aristotle might have developed toward individuals who claimed to train prospective statesmen would not be directed against any of his predecessors but rather against his contemporaries.

Aristotle's criticism still allows us to draw a connection to the broader, and earlier in its origin, sophistic tendency of creating records of information concerning particular legislative practices and constitutions (with which Isocrates was clearly familiar). Evidence for this tendency is provided by Plato, who mocks the accumulation of knowledge that characterized sophists like Hippias who is presented as an expert in the art of memory (*Lesser Hippias* 368d; cf. *Greater Hippias* 285d-286a). Memorization was gradually replaced by written records, which in turn gave rise to a 'fashion' of collecting and studying books. Xenophon describes a discussion in which Socrates challenges Euthydemus, for collecting important written works, presumably without being able to reflect on them in a critical way (*Memorabilia* IV 2,10). A similar type of intellectual is depicted by Plato in the *Phaedrus*, a dialogue which culminates in the celebrated criticism of writing. In this dialogue Plato also develops a criticism against those who collect and study techniques without being able to judge when these would also be appropriate (268a-269b). This criticism ties in with the well-known passage of the *Sophistical Refutations* where Aristotle compares teachers of eristic to someone who professes to relieve foot pain but instead of properly teaching the art of shoe-making presents his prospective student with a selection of various kinds of shoes (184a10-b4). Drawing on such evidence we can see how both Plato and Aristotle cultivate – and thereby downplay – a picture of the sophist as someone who accumulates knowledge without being able to provide his students with –or even possessing for himself– some higher principles that would allow him to evaluate it. And this is why the idea that the art of legislation can be reduced to the mere collection of existing good laws is preposterous, since the selection of the best among them would require acumen (σύνεσις) and a power of discrimination (κρῖναι), that presumably can only be cultivated through a relevant art.

The biased account of sophistical education that I have tried to reconstruct must be seen as a foil against which Aristotle presents his own methodological agenda concerning the use of the collection of the constitutions. For Aristotle this collection

30 Isocrates, *Antidosis* § 83. This reading has been proposed by Immisch 1935.

is a tool that serves a broader agenda, that enables the student to know what preserves and destroys city-states, and what are the reasons for which some are finely governed and some are not (1181b 18 – 22).[31] So the study involves an understanding of the 'mechanics' of the different constitutions. And that explains why, to judge from our only extended extant example, that is, the *Constitution of the Athenians*, Aristotle presented the workings of democracy as an insider, without taking into consideration the kind of negative judgment about democracy that he develops in the *Politics*.[32] The student of the collection should be able to understand the mechanisms and the values that allowed each constitution to flourish. Aristotle clearly regarded this agenda as pioneering: in thinking of his predecessors, he pointed to their tendency to identify exemplary yet existing cases of legislation as a means of reaching a model to emulate. As I have already suggested, the situation as he describes it is similar to the practice he attributes to teachers of eristic, which consists in providing the student with models to imitate. The fact that he does not further take into account the usefulness of *negative* models in sophistic rhetorical practice – of which, as we have seen, at best, pseudo-Xenophon's *Constitution of the Athenians* would be our mere extant example – may be a sign of the limited currency of this practice among the sophists or of Aristotle's justified lack of interest in it in the context of the training of a prospective legislator.

So even if Aristotle in principle acknowledged the usefulness of negative models for rhetorical practice (as he obviously does in the passage of the *Rhetoric* that we considered above) he would find it irrelevant to the training of the legislator, which is his focus in the last chapters of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. And this, I think, is why his emphasis there is in the way that the institutions of particular states are isolated as models for emulation (for the purposes of the present discussion I omit his methodological criticism against this practice). Compared to that 'sophistic' approach, Aristotle's project is a presumably comprehensive collection of case studies, the earliest 'data-base' that, along the lines of a criticism against writing that Aristotle shares with Plato, just as any written record, can be useful only to those who are already able to reflect on its contents. To make the last point clear Aristotle draws on a well-known medical analogy:[33] just as no one can become a doctor by merely relying on written records that contain medical case studies, even (as Aristotle adds) if they include particular information about the appropriate treatments; so

31 See Wallace 2015: 16 – 17.

32 A similar principle can be traced in pseudo-Xenophon's *Constitution of the Athenians*.

33 Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 268a-b. A striking difference between Plato and Aristotle concerns the use of the term ἐμπειρία: Plato uses this term to describe the uncritical accumulation of information; by contrast, in subscribing to Plato's criticism of uncritical accumulation of information Aristotle, who appreciates the role of ἐμπειρία in knowledge, avoids the use of the term εμπειρία. See further Balla 2008.

also no one can become a legislator by merely relying on written records about legislative practices that were successfully endorsed by other city-states.[34]

But what about the more positive elements of the sophistic legacy, which, as I have tried to show in the first part of this paper, involved an implicit contribution to theoretical reflection on the constitutions? To answer this question it will be helpful to draw a distinction between (a) an account that presents the sophists primarily as teachers of persuasion, with little if any interest in the content of argumentation; and (b) an account that sees the sophists as a 'movement' that contributes to the more general turn to and appreciation of empirical knowledge, that forms the basis of human reason. I have explained how the latter account is presupposed by, and serves, the practical argumentative skills that the sophists professed to teach. Emphasis on the practical orientation of sophistic education coupled with historiographical bias often prevents us from realizing that the sophists' contribution was not confined to the cultivation of argumentation techniques,[35] even if it often appears that that was the ultimate aim of their program. So I have tried to highlight some aspects of sophistic thought that can be seen as paving the way to Aristotle's project of the constitutions. In particular, I have drawn attention to (a) the rise of an interest in accumulation of information (possibly related, though not necessarily confined, to that in argumentation techniques). I have treated this rise as a characteristic of sophistic thought (albeit one whose importance was downplayed both by Plato and Aristotle who often criticized their predecessors for being *merely* interested in accumulation of information); (b) the open-ended spirit in which the accumulated material was presented, which presumably enabled a speaker to use it in any way he judged as appropriate for his purposes. Drawing on evidence from the *Rhetoric*, I have shown how *at least part* of Aristotle's interest in the study of constitutions conforms to sophistic practice. I have also tried to downplay the widespread argument according to which the sophists, like sceptics *avant la lettre*, refrained from defending any positive view. Exposing to one's audience different practices (as in the case of

34 There is an interesting connection between this passage and the following fragment from the *Protrepticus* (B49 Düring): "as he is not a good builder who does not use the rule or any other such instrument [i.e. instruments derived from nature] but takes his measure from other buildings, so, presumably, if one either lays down laws for cities or administers the affairs of the state, with a view to and in imitation of administration as conducted by other men or actual existing constitutions, whether of Sparta or of Crete or any other state, he is not a good lawgiver or a serious statesman; for an imitation of what is not good cannot be good, nor can an imitation of what is not divine and stable in its nature be imperishable and stable"; translation by Düring 1961. The problems of the reconstruction of Aristotle's *Protrepticus* were among the scholarly interests of Paraskevi Kotzia; see Kotzia 2002.

35 Plato's presentation of Gorgias in the *Gorgias* has shaped a view of the sophist as a teacher of argumentative techniques with no interest in the content of argumentation. But we can easily see how the separation between content and method suits Plato's agenda of juxtaposing sophistry and rhetoric to philosophy, and we should therefore treat his testimony with a grain of salt. For a refutation of the widespread view that the sophists' primary aim was persuasion see further Gagarin 2001.

constitutions), as in presenting the different constitutions, without declaring one's own view, does not imply relativism let alone immoralism. It is of course possible to present different practices in some kind of hierarchical order: this is what Plato does with regard to the constitutions in the account of the *Republic*. And to some extent, that may be also part of the agenda of authors who described the Spartan constitution. The case of Plato allows us to reflect on the distance between a philosophical agenda that uses the different existing constitutions as a foil to the ideal one (I traced a parallel to the way in which in the *Timaeus* uses "biodiversity" as an argument in favour of the superiority of the human race) and one that focuses on the study of mechanisms that preserve the various constitutions. Compared with this background, Aristotle seems to follow a middle way. On the one hand –once more judging from the evidence of the *Constitution of the Athenians*–, he presents his material without any value judgment, showing only how on the basis of the particular history and the practices of a certain state a certain constitution is being preserved. That I take to be a feature entirely compatible with the sophistic spirit, which also explains the apparent discrepancy between Aristotle's criticism of democracy in the *Politics* and the almost positive presentation of this constitution in the *Constitution of the Athenians*. On the other hand, of course, Aristotle subscribes to Plato's general philosophical orientation and stresses the usefulness of the collection for reflection on the question of the best constitution.

That Aristotle does not seem aware of the continuity I have tried to highlight is not very surprising. As in many other cases, he is probably right to think that the sophists did not produce any *theory* in the sense of meta-language about the constitutions; and a big distance separates *their* general interest in case studies from the comprehensive project that Aristotle set out to pursue. On the other hand, the criticism that he possibly addresses to Isocrates, and his explicit characterization of the relevant educational camp as 'sophistic' supports the idea of a continuous line of (however naïve, from Aristotle's point of view) commitment to the value of empirical knowledge, that, as I have tried to argue, can be traced back to the early sophists.

Stavros Kouloumentas

4 Aristotle on Alcmaeon in relation to Pythagoras: an *addendum* in *Metaphysics Alpha*?

Introduction

Knowledge of chronological information is crucial if we are properly to assess the novelty and reception of an ancient theory, helping us as it does to clarify the connection of a thinker with his contemporaries and to gauge his contribution to the intellectual debates of his time. It is thus quite disappointing that the extant fragments of early Greek philosophy rarely offer clues as to the dates of their authors and of those connected with them, such as their teachers, students, and opponents. In fact, most of the surviving evidence is indirect and scanty. We possess various biographical reports and chronicles dating from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine era that provide information of the following order: the conjunction of the birth, floruit, or death of a philosopher with an important historical event (Olympiad, battle, beginning or end of a war, foundation or fall of a polis); his temporal relation, whether of coincidence or otherwise, to other known figures (kings, tyrants, archons, poets, philosophers); and key dates in his career (beginning of philosophical activity, composition of writings, meeting with or studying under a philosopher, arrival at or departure from a place).[1] Needless to say, most of the relevant sources contain approximations and inaccuracies, since they were composed some centuries after the lifetimes of the early Greek philosophers to whom they refer, and aim at organising a vast number of historical events and diverse figures in a continuous line.

A notable exception as to the type of source typically conveying pertinent chronological information presents itself in the case of Alcmaeon of Croton. Not only do we possess the *ipsissima verba* with which Alcmaeon, by addressing – in the incipit to his work *On Nature* – three shadowy figures associated with Pythagoreanism, linked himself chronologically with them, but we are also supplied with a note in an indirect source of relatively early date, namely Aristotle's *Metaphysics Alpha*,

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1 On ancient Greek chronography see Mosshammer 1979.

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that suggests that the lifetimes of Alcmaeon and Pythagoras overlapped to some extent. The latter is our sole piece of information regarding Alcmaeon's dates and poses a set of questions concerning its inclusion in the Aristotelian text, its exact meaning, and its credibility. In order to examine these issues in depth, I shall proceed to analyse all possible interpretations of the note's wording in the light of relevant texts. I shall also take into account the note's reception in the extant commentaries of the *Metaphysics*, as well as any information contained in biographies of the Hellenistic era and Late Antiquity that sheds light on the connection of Alcmaeon with Pythagoras. I shall argue that, despite the fact that the note is often thought to have been added to the *Metaphysics* after the composition of the original text, we nevertheless have good reasons to think that Alcmaeon was a contemporary of Pythagoras and was probably born around 530 BC. Alcmaeon would accordingly have composed his treatise at the beginning of the fifth century, thus being answerable for one of the earliest specimens of a work *On Nature*.

1 Alcmaeon and Pythagoras in *Metaphysics Alpha*

In *Metaphysics Alpha*, Aristotle offers a comprehensive account of the doctrines of "the so-called Pythagoreans" (οἱ καλούμενοι Πυθαγόρειοι) who postulate numbers as the "first principles".[2] He also mentions a particular group of Pythagoreans who lay emphasis on the polar structure of reality and refer to ten primary oppositions. Their approach is compared to that of Alcmaeon who is clearly distinguished from the Pythagorean dualists: Alcmaeon is less methodical for he neither enumerates nor specifies his own pairs, whereas they reduce the various polarities to ten pairs. Aristotle points out that he is not sure whether Alcmaeon's doctrine of opposites influenced the Pythagorean dualists or was based on their system:

> Ἕτεροι δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων τὰς ἀρχὰς δέκα λέγουσιν εἶναι τὰς κατὰ συστοιχίαν λεγομένας, πέρας ἄπειρον, περιττὸν ἄρτιον, ἓν πλῆθος, δεξιὸν ἀριστερόν, ἄρρεν θῆλυ, ἠρεμοῦν κινούμενον, εὐθὺ καμπύλον, φῶς σκότος, ἀγαθὸν κακόν, τετράγωνον ἑτερόμηκες· ὅνπερ τρόπον ἔοικε καὶ Ἀλκμαίων ὁ Κροτωνιάτης ὑπολαβεῖν, καὶ ἤτοι οὗτος παρ' ἐκείνων ἢ ἐκεῖνοι παρὰ τούτου παρέλαβον τὸν λόγον τοῦτον· καὶ γὰρ [ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν] Ἀλκμαίων [<νέος> ἐπὶ γέροντι Πυθαγόρᾳ,] ἀπεφήνατο [δὲ] παραπλησίως τούτοις· φησὶ γὰρ εἶναι δύο τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, λέγων τὰς ἐναντιότητας οὐχ ὥσπερ οὗτοι διωρισμένας ἀλλὰ τὰς τυχούσας, οἷον λευκὸν μέλαν, γλυκὺ πικρόν, ἀγαθὸν κακόν, μέγα μικρὸν. οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἀδιορίστως ἀπέρριψε περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν, οἱ δὲ Πυθαγόρειοι καὶ πόσαι καὶ τίνες αἱ ἐναντιώσεις ἀπεφήναντο. παρὰ μὲν οὖν τούτων ἀμφοῖν τοσοῦτον ἔστι λαβεῖν, ὅτι τἀναντία ἀρχαὶ τῶν ὄντων· τὸ δ' ὅσαι παρὰ τῶν ἑτέρων, καὶ τίνες αὗταί εἰσιν.[3]

2 *Metaph.* A 5, 985b23–986a21.

3 *Metaph.* A 5, 986a22-b4. The text and the critical apparatus are based on Primavesi 2012: 484. Diels's conjectural supplement νέος is not translated, since it is not necessary, as argued below.

> ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν Ἀλκμαίων ἐπὶ γέροντι Πυθαγόρᾳ, ἀπεφήνατο δὲ παραπλησίως τούτοις α(EE^{s}E^{b}V^{d}T) Lat Ascl.^{p} 39.21–27 Bekker Bonitz Christ: Ἀλκμαίων ἀπεφήνατο παραπλησίως τούτοις β(A^{b}M) Ross Jaeger, cf. Al.^{p} 42.3–4 | <νέος> ἐπὶ γέροντι Πυθαγόρᾳ coni. Diels, cf. Iamb. *VP* 104: ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν <ἀνὴρ> Ἀλκμαίων coni. Gomperz
>
> Others among these same thinkers [sc. the Pythagoreans] say the ten principles, described as two columns of cognates, are ten in number: limit unlimited, odd even, one plurality, right left, male female, resting moving, straight curved, light darkness, good bad, square oblong. In this way Alcmaeon of Croton, too, seems to have conceived the matter, and either he got this theory from them or they got it from him. For Alcmaeon [came of age when Pythagoras was old, and he] expressed himself similarly to them. For he says that most human things go in pairs, meaning not definite contrarieties, as the Pythagoreans hold, but any random contrarieties, such as white black, sweet bitter, good bad, great small. He threw out indefinite suggestions concerning the other contrarieties, while the Pythagoreans specified both how many and which ones these contrarieties are. From both of these thinkers, then, one can get this much: that the contrarieties are the principles of beings. From the Pythagoreans, however, one can get how many and which ones these contrarieties are.

The β-version of the manuscript tradition suggests that Aristotle, after declaring his uncertainty as to the originator(s) of the doctrine of opposites, begins to explain the doctrinal affinities and differences between Alcmaeon and the Pythagorean dualists.[4] The α-version of the manuscript tradition, on the other hand, contains an additional note on the chronological relation between Alcmaeon and Pythagoras, who is somewhat unexpectedly introduced in the survey about "first principles". According to this sentence, bracketed in the Oxford editions of the *Metaphysics* by Ross and Jaeger, Primavesi's new critical edition of the first book, as well as the textbook of Kirk, Raven and Schofield, but printed without brackets in the earlier editions of the *Metaphysics* by Bekker, Bonitz, and von Christ, the standard collection of Presocratic texts edited by Diels and Kranz (DK 24 A3), and the recent Loeb edition of early

4 The *Metaphysics* has come down to us in direct transmission through at least fifty-three Greek manuscripts, plus the rich commentary tradition and various translations into Latin and Arabic. The Greek manuscripts go back to two different (hyp)archetypes, α and β (Harlfinger 1979), which transmit two variations of the text, the α-text and the β-text, showing that the *Metaphysics* underwent significant alterations after its publication by Andronicus in the first century BC. A detailed review of the current scholarship on the transmission of the *Metaphysics* along with a new critical edition of the first book and comments on the sentences and passages of questionable provenance can be found in Primavesi 2012. The main points of his study can be summarised as follows: (a) both the α-text and the β-text were unknown to Alexander of Aphrodisias, since they bear signs of intentional intervention, albeit of different origin; (b) the β-text is the product of a reviser who depends on Alexander, since he often modifies the original wording in accordance with the latter's commentary; (c) the α-text is normally more faithful to the original wording, but it has been enlarged by supplements deriving from an unknown commentator or teacher who is influenced by Neoplatonism. For a useful discussion of Primavesi's edition see Golitsis 2016b.

Greek philosophy by Laks and Most (Alcm. P1), Alcmaeon ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν [...] ἐπὶ γέροντι Πυθαγόρᾳ.[5]

There are three problems pertaining to this sentence: (a) whether it derives from Aristotle or is a later addition and, if so, whether there is anything to be said about its possible attribution; (b) what is the meaning of the vague phrase ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν; and (c) to what extent the report concerning the contemporaneity of Alcmaeon and Pythagoras is confirmed by reliable pieces of evidence. In fact, the aforementioned problems are interconnected with each other. Solving (a) may offer a starting point to tackle (c). In other words, if Aristotle himself claims something about Alcmaeon and Pythagoras, we should accept this claim, given his relatively good knowledge of the two thinkers.[6] However, if the report derives from an interpolator, such as an editor of the *Metaphysics* or a commentator, it may be less credible, depending on whether or not the ultimate source is Aristotle (notably his writings on the Pythagoreans or, less likely, his monograph on Alcmaeon).[7] Moreover, specifying (b), namely whether Alcmaeon was born, reached adulthood, or flourished when Pythagoras was old, would help us to interpret the synchronism of the two thinkers with more precision.

5 Ross 1924; Jaeger 1957; Primavesi 2012; Kirk, Raven, and Schofield 1983; Bekker 1831; Bonitz 1848; von Christ 1886; Diels and Kranz 1951–1952 (first published by Diels in 1903); Laks and Most 2016.

6 Aristotle provides an overview of Alcmaeon's doctrines in the introductory sections of the treatises that deal with the "first principles" (DK 24 A3) and the soul (DK 24 A12), mentions Alcmaeon's observations in the biological treatises (DK 24 A7, A15–16), and probably wrote a monograph in response to him (DK 24 A3). Material from this monograph seems to have been incorporated into various Peripatetic texts: Theophrastus' *On the Senses* (DK 24 A5), the ps.-Aristotelian *Problems* (DK 24 B2), and the Arabic version of *On Plants* of Nicolaus of Damascus (*De plantis* I, 2.44 Drossaart Lulofs and Portman). On the other hand, apart from the contested reference in the *Metaphysics*, Pythagoras is mentioned only twice in the Aristotelian corpus, presumably because he did not contribute significantly to the topics examined by Aristotle. The first reference is a quotation from Alcidamas who reports that Pythagoras was held in high esteem in Magna Graecia like other representatives of archaic wisdom (*Rhet.* II 23, 1398b10–20). The second reference is found in a treatise whose authenticity is contested (*MM* I 1, 1182a11–14). Regardless of the authorship problem, the context, which refers to the erroneous identification of virtue with numbers and offers as an example the definition of justice as "equal times equal", suggests that "Pythagoras" might have replaced "the Pythagoreans" in the manuscript transmission, since this view is elsewhere attributed to all Pythagoreans (*Metaph.* A 5, 985b26–31, N 6, 1093b11–14; *EN* V 5, 1132b21–23; Alexander, *In Metaph.* 38.10–16). To be sure, the surviving material from Aristotle's writings on the Pythagoreans indicates that Aristotle had some knowledge of Pythagoras, including his origin, the miracle stories surrounding his life, his dietary restrictions, and the symbolic description of cosmic structure (see frs. 190–196 Rose).

7 Aristotle himself notes that he examines the Pythagorean doctrines in detail in other treatises (*Metaph.* A 5, 986a12–13). A set of paraphrases and quotations from Aristotle's writings on the Pythagoreans, provided by Iamblichus, Porphyry, Diogenes Laertius, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Simplicius, and other authors (see frs. 190–205 Rose), shows that these treatises were available not only to members of the Lyceum but also to biographers of the Hellenistic era, Neopythagoreans, and Neoplatonists. On the other hand, Aristotle's monograph on Alcmaeon seems to have not been circulating widely. See n. 42 below.

Let us begin with (b). Alcmaeon is supposed to coincide in time with the founder of Pythagoreanism. Despite the fact that Pythagoras is a figure strongly associated with miracle stories, we can establish his dates with some degree of certainty. Aristoxenus (fourth century BC), one of our best sources regarding the early phase of Pythagoreanism, reports that when Pythagoras was forty he migrated from Samos, his native island, to Croton in order to escape from the oppression of Polycrates.[8] Two elements are suspicious in this report. First, the use of the forty years' count, which is common in biographical reports and chronicles, is often based on theoretical construction rather than documentary evidence.[9] Second, Aristoxenus places Pythagoras' departure at the beginning of Polycrates' reign, stressing the fact that Pythagoras could not abide the increasing cruelty of the tyrant (which, according to other reports, was shown toward aristocrats), although we know that other "wise men", such as Democedes, Anacreon, and Ibycus, joined his court. In fact, Aristoxenus had a good reason so to describe events: Pythagoras and his disciples were often accused of favouring tyranny, whereas within the Pythagorean tradition the master was represented as an advocate of democracy and freedom.[10] Hence the date provided by Aristoxenus should be taken as approximate: Pythagoras was neither young nor old when he left Samos. Polycrates initially ruled jointly with his brothers, before becoming lone tyrant. His reign overlaps with that of Cambyses, the Persian king who ruled from 530 to 522 BC (Herodotus III 120), but the date of his accession should be placed earlier in the light of archaeological evidence and reports concerning lyric poets who are associated with him.[11] Given that Polycrates was in power at the beginning of the 540s, Pythagoras seems to have moved to Croton some years afterwards. On this assumption, he was born around 570 BC and arrived at Croton around 530 BC.[12] Aristoxenus also reports that Pythagoras was old when

8 Aristoxenus, fr. 16 Wehrli (= Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae* 9): γεγονότα δ' ἐτῶν τεσσαράκοντα. Aristoxenus came from Tarentum, one of the main Pythagorean centres in Magna Graecia. He was closely linked with the last Pythagoreans, especially Xenophilus of Chalcidice and several Pythagoreans from Phlius who studied under Philolaus and Eurytus, before joining the Lyceum and being introduced to the Peripatetic interpretation of Pythagoreanism. His treatises, including *The Life of Pythagoras*, *The Life of Archytas*, *On Pythagoras and His Associates*, *On the Pythagorean Life*, and *The Pythagorean Precepts* (Aristoxenus, frs. 11–41, 47–50 Wehrli), provided material for the extant biographies of Pythagoras compiled by Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus. Cf. Zhmud 2012b.

9 According to Mosshammer (1979: 119–124), Aristoxenus is influenced by the Pythagorean division of life into four quarters each of which lasts twenty years and is analogous to a specific season: childhood and spring, youth and summer, manhood and autumn, old age and winter (Diogenes Laertius VIII 10). On this assumption, Aristoxenus presents Pythagoras, who seems to have lived approximately eighty years (c. 570–490 BC), as moving to Croton precisely at the peak of his life and dividing his activity equally between East and West.

10 Cf. Burkert 1972: 118–119.

11 On archaeological evidence see Shipley 1987: 74–80. On the chronographic tradition concerning Polycrates, Ibycus, and Anacreon see Mosshammer 1979: 290–304.

12 Other sources, too, situate Pythagoras' maturity between 540 and 530 BC (Aristoxenus, fr. 12 Wehrli = ps.-Iamblichus, *Theologoumena arithmeticae* 52.18–53.5; Clement, *Stromata* I 14,65; Dio-

Cylon, who mounted a conspiracy against the Pythagoreans in Croton, failed to join his sect.[13] We can thus infer that the coexistence of Alcmaeon and old Pythagoras is to be placed around the time when the first anti-Pythagorean riots broke out in Magna Graecia, namely at the end of the sixth century BC.[14]

One may object to this interpretation that the reason why Alcmaeon was linked with Pythagoras may just have been the desire of some author to introduce a degree of continuity into his depiction of the intellectual life of Croton similar to what we find in the biographical reports pertaining to the Milesians and the Eleatics by establishing a sort of relation between two thinkers who in reality worked independently of each other. However, it is Alcmaeon himself who affirms that the two thinkers coexisted. In the opening section of his treatise, he introduces himself as follows: "Alcmaeon of Croton, the son of Peirithus, said these words to Brotinus and Leon and Bathyllus concerning things that are non-manifest: [...]".[15] Alcmaeon's addressees are among the numerous Pythagoreans listed by Iamblichus at the end of *On the Life of Pythagoras*.[16] We possess no further pieces of information concerning Leon and Bathyllus, but Brotinus is credited with treatises of Orphic content;[17] he also seems to have enjoyed a close connection with Pythagoras himself through Theano.[18]

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genes Laertius VIII 45; Diodorus Siculus X fr. 3; Eusebius, *Chronographia* 104b12 Helm) or date his move to Magna Graecia in the sixty-second Olympiad, namely between 532 and 529 BC (Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae* 35). There is also a report of Apollodorus that Anaximander, who is supposed to have been sixty-four years old in 547/546 BC (the time of the fall of Sardis to Cyrus) and to have died a bit later, flourished when Polycrates was a tyrant (*Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* 339 = Diogenes Laertius II 2). This temporal coincidence is impossible on historical grounds, and it has been suggested that Apollodorus refers to Pythagoras and assumes that Anaximander was his teacher, but this piece of information was omitted in the transmission process. According to Apollodorus' pattern, which is also used to date the chief tragedians, three philosophers are supposed to be sixty-four (Anaximander, the eldest person), forty (Anaximenes, the middle person), and twenty-five (Pythagoras, the youngest person) years old at a specific date which coincides with a historical event. Thus Pythagoras was forty years old in 532/531 BC. See Jacoby 1902: 215 – 227; Burkert 1972: 109 – 110; Mosshammer 1979: 274 – 304.

13 Aristoxenus, fr. 18 Wehrli (= Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae* 248): τὸν Πυθαγόραν ἤδη πρεσβύτην ὄντα.

14 On the anti-Pythagorean riots see Burkert 1972: 109 – 120.

15 DK 24 B1.

16 DK 58 A1.

17 DK 17 A4.

18 DK 17 A1. The extant sources are inconsistent as to the relation between Brotinus and Pythagoras: Brotinus or Brontinus (the manuscripts of Diogenes Laertius, Iamblichus, and the *Suda* preserve both variants) appears as the father or husband of Theano (also called Deino or Deinono), who is already mentioned by Dicaearchus (DK 14 A8a) and is referred to as the wife, daughter, or pupil of Pythagoras (DK 17 A1; cf. *Suidae Lexicon* Θ 83 – 84 s.v. Theano, Π 3120 s.v. Pythagoras). Moreover, we know about a letter purportedly written by Telauges, Pythagoras' son and successor, to Philolaus, which reports that the teachers of Empedocles were Hippasus and Brotinus (DK 17 A3). Given the vagueness pertaining to these reports, Brotinus' dates cannot be established with certainty. If Brotinus is Theano's father and she is Pythagoras' wife, Brotinus could be older than Pythagoras or even a contemporary of

The question is what sort of relation he had to Alcmaeon to justify such an emphatic mention in the incipit and whether this relation can help us determine Alcmaeon's dates. It is often assumed that Alcmaeon's addressees were students or friends (even fellow Pythagoreans), but, taking into account the polemical nature of similar references in the incipits of contemporary prose authors, it is more likely that they were opponents to whom Alcmaeon responded directly by contrasting their method of acquiring knowledge with his own.[19] Regardless of what interpretation one adopts, Brotinus' dates are too uncertain to specify when this response (by Alcmaeon to his opponents), instruction (by Alcmaeon to his students), or dedication (by Alcmaeon to his friends) was composed.

Let us go back to the ambiguities of the Aristotelian text. It is unclear whether the verb ἐγένετο should be taken to mean that Alcmaeon "was born" (often signified as ἐγεννήθη[20]) when Pythagoras was still active in Croton or that Alcmaeon "flourished" (often signified as ἤκμαζεν, ἦν, or ἐγνωρίζετο[21]) during this period. The floruit (ἀκμή) of a thinker, that is, his attainment of intellectual maturity and recognition of his status, was conventionally supposed to take place at the age of forty and to coincide with the nearest important historical event and/or the dates of another prominent figure in accordance with the criteria of Apollodorus (second century BC), the main source of most biographers and chronographers of antiquity.[22] If Alcmaeon "flourished" when Pythagoras was old, he was approximately twenty years younger than Pythagoras. On this assumption, Alcmaeon should have been born around 550 BC. However, if Alcmaeon "was born" when Pythagoras was old, he was approximately sixty years younger than Pythagoras. On this assumption, Alcmaeon should have been born around 510 BC. Both meanings of ἐγένετο are quite common in biographical reports and chronicles.[23]

What is uncommon is the construal of ἐγένετο with τὴν ἡλικίαν. It makes no sense to say that Alcmaeon "was born" or "flourished" τὴν ἡλικίαν, and so we may consider the following options: to modify the text, to supplement it with some word(s) construed with τὴν ἡλικίαν, or to assume that the phrase ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν held a specific meaning. To begin with the first option, the deletion of τὴν ἡλικίαν ("Alcmaeon was born/flourished when Pythagoras was old") or its placement at the beginning of the sentence as an accusative of respect ("as regards his

his. In both cases, he would likely be older than Alcmaeon. If Brotinus is Theano's husband and Pythagoras is her father or teacher, Brotinus could be younger than Pythagoras and presumably roughly contemporaneous with Alcmaeon.

19 See Kouloumentas 2018.

20 Cf. Diogenes Laertius III 3; Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium* I 8,13; *Suidae Lexicon* Σ 863 s.v. Sosiphanes.

21 Cf. Diogenes Laertius II 3; Clement, *Stromata* I 16,64; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XIII, 599c.

22 On the method of Apollodorus see Jacoby 1902: 39–59; Mosshammer 1979: 113–127.

23 See Wachtler 1896: 7–16.

age, Alcmaeon flourished when Pythagoras was old"),[24] makes the text smooth. However, Diels (followed by most editors of the *Metaphysics*) suggests that we should supplement the text with the word νέος, since an adjective signifying age is often coupled with a dative or accusative of respect which specifies that the subject is younger (cf. Diogenes Laertius IX 41: γέγονε δὲ τοῖς χρόνοις, ὡς αὐτός φησιν ἐν τῷ Μικρῷ διακόσμῳ, *νέος* κατὰ πρεσβύτην Ἀναξαγόραν, ἔτεσιν αὐτοῦ νεώτερος τετταράκοντα)[25] or older (cf. Herodotus II 54: Ἡσίοδον γὰρ καὶ Ὅμηρον ἡλικίην τετρακοσίοισι ἔτεσι δοκέω μέο *πρεσβυτέρους* γενέσθαι καὶ οὐ πλέοσι) than another person. Both interpretations involve a certain degree of textual modification, and so a safer option is to inspect any parallels to the sentence as transmitted.

Two texts are pertinent.

The first derives from the preface of Berossus' *History of Babylon* and affirms that the author and Alexander the Great are of the same age (Βήρωσσος δὲ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν Βαβυλωνιακῶν φησι γενέσθαι μὲν αὐτὸν κατὰ Ἀλεξάνδρον τὸν Φιλίππου τὴν ἡλικίαν[26]). Syncellus, who transmits the fragment, elsewhere reports that Berossus "flourished" in the time of Alexander the Great,[27] and the Armenian version of Eusebius' chronicle confirms that he was a contemporary of Alexander the Great.[28]

The second is found in the *Constitution of the Athenians*, presumably written by some student(s) of Aristotle rather than Aristotle himself, and has a different meaning. The text describes the youths who attained maturity in accordance with the civic law, thus reaching the proper age to gain citizenship (εἰ δοκοῦσι γεγονέναι τὴν ἡλικίαν τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου).[29] Inasmuch as this parallel is attested in the Aristotelian corpus, it is reasonable to assume that Aristotle or whoever inserted the sentence into the *Metaphysics* means that Alcmaeon "came of age" when Pythagoras was old.[30] Similar expressions indicate that one has reached adulthood and is eligible to engage in activities appropriate to that stage of life such as marriage, politics, and mili-

24 Cf. Eusebius, *Preparatio Evangelica* X, 9,10; Pausanias V, 10,3. To be sure, it makes no sense to say that "as regards his age, Alcmaeon was born when Pythagoras was old" because age is a feature one gains after his/her birth.

25 The text (printed as DK 68 B5) is obviously a paraphrase of Apollodorus based on a self-reference of Democritus, but it is not clear whether the sentence that follows, which claims that *The Little World-Order* was composed 730 years after the fall of Troy, goes back to Apollodorus or Democritus. On this problem see Mansfeld 1983.

26 *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* 680, fr. 1 (= Georgius Syncellus, *Chronographia* 28.21–22).

27 Georgius Syncellus, *Chronographia* 14.22–23.

28 Cf. Eusebius, *Chronographia* 6.16–18 Karst.

29 *Ath. Const.* 42.1. It has been disputed whether the youths were registered after reaching their eighteenth birthday or after entering on the eighteenth year of their life (Rhodes 1993: 497–499). The official reckoning of adulthood varied in each polis on account of cultural differences, but it was not supposed to be after the age of twenty. In the light of the parallel from the *Constitution of the Athenians*, Diels's supplement νέος ("Alcmaeon was young in age when Pythagoras was old"; cf. Gomperz's proposal ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν <ἀνήρ>) is superfluous.

30 To my knowledge, the sole scholars who propose this translation are Laks and Most 2016: 741.

tary service.[31] If Alcmaeon "came of age" when Pythagoras was old, he was approximately forty years younger than Pythagoras. Such an age difference between young and senior philosophers is mentioned not only in biographical reports and chronicles but also in texts written before the *Metaphysics*, such as Democritus' autobiographical statement ("As regards his dates, he was, as he himself says in *The Little World-Order*, young in the old age of Anaxagoras, being forty years younger than he"[32]) and Plato's account of Socrates' encounter to the Eleatic visitors ("Parmenides was already quite elderly [...] about sixty-five years old. Zeno was then close to forty [...] Socrates was then quite young"[33]). We may thus infer that Alcmaeon was born around 530 BC when Pythagoras began to establish his fame as religious expert and political leader in Croton.

Having examined the meaning of the sentence, we should now address problem (a), namely that of its authenticity. Generally speaking, the sequence of Aristotle's doxographical account in the *Metaphysics* is intended to be chronological, since Aristotle wishes to examine how philosophy developed over the course of time in reference to his theory of four causes. Some deviations from this order are made in order to interject references to the forerunners of philosophy (e. g. "the first theologians" who preceded Thales) or to philosophers who put forward doctrines resembling earlier systems (e. g. Diogenes of Apollonia, mentioned in connection with Anaximenes). However, Aristotle provides no further dating precisions for any of the philosophers who postulated "first principles", apart from an ambiguous comment on the chronological relation between Anaxagoras and Empedocles[34] and the remark that the Pythagoreans were active before and contemporaneously with the Atomists.[35] Neither did the commentators supply us with any more specific chronological information regarding the philosophers examined in the *Metaphysics*. Hence most scholars suggest that the sentence must be a later interpolation, citing

31 Cf. Plato, *Euthydemus* 306d5: ἡλικίαν ἔχει, and *Theaetetus* 142d2–3: εἰς ἡλικίαν ἔλθοι; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* IV 2,3: ἐν ἡλικίᾳ γενόμενος.

32 DK 68 B5.

33 Plato, *Parmenides* 127b1-c5; cf. *Sophist* 217c5–7; *Theaetetus* 183e7.

34 *Metaph.* A 3, 984a11–13. Anaxagoras appears to be "earlier than him [sc. Empedocles] in age but later in his works". It is controversial as to whether the last phrase has a temporal (Anaxagoras published his treatise after Empedocles) or evaluative (Anaxagoras' doctrines are inferior to those of Empedocles or they are more advanced than those of Empedocles) meaning. Cf. Mansfeld 2011.

35 *Metaph.* A 5, 985b23. Primavesi (2014: 228) suggests that the remark may refer not only to the Atomists but also to Empedocles and Anaxagoras, two fifth-century pluralists who had been discussed earlier. Cf. the three possible interpretations proposed by Alexander, *In Metaph.* 37.4–12: (i) some Pythagoreans were born before the Atomists, while others were contemporaneous with them; (ii) the Pythagoreans were active before and contemporaneously with not only the Atomists but also with all the philosophers mentioned earlier; (iii) Pythagoras lived shortly before Leucippus and Democritus, but many of his followers flourished at the same time as the Atomists.

the following reasons.[36] First, Alcmaeon is being said to have coexisted in time with Pythagoras, but Pythagoras himself is rarely mentioned in the extant writings of Aristotle. Instead the latter consistently speaks of "the Pythagoreans", "the Pythagorists", or "the Italians" in the plural without referring to their master or his doctrines. Second, the sentence is missing from the *β*-version of the manuscript tradition, especially *Laurentianus plut*. 87.12 (A^b), one of our three primary codices, and *Ambrosianus* F 113 sup. (M). Third, Alexander of Aphrodisias, the most meticulous and acute commentator of the *Metaphysics* who often supplies us with additional material from Aristotle's writings on the Pythagoreans (frs. 202–3, 205 Rose), seems to have no knowledge of the sentence. Thus, it has been supposed that the sentence was interpolated at a later stage, presumably by a Neopythagorean author who felt compelled to refer to the master and his students.

This is a possibility that cannot be excluded, especially given the existence of a number of other sentences and passages that are similarly extant in the *α*-version of the manuscript tradition but absent from the *β*-version.[37] There is, however, sufficient evidence available within the manuscript tradition with which to defend the authenticity of the sentence, to which may be added the questionable status of any alleged Neopythagorean influence and the textual coherence of Aristotle's account.

To begin with the manuscript tradition, the sentence is found in the following sources: two of the three primary codices, *Parisinus gr.* 1853 (E) and *Vindobonensis phil. gr.* 100 (J), whose descendant is *Vaticanus gr.* 256 (T); *Vaticanus gr.* 115 (V^k) and *Taurinensis* B.VII.23 (C), whose model (ζ) belonged to the *β*-family but had been contaminated with the *α*-text; and the four medieval Graeco-Latin translations of the *Metaphysics* which are largely based on *Vindobonensis phil. gr.* 100 (J) and other lost manuscripts. The fact that Alexander of Aphrodisias, who draws from an exemplar of the *Metaphysics* which circulated much earlier (second century AD) than the *α*-text and the *β*-text (sixth or ninth century AD), makes no reference to the sentence does not entail that it did not exist before him (see section II below). What can be surmised is that the sentence was missing from his own exemplar and the other material that he might have used (marginal notes, other commentaries), which are not always the best source for reconstructing the text.[38]

The assumption that the sentence was inserted into the original text by a Neopythagorean author is encouraged by Diels' supplement νέος ("Alcmaeon was young in age when Pythagoras was old") in the light of a report of Iamblichus, which contains chronological inaccuracies and includes Alcmaeon among the

36 Zeller 1919: 597, n. 2; Ross 1924, vol. I: 152; Burkert 1972: 29, n. 6; Kirk, Raven, and Schofield 1983: 338, n. 1; Primavesi 2012: 447–448. Scholars who defend the authenticity of the sentence include Wachtler 1896: 1–16; Guthrie 1962: 341–343; Zhmud 2012a: 122.

37 Detailed discussion of the eighteen suspicious texts can be found in Primavesi 2012: 439–456.

38 On Alexander of Aphrodisias as an indirect witness to the text of the *Metaphysics* see Kotwick 2016.

young students of Pythagoras.[39] But we have already seen that such an emendation is not necessary if we accept that the phrase ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν carries a special meaning, and thus to invoke Diels' supplement and its putative Iamblichean echoes in argument is to beg acceptance of the Neopythagorean provenance of the sentence rather than to prove it. Instead the sentence can be interpreted as an Aristotelian note that was misunderstood by some Hellenistic biographers and Neopythagorean authors (see section III below) as indicating that Alcmaeon studied under Pythagoras.[40] Seen from this perspective, the striking reference to Pythagoras in the midst of a discussion on the Pythagoreans is not unjustified. Aristotle appears to be unsure whether Alcmaeon influenced the Pythagorean dualists or *vice versa* but is pretty sure as to the doctrinal affinities and differences between the thinkers in question. He has already dated the Pythagoreans (both the number theorists and the dualists) before and contemporaneously with the Atomists (*Metaph.* A 5, 985b23), and is now introducing another thinker who held similar doctrines to the Pythagorean dualists. Dating Alcmaeon's maturation in the old age of Pythagoras means that the former was roughly contemporaneous with the Pythagorean dualists. Thus Aristotle justifies his uncertainty as to whether they polished Alcmaeon's system or Alcmaeon reworked their ideas in a less sophisticated manner. The fact that Aristoxenus, who was a member of the Lyceum, mentions Pythagoras' dates (frs. 16, 18 Wehrli) and that Aristotle in his writings on the Pythagoreans referred to the origins of Pythagoras and the miracle stories surrounding him (frs. 190 – 192 Rose) indicates that Aristotle had good biographical information concerning his predecessor, both from Aristoxenus and from oral sources. Aristotle might well have used this material as a basis to specify Alcmaeon's dates and trace his contribution to the development of dualistic doctrines.

Let us now turn to the commentary tradition (Alexander of Aphrodisias, Asclepius of Tralles, the anonymous scholiast of *Parisinus gr.* 1853) and the biographies of the Hellenistic era and Late Antiquity (Diogenes Laertius, Iamblichus) to examine (c), namely to what extent the report as to the contemporaneity of Alcmaeon and Pythagoras is confirmed by reliable evidence. The survey of these sources may also provide further evidence for (a) and (b).

39 Cf. Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae* 104. This is the proposal of the most recent editor of the *Metaphysics* (Primavesi 2012: 447–448), but it is not universally accepted by scholars (Laks and Most 2016: 740; Fazzo 2016: 451, n. 35; Golitsis 2016b: 463, n. 14).

40 The contested author of the commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*, which is transmitted under the name of Simplicius, notes: "Alcmaeon of Croton is reported by others to be a Pythagorean, but Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* thought him worth recalling as having handed down the two columns of cognates to the Pythagoreans or having taken them from the Pythagoreans" ([Simplicius], *In DA* 32.3 – 6).

2 The commentary tradition: Alexander of Aphrodisias and Asclepius of Tralles

We may begin with Alexander of Aphrodisias (late second-early third century AD) who represents the peak of the Peripatetic commentary tradition. He offers excellent guidance to the interpretation of Aristotle, since his aim is to analyse and supplement the text in the light of what Aristotle states elsewhere, as well as to defend the teacher's views against competing doctrines. His continuous commentary on the first five books of the *Metaphysics* is the earliest and most important indirect witness to the text that we possess. Alexander examines thoroughly the Pythagoreans who postulated numbers as "first principles" and cites valuable material from Aristotle's writings on the Pythagoreans to elucidate their number theory and astronomical system, but provides meagre information concerning the Pythagorean dualists and Alcmaeon.[41] Whether this imbalance is due to Alexander himself, who would deliberately place emphasis on the representatives of mainstream Pythagoreanism, or is due to the limited sources available to him and to Aristotle cannot be established with certainty.[42] What is clear is that he relied for his commentary on an exemplar of the *Metaphysics* which omits the sentence in question:

> Ἱστορεῖ δὲ ὅτι τινὲς τῶν Πυθαγορείων τὰς ἀρχὰς δέκα ὑπετίθεντο ἐναντιώσεις, ὃς καὶ πρῶτος τέλειος ἀριθμὸς αὐτοῖς ἐστι, κατὰ συστοιχίας τινὰς τιθέντες, εἰς ἃς ἀνῆγον καὶ τὰ ὄντα. καὶ τίνες αὗταί εἰσιν, ἐκτίθεται· πέρας γὰρ καὶ ἄπειρον, περιττόν τε καὶ ἄρτιον, ἓν καὶ πλῆθος, δεξιὸν καὶ ἀριστερόν, ἄρρεν θῆλυ, ἠρεμοῦν κινούμενον, εὐθὺ καμπύλον, φῶς σκότος, ἀγαθὸν κακόν, τετράγωνον ἑτερόμηκες. ἱστορεῖ δὲ ὡς καὶ Ἀλκμαίωνος τοῦ Κροτωνιάτου τὸν αὐτὸν τούτοις τρόπον περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν ἀποφηναμένου· εἰς γὰρ ἐναντίωσίν τινα ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων ἀνάγειν ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ οὗτος ὡς ἀρχῶν οὐσῶν τῶν ἐναντιώσεων. διαφέρει δὲ τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν ὅτι οἱ μὲν δεκάδας ποιοῦντες ταύτας μὲν ἐξετίθεντο ὁρίζοντες, ὁ δὲ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἐναντίωσιν ἀρχὴν ἔλεγεν ἀδιορίστως· οὕτως δὲ πᾶσα ἂν ἐναντίωσις ἀρχὴ γίνοιτο αὐτῷ. κοινὸν μὲν οὖν τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν, οἳ ταύτης ἐγένοντο τῆς δόξης, καὶ Ἀλκμαίωνος τὸ ἐναντίας λέγειν εἶναι τὰς ἀρχὰς τῶν ὄντων· πόσαι δὲ καὶ τίνες αὗται, τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν ἴδιον.[43]
>
> [Aristotle] reports that some of the Pythagoreans posited that the principles are ten contrarieties, which is also the first perfect number for them, placing these contrarieties in two columns of cognates, to which they also reduced the beings. And he sets out what these contrarieties

41 Alexander, *In Metaph.* 37.4 – 42.17.

42 The lack of genuine material from early philosophers is a problem that is often mentioned by the Neoplatonist commentators (cf. Simplicius, *In Phys.* 144.25 – 28, 151.20 – 30; *In Cat.* 352.22 – 24). Of particular interest is the remark found in Philoponus that the writings of early philosophers who referred to the moving and cognitive capacities of the soul, such as Thales, Diogenes of Apollonia, Heraclitus, and Alcmaeon, were not available in his era, and that Aristotle did not comment on their doctrines in detail (Philoponus, *In DA* 88.9 – 17). This indicates that Aristotle and some of his disciples probably had direct access to Alcmaeon's treatise, but the latter did not survive for a long period. It also confirms that Aristotle's monographs on his predecessors, with the exception of the writings on the Pythagoreans, were hard to find in late antiquity.

43 Alexander, *In Metaph.* 41.32 – 42.11.

> are: limit and unlimited, odd and even, one and plurality, right and left, male [and] female, resting [and] moving, straight [and] curved, light [and] darkness, good [and] bad, square [and] oblong. He reports that Alcmaeon of Croton, too, expressed the same view concerning the principles as these Pythagoreans. For he, too, attempted to reduce each of the beings to some sort of contrariety, supposing that the contrarieties are principles. However, he differs from the Pythagoreans for they expounded the contrarieties accurately by reducing them to ten pairs, whereas he considered any random contrariety to be principle in a vague manner. In this way, any contrariety would be a principle for him. The assertion that the principles of the beings are opposites is thus common to the Pythagoreans who held this view and to Alcmaeon, but how many and what kind these principles are is peculiar to the Pythagoreans.

Alexander comments on or paraphrases almost every sentence in the *Metaphysics*, as far as we can judge from the extant books of his commentary. It is thus unlikely that he knew the sentence but was disinterested in it. In fact, other sections of his commentary show that Alexander had some knowledge of Pythagoras' dates. He suggests that one possible interpretation of Aristotle's remark that the Pythagoreans were active before and contemporaneously with the Atomists is that Pythagoras lived shortly before Leucippus and Democritus.[44] He also reports that Empedocles did not live before Pythagoras.[45] In neither case is Alcmaeon mentioned as a point of reference. We should not, however, disregard a piece of information simply because it is not discussed by the best commentator, especially if other commentators know of it.

Asclepius of Tralles (sixth century AD) belongs to the circle of Ammonius (son of Hermias), the ablest student of Proclus and the head of the Neoplatonist school in Alexandria. His commentary on the first seven books of the *Metaphysics* consists of notes taken at the lectures conducted by his teacher, often tacitly incorporating excerpts from the commentary of Alexander. Asclepius introduces Alcmaeon as follows:

> Ἱστορεῖ δὲ ὅτι καὶ Ἀλκμαίων ὁ Κροτωνιάτης τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον τούτοις ἀπεφήνατο· εἰς γὰρ ἐναντίωσίν τινα ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων ἀνάγειν ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ οὗτος, ὡς ἀρχῶν οὐσῶν τῶν ἐναντιώσεων. καὶ ἢ οὗτος παρὰ τῶν Πυθαγορείων παρέλαβεν ἢ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι παρὰ τούτου· καὶ γὰρ κατέλαβεν ὁ Ἀλκμαίων γέροντα τὸν Πυθαγόραν.[46]
>
> [Aristotle] reports that Alcmaeon of Croton, too, expressed himself similarly to them. For he, too, attempted to reduce each of the beings to some contrariety, supposing that the contrarieties are principles. And either he got [this theory] from the Pythagoreans or the Pythagoreans got it from him. For Alcmaeon found Pythagoras in the latter's old age.

Asclepius notes Aristotle's uncertainty as to whether the Pythagorean dualists influenced Alcmaeon or *vice versa*, and reproduces the sentence without adding further details. His understanding of the vague phrase ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν is that Alcmaeon

44 Alexander, *In Metaph.* 37.10–11: ἢ μάλλον ὅτι αὐτὸς μὲν Πυθαγόρας πρὸ Δημοκρίτου τε καὶ Λευκίππου ὀλίγον ἐγένετο.

45 Alexander, *In Metaph.* 46.12: οὐ γὰρ πρὸ Πυθαγόρου Ἐμπεδοκλῆς.

46 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 39.21–26.

"found" (and not "heard" as other authors claim) Pythagoras in the latter's old age. This cannot mean that Alcmaeon "was born" or "flourished" then but that his lifetime overlapped that of Pythagoras for a short period of time. We may compare the following text about Plato and the *demos:* "Plato was born late in his country, and he found the *demos* already old and habituated by the previous statesmen to do many things at variance with his own counsel".[47]

A similar account concerning Alcmaeon is found in the codex *Parisinus gr.* 1853 that preserves many Aristotelian treatises, including one of the best manuscripts of the *Metaphysics* (E in fols. 225v-308r). The text is furnished with detailed notes on the margins, which are often marked by graphic signs. They can be dated to the twelfth century AD, a period during which Aristotelian studies flourished in Byzantium. The anonymous scholiast often draws from the commentaries of Asclepius of Tralles and of Michael of Ephesus, and sometimes refers to his "teacher" or "professor". This is an indication that the text was available in a library and was annotated in consequence of lectures on the *Metaphysics*.[48] Alcmaeon is introduced as follows:

> Ἱστορεῖ δὲ ὅτι καὶ Ἀλκμαίων ὁ Κροτωνιάτης τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον τούτοις ἀπεφήνατο· εἰς γὰρ ἐναντίωσίν τινα τῶν ὄντων ἕκαστον ἀνάγειν ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ οὗτος, ὡς ἀρχῶν οὐσῶν τῶν ἐναντιώσεων· καὶ ἢ οὗτος τὰς ἀρχὰς ταύτας παρὰ τῶν Πυθαγορείων παρέλαβεν ἢ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι παρὰ τούτου· ἔφθασε γὰρ γέροντα τὸν Πυθαγόραν Ἀλκμαίων (Codex *Parisinus gr.* 1853, fol. 229v mg.).
>
> [Aristotle] reports that Alcmaeon of Croton, too, expressed himself similarly to them. For he, too, attempted to reduce each of the beings to some contrariety, assuming that the contrarieties are principles. And either he got these principles from the Pythagoreans or the Pythagoreans got them from him. For Alcmaeon reached Pythagoras in the latter's old age.

The anonymous scholiast agrees with Asclepius of Tralles that Alcmaeon somehow "reached" Pythagoras in the latter's old age. It is clear that this coexistence is understood in chronological terms without implying any connection between pupil and teacher.

In summary, three things can be deduced from the survey of the commentary tradition. First, the sentence derives from the *α*-version of the manuscript tradition. Second, the commentators who mention the sentence seem to understand the vague phrase ἐγένετο τὴν ἡλικίαν as referring to an early stage of Alcmaeon's life. Although this interpretation is compatible with the supplement νέος, there is no reason to modify the Aristotelian text. Third, the commentators who mention the sentence are not equipped with further information as to the contemporaneity of Alcmaeon and Pythagoras and their personal or philosophical relationship.

A survey of further sources reveals that other authors provide information of a different kind.

47 Plato, *Epistulae* V, 322a8-b2: Πλάτων ὀψὲ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι γέγονεν καὶ τὸν δῆμον κατέλαβεν ἤδη πρεσβύτερον καὶ εἰθισμένον ὑπὸ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν πολλὰ καὶ ἀνόμοια τῇ ἐκείνου συμβουλῇ πράττειν.
48 See Golitsis 2014: 43–50.

3 Biographical tradition: Iamblichus and Diogenes Laertius

We possess two pieces of evidence from biographers of the Hellenistic era and Late Antiquity that mention Alcmaeon in connection with Pythagoras and his disciples.

The first constitutes the very beginning of the section devoted to Alcmaeon in the history of philosophy produced by Diogenes Laertius:

> Ἀλκμαίων Κροτωνιάτης. καὶ οὗτος Πυθαγόρου διήκουσε.[49]
>
> Alcmaeon of Croton. He, too, heard Pythagoras.

Diogenes Laertius notes that Alcmaeon "heard Pythagoras",[50] namely he studied with the purported founder of the Italian sect. This declaration reflects the tendency of Diogenes Laertius to fit all thinkers into a line of succession by postulating a teacher-pupil relationship, as was common in Hellenistic historiographies of philosophy. In the so-called *Successions* (διαδοχαί), thinkers of different origins and background are organised in lists of disciples or pupils with the focus placed on the special ties of the group rather than on individuals.[51] Thus, Diogenes Laertius divides a vast number of thinkers into two sects, the Ionian and the Italian, in the opening section of his treatise.[52] This schematic division suggests a sort of institutional continuity and doctrinal affinities between different thinkers, which reflects the organisation of philosophy into schools (e.g. Peripatetic, Stoic, Epicurean) that commenced in Athens in the fourth century BC and spread around the entire Greek world in the following centuries. These schools can be described as educational establishments for joint studies under the leadership of a scholarch who cultivates and transmits the doctrines of the founder. Each school operated in a specific locale, applied a set curriculum, pursued communal living, and develops a distinct philosophical tradition, features that can hardly be traced in pre-Aristotelian philosophical practice. The fact that Alcmaeon was from Croton, the Pythagorean metropolis of Magna Graecia, and that he referred in his incipit to some shadowy figures associated with Pythagoreanism, especially Brotinus,[53] encouraged Diogenes Laertius or his source (presumably

49 DK 24 A1 = Diogenes Laertius VIII 83.

50 Cf. Diogenes Laertius VIII 50 and 54 on Empedocles, and VIII 78 on Epicharmus. It is worth noting that other thinkers, including Archytas, Hippasus, and Philolaus, are simply introduced as Pythagoreans.

51 On this doxographical genre and its great influence on the work of Diogenes Laertius see Mejer 1978: 62–73. Cf. Mansfeld and Runia 2009: 73–96.

52 Diogenes Laertius I 13–15.

53 On the Pythagorean status of Brotinus, one of Alcmaeon's addressees, see Diogenes Laertius VIII 42.

Aristoxenus who is often mentioned as an authority in the sections dealing with the Pythagoreans) to assume that Alcmaeon was also a Pythagorean.[54]

Identifying the members of the Pythagorean sect is not an easy task. Most ancient reporters who use the term "Pythagoreans" or similar labels (Πυθαγόρειοι, Πυθαγορικοί, Ἰταλικοί) refer to a cluster of thinkers who mainly came from Magna Graecia and flourished after the death of Pythagoras. The Pythagoreans advocated a particular way of life and they shared a set of common ideas that are often reported to have varied on a number of points, such as the postulation of principles, the capacities of the soul, and the revolutions of celestial bodies. These thinkers include: (i) Pythagoras, the legendary master; (ii) individual Pythagoreans known by name, such as Hippasus and Philolaus; (iii) anonymous individual Pythagoreans; (iv) the Pythagoreans as a group. There is some consensus among scholars regarding the main representatives of Pythagoreanism, but it is debatable whether several thinkers who were primarily interested in life sciences, such as Alcmaeon and Hippo, or contributed to other intellectual fields, such as Epicharmus (comedy), Ion of Chios (poetry) and Polycleitus (sculpture), were associated with the Pythagoreans. To be sure, an association may represent different kinds of relations: sect membership, personal contact or friendship with the master or other Pythagoreans, dialectical exchange of ideas with one's fellows, the possession of doctrinal affinities and differences, even disagreements on some topics. The main problem in specifying the Pythagorean status of a thinker is that Pythagoreanism is not a "philosophical school" in a strict sense, one whose members shared the same ideas and interests so as to be easily identified as such, but a philosophical-cum-religious trend that persisted for centuries while undergoing continuous transformation. Some Pythagoreans were involved in politics actively, others were organised in religious societies and followed a set of rules, and others contributed to various sciences, especially those based on numbers and ratios. Their lifestyle and ideas not only aroused enmity but also influenced other thinkers, and it gradually became commonplace to regard most contemporary thinkers from Magna Graecia as Pythagoreans.

Huffman formulates a set of criteria that help us to identify the members of the Pythagorean sect.[55] First, any thinker who is clearly recognized as a Pythagorean by the ancient reporters who were active before the fourth century BC and were not influenced by Academic ideas can be regarded as a Pythagorean. Second, any thinker who espouses the key doctrines assigned to the Pythagoreans by Aristotle, our richest source from whom many ancient reporters draw material, can be regarded as a Pythagorean; given the wide diversity in Pythagoreanism and the ambiguities surrounding their system, the doctrinal criteria should be limited to the key doctrines, such as the postulation of "limit and unlimited" as principles and numbers as pro-

54 On Aristoxenus as indirect source of Diogenes Laertius see Mejer 1978: 42. On his relation to the Pythagoreans see Zhmud 2012b.

55 Huffman 2008: 292–301.

viding us with knowledge about beings. Third, any thinker who is commonly described in the biographical tradition as having adopted a Pythagorean lifestyle or establishing connections with certain Pythagoreans can be regarded as a Pythagorean.

Let us now examine whether these criteria permit us to classify Alcmaeon among the Pythagoreans. Alcmaeon came from Croton, the Pythagorean metropolis of Magna Graecia, and was active when Pythagoras was old. He appears to believe in the divinity of the celestial bodies, and gave philosophical form to a pivotal Pythagorean belief by arguing that the soul is immortal.[56] His view concerning the movement of the stars bears some doctrinal affinities with the astronomy of some Pythagoreans,[57] and the formulation of his medical theory reflects disapproval of one-man rule and sympathy for egalitarianism,[58] thus fitting in with the Pythagorean principles of communal life. In addition, Alcmaeon refers to some shadowy figures associated with Pythagoreanism in his incipit.[59] Although these points attest to his familiarity with the main philosophical-cum-religious trend of his era and to his personal contact or even friendship with some Pythagoreans, it is difficult to regard Alcmaeon as a member of the Pythagorean sect for the reasons set out below.

First and foremost, no elements of a number theory, the key doctrine attributed to the Pythagoreans by Aristotle, are attested in the extant sources pertaining to Alcmaeon. Aristotle reports that a group of Pythagoreans considered pairs of opposites instead of numbers as principles, but he clearly contrasts Alcmaeon's doctrine of opposites with the table of opposites produced by these Pythagoreans. Likewise, Aristotle mentions Alcmaeon's argument for the immortality of the soul in a different section of *On the Soul* from those in which he reports the Pythagorean doctrines (soul as the motes in the air or as what moves these motes; soul as wind entering the body). Hence Aristotle presents Alcmaeon as an independent thinker who deserves to be examined on his own merits. Alcmaeon's differentiation from the Pythagoreans is beyond dispute, since the cardinal oppositions between "limit and unlimited" and "odd and even" play no role in his system, as far as we can judge from the extant sources. In addition, there is no evidence that Alcmaeon adopted a Pythagorean lifestyle, that he was interested in mathematics and music, and that he was involved in the political life of Croton, especially during the anti-Pythagorean riots. Quite understandably, the pseudo-Pythagorean texts make no reference to Alcmaeon.[60]

It should be noted that most ancient reporters did not present Alcmaeon as a Pythagorean. For this qualification we have had to look to Diogenes Laertius and Iamblichus, both of whom had the tendency to regard earlier philosophers, especially those from Magna Graecia, as Pythagoreans. However, neither seems to be familiar with Alcmaeon and neither offers any valuable information concerning his life

56 DK 24 A12.
57 DK 24 A4.
58 DK 24 B4.
59 DK 24 B1.
60 Cf. Thesleff 1965.

and doctrines. In Iamblichus' report the lack of historical documentation is patently evident:

> Καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ τοῦ διδασκαλείου τούτου, μάλιστα δὲ οἱ παλαιότατοι καὶ αὐτῷ συγχρονίσαντες καὶ μαθητεύσαντες τῷ Πυθαγόρᾳ πρεσβύτῃ νέοι, Φιλόλαός τε καὶ Εὔρυτος καὶ Χαρώνδας καὶ Ζάλευκος καὶ Βρύσων, Ἀρχύτας τε ὁ πρεσβύτερος καὶ Ἀρισταῖος καὶ Λῦσις καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ Ζάμολξις καὶ Ἐπιμενίδης καὶ Μίλων, Λεύκιππός τε καὶ Ἀλκμαίων καὶ Ἵππασος καὶ Θυμαρίδας καὶ οἱ κατ' αὐτοὺς ἅπαντες, πλῆθος ἐλλογίμων καὶ ὑπερφυῶν ἀνδρῶν.[61]
>
> For those who were from this school, especially the oldest who were contemporaneous with him and were young pupils when Pythagoras was old, include: Philolaus, Eurytus, Charondas, Zaleucus, Bryson, Archytas the elder, Aristaeus, Lysis, Empedocles, Zamolxis, Epimenides, Milo, Leucippus, Alcmaeon, Hippasus, Thymaridas, and all those associated with them, a group of reputable and extraordinary men.

Iamblichus records the Pythagoreans who had a direct relationship to the founder of the Pythagorean sect and established a sort of brotherhood in Croton. In the surrounding lines, Iamblichus attempts to show that, on account of their connection with Pythagoras, their discussions and writings were deliberately constructed in such a way that their content was unintelligible to the audience. The postulation of a teacher-pupil relationship and the mention of a "school" reflect the tendency to fit all thinkers into a line of succession and split them into sects, which was prevalent in Hellenistic historiographies of philosophy. Thus, Iamblichus presents Pythagoreanism as a philosophical school (αἵρεσις) in its own right, which had a founder, successors and disciples, adopted a distinctive way of life, and preserved doctrines, set curriculum and rules, as well as a corpus of authoritative texts.[62]

The surviving evidence concerning most of the alleged disciples of Pythagoras is meagre, but it is obvious that some of them had no connection to Pythagoreanism (Charondas, Zaleucus) or were semi-mythical seers credited with the transmigration doctrine (Epimenides, Zamolxis). Others lived after Pythagoras (Philolaus, Eurytus, Bryson, Thymaridas) or are fictional figures (Archytas the elder, Aristaeus).[63] The sole figures that seem to have associated with Pythagoras include Lysis (one of the few survivors of the first anti-Pythagorean riots in Croton), Milo (the famous athlete and general), and Hippasus (the first known Pythagorean who developed a scientific interest in mathematics). The inclusion of Alcmaeon, Empedocles, and even Leucippus in the list "looks like an attempt to show that all the great names in early Pytha-

61 Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae* 104 (not printed in DK).

62 See Macris 2009.

63 The scanty evidence pertaining to Archytas the elder, who was probably invented in order to justify the mention of Archytas, the last major Pythagorean, in reports about Pythagoras, is discussed by Huffman 2005: 25–26. Aristaeus appears, along with other shadowy figures, as an alleged successor of Pythagoras (Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae* 265), but none of them is mentioned in the table of Pythagoreans.

goreanism had studied with the master"[64]. Similar inaccuracies can be detected in the table of Pythagoreans that is preserved at the end of *On the Life of Pythagoras* and includes Alcmaeon among the Pythagoreans from Croton (DK 58 A1).

Conclusion

Although the report that Alcmaeon was a contemporary of Pythagoras is often thought to have been added to the *Metaphysics* after the composition of the original text, there are good reasons to think that it goes back to Aristotle and so provides a valuable piece of information concerning Alcmaeon's dates. An inspection of relevant texts shows that Aristotle refers to the maturation, rather than to the birth or floruit, of Alcmaeon as coinciding with the old age of Pythagoras. This renders Diels' supplement νέος unnecessary. Instead of assuming that a Neopythagorean author inserted the pertinent sentence in the *Metaphysics*, it can be argued that some biographers of the Hellenistic era and Late Antiquity misinterpreted Aristotle's actual words by presenting Alcmaeon as a young pupil of Pythagoras.

64 Huffman 2005: 26.

II COMMENTATORS

Christian Wildberg

5 Late Antiquity: "Whether we like it or not". An Essay

I first thought to write this essay while pondering how Late Antiquity could be studied in new and innovative ways, at universities. More specifically, the inspiration for this essay came to me when I was developing a proposal for a new course in the history of philosophy in the Late Antique period (roughly, from Philo to Philoponus). By the end of this essay it will hopefully be clearer what I mean by the title; I begin by explaining my concern in some preliminary way. Now, I know that my readers might not all exactly be enthusiasts for Late Antiquity, who already feel that the value of studying the post-classical periods all the way up until the Arab conquest is self-evident. But I hope here to convince even the uninitiated or unconverted that the project of studying Late Antiquity truly has weight and urgency, and thereby perhaps to increase the sense of the importance this particular historical period actually has. It would be odd if some of my readers did not think that it is a better use of one's time to read Thucydides rather than Procopius, or Plato rather than Proclus. Not so long ago, I very much thought the same thing because I was the product of a common academic culture.

When I was a graduate student in the 80s, I was one of a handful of budding scholars who took the risk of doing their doctoral research on the marginal fringes of ancient philosophy. The hot topic of the day was Hellenistic philosophy (Stoicism and Skepticism in particular), closely followed by Plato and Aristotle. Cicero was of interest only insofar as he informed us about the Stoics or middle Platonists; even Lucretius was already an outlier, and beyond that, people had very little to say. You would not want to be caught with an open volume of Plotinus on your desk, much less one of the so-called fathers of the church!

To be sure, this situation has now changed somewhat – not least due to the monumental effort of one remarkable scholar of Late Antiquity, Peter Brown. I remember reading his celebrated biography of St. Augustine not terribly long after it came out in the late sixties; here was a book that provided an opening, and offered the reader a fascinating perspective on an intellectually rich and important time, a time in which great men struggled with metaphysical and moral problems of cosmic proportion and impressed their will upon an emerging intellectual discourse that would change the world.

In the mid-eighties, the study of Late Antiquity still did not really exist at all as a distinct field, and it took decades of diligent work and constant prodding to make room for it in Departments of History, Religion, and Classics. Thanks to these efforts, the field does now seem to be well established, at least in a number of universities; but I don't think that I am misrepresenting the state of affairs when I say that things still seem to be very much in a state of potentiality rather than actuality. To be sure,

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the history of the early church has been a field for specialists in religion departments ever since the time of Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930) in the late 19th century. But the broader study of the cultural and intellectual history of Late Antiquity, in which orthodox Christianity is only a part of a much larger whole, has only just begun. For example, 2012 saw the establishment of an interdisciplinary committee for the study of Late Antiquity at Princeton, and a year later Brown University founded the colloquium on Religious and Cultural Exchange in the Post-Classical Mediterranean.

But so far, neither of these efforts and others like them have had much of a trickle-down effect into the consciousness of the general public, and they probably won't have for some time to come. If we trained a spotlight on the educated public and intellectuals who are at home in early modern and contemporary culture and ask the question to what extent they thought Late Antiquity deserved further investigation, I fear that we would stare into a lot of blank faces. More likely than not, our probing spotlight would encounter a great deal of ignorance that is rooted in the profound lack of interest in a period that in fact displays a far greater complexity, intellectual diversity, and cultural cross-fertilization than the classical world of gods and heroes. And yes, I know, there is Hypatia and *Agora* and all that, but this is the exception that proves the point: Late Antiquity lies largely off the radar of our curiosity and therefore, *a fortiori,* beyond any genuine engagement and understanding.

Here is little anecdote about a brief conversation I overheard many years ago that humorously illustrates the point. The location is Rome. Imagine a middle-aged couple of tourists on a visit to Italy; they have been navigating through the inner city of Rome and the Vatican State all day. Exhausted from walking, they rest their tired frames on the shallow steps around the obelisk on St Peter's Square. Studiously chewing his gum, the husband looks around and up along the walls of the semicircular façade. He pauses and muses, partly to himself, partly to his wife: "I wonder who this Pont Max was. His name is all over the place." To which his wife responds with a shrug and says: "Search me, I don't know!"

I don't tell this story in the unkind spirit of mocking the cluelessness of today's average tourist. Rather, I want to emphasize something much more important: this anecdote is a perfect example of the concealed presence of the late antique past. Remnants of that past have become part of our own world; we see them, even look at them, but we have lost the firm grasp of what they mean. Such things have become mere ciphers for most of us, empty and meaningless; however, the meaning that these remnants signify continues to remain an important part of our world: "Pont Max" seemed just like another name, perhaps like the movie "Mad Max", and as such was indecipherable for our tourist; thus, he could not possibly make the inference that at that very moment a latter-day *pontifex maximus* was perhaps sitting not so very far from him, behind one of the windows of the adjacent wing right there in St. Peter's, building one of his formidable bridges and affecting human lives around the world in no mean measure.

Inscriptions aside, there are numerous things that, over the centuries, we have begun to take for granted and continue to take for granted – a whole slate of preconceptions, assumptions and beliefs, customs and entire institutions, like the church and the Pope. They all very much belong to our present world, except that we have forgotten that they were all invented at some time in the past and have been skillfully woven into the fabric of our society and its history. The time, the period in which much of this happened, and which has inscribed itself into the reservoir of our collective consciousness like no other, is undoubtedly Late Antiquity. In museums and special exhibitions, we are nowadays treated here and there to the rich and ornate material culture of that time. But one must emphasize that the material culture is only the outward expression of an inner world of thoughts and ideas. What we also need to see clearly, if we want to understand Late Antiquity, is the intellectual world that gave birth to long-lasting iconographies of human destiny and identity, of moral values, conceptions of heaven and earth, life and death, triumph and defeat, sin and redemption. To be sure, Late Antiquity has become an increasingly fertile ground for the cultural historian, the historian of religion, and the political historian. But the task of examining this inner world, the big ideas that preoccupied the late antique intelligentsia, how these ideas hung together, why they made sense at the time, and whether or not they should still have traction with us today – all of this is the task of the historian of philosophy.

In this essay I would like to propose two separate but related theses and attempt to make them as plausible as I can:

(i) The first thesis is that of all the historical periods into which antiquity is traditionally divided (Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Imperial periods, and then Late Antiquity), it is this last period – Late Antiquity – that was in fact the most formative and influential in the subsequent course of the history of western culture, not only for the middle ages but in certain respects also for modernity, indeed for us now. The thesis is certainly *prima facie* plausible, if one thinks in the first instance about religion, Christianity, but good support for it could also be garnered if one were to look at legal history, or at the historical causes that shaped the geopolitical structure of Europe, both east and west.

(ii) However, and this would be my second thesis, I would also like to argue that Late Antiquity is actually of prime importance in terms of understanding the fundamental tenets and beliefs of our *intellectual* history. And I do mean quite literally "philosophical" intellectual history. Now, this may strike some of you as counterintuitive, given that, as you may reasonably object, the really great thinkers of antiquity lived well before the Roman Empire. But I am not talking about Plato and Aristotle. I am talking about that welter of intellectual currents that converged in Late Antiquity to form a common culture of philosophical discourse, broadly conceived, that includes not only pagan philosophy as it was at the time, but also and especially Christian philosophy as well as the various manifestations of Gnosticism and Hermetism.

I can just imagine that this proposal might meet some resistance. It is evident, one might say, that much of the written output of Late Antiquity is Christian theol-

ogy, which has little or nothing to do with philosophy, and what there is of philosophy proper, i.e. late antique pagan philosophy, is entirely secondary and forgettable, since it is wholly dependent on the infinitely superior works of, say, Plato and Aristotle.

This is the sort of thing a modern philosopher or even a hardcore historian of philosophy might say. One can easily see how widespread this sort of attitude is by surveying, for example, the available monographs on the history of western philosophy. After typically treating the reader to a rich three-course meal of Pre-Socratic, Classical and Hellenistic philosophy, the narrative in these monographs tends to peter out in dramatic fashion, not because the cooks and waiters have all gone home and the restaurant is about to close, nor because there isn't any food left. Perhaps we get a quick glance at Plotinus, but that's just about it. The authors of these histories, it seems, think that the prospect of having to recount the rich history of philosophy in Late Antiquity is simply too much to deal with, like a far too calorific dessert no one could possibly stomach any more. We all had an elegant sufficiency, thank you very much, and no, we won't even have a bite of an Augustinian pear, stolen or not stolen, or touch as much as a "Clementine".

Or, to stay with the metaphor, we are at a different banquet, this time savoring the history of medieval philosophy. Etienne Gilson's monumental work is one such multicourse *prandium*. On his menu, Late Antiquity is served for starters, a preliminary sort of dish that you need to finish off before you can move on to a *plat de résistance* of Scotus, Bonaventure and Aquinas. Gilson does a good job of highlighting salient ideas to be found in Justin, Irenaeus, Gregory, and so on. But then one pauses with a jolt: there is no mention of Philo, of Plotinus, of Porphyry, or of Proclus. These people don't seem to exist. Next, when one reads the chapters on Late Antiquity, the various ingredients of our meal are all of the highest nutritious quality: according to Gilson, the venerable fathers of the church get pretty much everything right! They are paraded like icons, and the reader loses any sense that these thinkers were tough-minded public intellectuals who harnessed a fair amount of dodgy logic to push political interests and agendas. The adulation of the church fathers may have something to do with the fact that Gilson's great work needed the imprimatur from Pius XII, the *pontifex maximus* at the time, nowadays best known for having been the first to wield the mighty club of papal infallibility while at the same time studiously avoiding the pulpit when it came to saying something infallible about the plight and persecution of the Jews in Nazi Germany. But all that is by the by. Back to the history of philosophy.

I have books on my shelf that make life easy and jump directly from Aristotle to Aquinas, but those books date from before the general study of Late Antiquity underwent something of a renaissance over the last 25 years or so. Now that there are so many colleagues working in the field, it seems like a good idea to turn the writing of an intellectual history of the period into a joint venture. One such collaborative effort has been recently published by Lloyd Gerson to replace Hilary Armstrong's venerable but dated history of philosophy in Late Antiquity. This was a fine thing to do. Except

that no matter how hard the editor tried, the account is atomized into a narrative about separate thinkers. Moreover, every one of the participating authors has his particular hero, propped up and placed into the best possible light. It is an intellectual history pretty much without villains, again a story without philosophical impasses, paralogisms, and plain errors.

Most curious of all is perhaps the fact that one thing you won't find in any these histories is a discussion of the "philosophy" (in the broad sense suggested above) of first century BCE Judaism (Philo, for example), or of such profound thinkers as John the Baptist, Jesus and Paul, for that matter. I am tempted to say that this – as far as I can see – ubiquitous omission is a bit like talking about Platonism without ever mentioning Pythagoras and Socrates. Well, it isn't a bit like it, it is exactly like it, and the facile separation of what is supposed to be religious thought from what is philosophical thought is one of the greatest obstacles that stand in the way of understanding the period in question. And yes, I have no problems calling John and Jesus thinkers, even though for most people it is presumably more important to consider what they did and what was done to them, rather than what they thought. But undoubtedly, their actions and their sufferings, just as in the case of Socrates, originated from the center of their intellectual commitments and deepest beliefs. And on a certain level, the distinction we like to draw between philosophical and religious beliefs then becomes very blurry indeed.

The church fathers, at any rate, made no such distinction. It was patently obvious to them, and they explicitly said so, that their exegeses and discussions of scripture, as well as the consequences to be inferred from them and the competitive opposition of these consequences to the traditional doctrines of the Greeks – all this was 'philosophy'. For them, the doctrines they embraced 'stood to reason', and I do not see why a history of philosophy of Late Antiquity should not therefore hold them to the standards of reason. This proposal does not aim to eradicate entirely the traditional distinction between philosophy, with its commitment to reason, and religion, with its commitment to the authority of revelation. Rather, it acknowledges that no religious system of beliefs can function in the long run without reason, without assumptions that hang together in some coherent form, and without explanatory narratives that lend themselves to communication to the next generation and continue to satisfy the innate human desire to understand.

So what we need, it seems to me, is an intellectual history of Late Antiquity, a history that is so broadly conceived that it does not, in view of the obvious communalities, simply just connect Proclus and Dionysius the Areopagite, or Plotinus and Origen, but actually juxtaposes Jesus and Lucretius, or Paul and Cicero. A survey of this kind might begin to wrench answers from the extant material – answers to very, very important questions which not only puzzle me a great deal, but which one cannot, it seems to me, ignore much longer with impunity.

Let me give you a few examples of what I have in mind.

– Sometime in the fifth century BCE, the philosopher Protagoras confesses that neither he nor any other human being had any direct knowledge of the gods. He was

undoubtedly influenced by Xenophanes and others who had become aware of the epistemic limitations of traditional Greek religion. And at the time, many people thought this view wasn't unreasonable. Fast forward: sometime in the fifth century AD, a sharp mind like Proclus slaughters a pig and carefully buries it under the floor of his house on the south slope of the acropolis in Athens, the bloodstained knife still sticking in the sacrificial victim's neck. The purpose of this ritual was to purify and prepare his villa for a very important guest, none other than the goddess Athena. Athens had resisted Christianization for the longest time, but by the time of Proclus in the late fourth century, the Christians began to decommission the temples on the acropolis. Athena had appeared to Proclus in a dream and announced that she wanted to move down from the acropolis in order to live with him. And so Proclus slaughtered a pig to welcome her. He and his collaborators, intelligent and educated people from all over the empire, apparently did not think that this was unreasonable. Between Protagoras and Proclus, what happened?

– Or consider this: At the moment when humanity was called upon to wake up to the message of forgiveness, inner peace and eternal redemption, mankind found new and hitherto unheard-of ways of silencing and suppressing the other, typically on no more ground than intellectual disagreement. In the first century before the common era, the circle around Cicero happily debated the doctrines of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus and Chrysippus, forever going back and forth among themselves and enjoying the experience of being immersed in intricate controversy. Only a few generations later, such intimate acquaintance with pagan lore could get you into serious trouble. At the very time when emperor Marcus Aurelius revitalized the four great pagan schools of philosophy in Athens, St. Irenaeus got busy drawing up his *Philosophoumena*, a long list of heresies that was destined to ensnare many a free spirit in the ever-spreading net of vigilant orthodoxy. One man was pitted against another for the sole reason that he believed this rather than that, prayed to this god rather than another, or prayed to the same god in this fashion rather than that fashion. Again, what happened? Why precisely did this make sense to reasonable people?

Alfred North Whitehead once famously characterized the European philosophical tradition as a "series of footnotes to Plato." Not so. To get a sense of how extensive, momentous and radically un-Platonic these footnotes could be, one only needs to take a closer look at the so-called Hermetic treatises, a curious and curiously influential set of texts from Late Antiquity that look a bit like Greek philosophy, because they use the language of Greek philosophy; but in fact, one realizes soon enough that here one is breathing a more rarified and otherworldly air, very different from the humid sea breeze that once carried about the owls of Athens. What we are dealing with here is a seismic shift of perspective that must have shaken the ancient world in the first few centuries of the Common Era and captured the imagination of the layman and the intellectual alike.

To give you just one example: A passage in first treatise of the *Corpus Hermeticum* relates the story of man's incarnation, how human beings came into the world. Superficially, it all looks like an adaptation of the Narcissus myth: the ideal Man, a

creation of the highest god, looks down into the world and becomes engrossed in the possibilities of an existence in the physical world. Upon closer inspection, however, it turns out that the Hermetic story is much more complicated. In fact, two quite different love stories with different points seem to be woven together in a complicated psychology of attraction. According to one strand of the narrative, Man looks down and recognizes in his own reflection the image of God, and the apparent presence of his father in the world attracts him into the world. That is to say, Man sees himself in the world as god, or as a god, or as the representative of god, and accepts *that* as his defining nature. According to the other strand of the story, the ideal Man looks down and Nature, here personified as a woman, sees him from below. Nature falls in love with Man, and ensnares him in fetters of corporeal existence, which is his downfall and death. Here we have, in a nutshell and side by side, two of the great moments that define much of late antique anthropology: the disparagement, even hostility towards the body, as the principle of death, and the delusion of a divine pedigree, bestowing upon us an exalted and privileged status high above the rest of creation.

It would be a mistake to think that a detail such as this, buried in the manuscripts of obscure treatises, is merely of academic interest. To my mind, it is indicative of a fundamental transformation in the human intellectual landscape, a transformation that might well be more fundamental than the transition to Christianity itself. For I doubt that we are dealing here with something that is best understood as the result of Christianization; Plotinus too despised his body and thought of himself as a sort of divine figure, and he claimed to have ascended all the way up to consort with the highest creative principle of the world. Neither Hermetists nor Neoplatonists had any truck with the emerging new religion, but they all shared an amazing confidence in the exceptional spiritual status of humanity. It seems that we are dealing with a powerful intellectual and religious tsunami wave that washed over the Roman Empire and swept everyone along and onto higher ground, Christianity being just one particular manifestation of that momentous phenomenon.

Before I pursue this lead any further, let me pause for a moment to remind you that the denigration of the body and exaltation of ourselves as divine are far from the most important or most notable cultural innovations we can trace back to Late Antiquity. It seems to me that many other philosophical commitments of late antique intellectuals became formative not just of Christianity but also of the entire development of Western thought up to the present day. At this point I cannot give you much more than a list of philosophical doctrines and beliefs, all of which originated or became mainstream in Late Antiquity; they share the common characteristic that all of them had an immense impact on how we might construe the world and our role as human beings in it. To what has already been mentioned we may add:

1. The emerging conviction that there is only one god. This is particularly significant, since dogmatic belief in monotheism may well be regarded as the prime mover of religious intolerance and violence;
2. the conviction that the world is created rather than eternal, and that it is created by a god as an expression of divine will; concomitant with this dogma is

3. the view that the course of history is predetermined and directed towards an eschatology that is now understood in moral terms, as a day of judgment;
4. the problematic creed that humans are a direct offspring of the divine and as such are entitled to rule over the rest of creation and exploit it for their supposedly ulterior purposes; all of this is underwritten by
5. the conviction that we are in the possession of god's revealed word, which *eo ipso* contains the truth and nothing but the truth.

This is the time in which geocentricity ceased to be a highly plausible hypothesis and was elevated to the level of a cosmological certainty. And as these broad theological and cosmological doctrines found traction and became common currency, they transformed the citizen of a polis or region into a citizen of a very particular kind of universe, a universe in which god constantly monitors his creation and takes partisan interest in the affairs of men. For pagans and Christians alike, the divine stood at the ready to communicate and intervene at any time; and there was a plan that would put you on one or the other side of condemnation and salvation.

This sort of outlook gave birth to far-reaching ethical theories that would have perplexed people living during a pre-Christian period. For if the world is determined in all its aspects by a benevolent god, and if, at the end of time, each human being will individually stand trial to be justified or condemned, there has to be something about human beings in virtue of which they can be pronounced innocent or guilty. And so it was in Late Antiquity that the human faculty of a free will was invented.

The view is, roughly, that apart from reason and desire, human beings have a "will" that constitutes the center of our character as agents; and this will is free, that is to say, human beings qua human beings are autonomous with respect to their actions at any time in their adult lives. This notion does not strike us as peculiar only because it is so familiar from the moral philosophy of Augustine and Kant. But it should give one pause that this concept cannot be found in the psychology of Plato or Aristotle or the Stoics. Yet, by the time of Augustine the idea of a will that is by nature free was firmly in place and is still very much alive today.

The fact is that the period of Late Antiquity was a fertile breeding ground for all kinds of new ideas that made it into the canon of western civilization and ended up defining the horizon within which our history evolved. When philosophers today discuss the will, and whether or not its freedom is compatible with nature's causality and its laws, they would do well to remember, even for a moment, that the concept they are trying to understand was invented in the course of debates that presupposed a particular kind of theocentric metaphysics that itself has not stood the test of time. And so, we are grappling – and presumably will have to grapple for some time to come – with 'the will', the elusive attendant notion of an erroneous cosmology, and a highly problematic philosophy of history.

If all this is not troubling enough, one might add the important observation that the notion of a free will has presumably contributed to the perpetration of countless acts of unjustified punishment and dehumanization. Why? Because closely connect-

ed to the idea of a free will is the view, also a product of Late Antiquity, that the origin and principle of evil in the world is humanity itself.

Since the will was thought to be free, it came to be thought of as something that could be directed in any which way. That is to say, the will could be used not simply to direct us towards certain good and beneficial means and ends, but, since it is free and unconstrained, there was nothing to prevent it from intending means and ends that are neither agreed-upon intrinsic goods, nor even perceived goods; the human will, so it was thought, could be directed to the very opposite of goodness, viz. moral evils aimed at nothing else but inflicting harm on others. Now, given that there are a lot things happening in the world that strike us as harmful and destructive, the conclusion seemed inescapable that at least some, if not all of these evils have been brought about by agents that willed them. These agents must then be evil themselves for having willed them. And from this, one could conclude that a logical way to confront evil in the world is to identify the culprits, and to deal with those culprits in a way that ensures that they will never again be able to disrupt the god-given world order.

All this needs to be said, in however sketchy an outline, to draw attention to the fact that the notion of the will, and of the will being free, may not be such an innocent notion. The predominant explanation of human action by the will has undoubtedly contributed to countless acts of unjust condemnations of the other and countless self-righteous efforts to recalibrate the moral status of the world: torture, exile, imprisonment, persecution, and execution – all of which are themselves outstanding examples of pure evil, the very thing they were designed to eradicate.

Now I am not saying that all these momentous and problematic ideas that I have listed (monotheism, creationism, human exceptionalism, intellectual intolerance, free will, the explanation of evil, etc.) were all “invented” in Late Antiquity; some of them were prefigured in more ancient pagan philosophy, others in Hellenistic Judaism. But it is in Late Antiquity that they became mainstream, acquired traction, and commanded recognition with an authority that only a suicidal man would venture to challenge.

Before I conclude, I would like to add one further consideration that should alert us to the unique significance of the intellectual world of Late Antiquity. Earlier in this essay I invoked the philosophical ethos of Cicero and his circle, and I remarked that this kind of freewheeling and liberal intellectual exchange was going to be quite unusual and even dangerous only a few generations later. It is worthwhile pausing and thinking about this curious phenomenon for a bit. My hunch is that it has something to do with the canonization of literature, a paradigm shift that was perhaps as momentous, if not more so, as the shift from orality to literacy. The Hellenistic age, with its establishment of synoptic collections of the literary output up to the end of the fourth century BCE in libraries and institutions of higher learning witnessed, for the first time in our history, the emergence of a canon of those works worthy of preservation, dissemination, and scholarly attention. These works were produced in the archaic and classical periods, and they formed the backbone of a living literary cul-

ture. This is very much in evidence in the Hellenistic Age itself, which saw a vast literary production based on the innovative appropriation, adaptation, and development of philosophy, poetry, and natural science. The towering late Republic figures such as Cicero, Varro, Horace, Lucretius, Vergil, etc. are just the tail end of this cultural phenomenon.

But then something absolutely remarkable happens, gradually and steadily over the course of the first two or three centuries of the Common Era. In both the religious and secular sphere, texts become canonical in a much more elevated sense. Instead of being part of a living tradition, texts are invested with a hitherto unheard of authority and truth. The canon formation in the realm of Christianity and the emergence of the sacred text is well researched and understood, but the same sort of fabrication of the authoritative text can be observed in the secular realm. This is the time in which the ideas of the classical authors cease to be used as mere starting points for one's own speculation (Plotinus is one of the last figures to work in this way.) Texts qua texts, on the basis of their authorship and antiquity, are now regarded as the embodiment of truth. And so, philosophy and natural science turn above all into exercises of exegesis. We find ourselves in the age of the commentary, and as far as I can see, that curious deference to the authority of the canon, which underlies all enterprises of exegesis and commentary, has never entirely left us.

From these preliminary remarks I conclude – and I hope that you can agree with me at least to some extent – that Late Antiquity, rather than our beloved Classical Greece, was the most formative period of antiquity. Unlike the archaic and classical periods, the intellectual world of Late Antiquity is still very much part and parcel of our own world, perhaps even disturbingly so. As Peter Brown is wont to say: "Late Antiquity is later than you think." Just as the monumental "Pont Max" inscriptions in Rome, certain core beliefs of late antique thinkers acquired a robust staying power and remain quite literally "all over the place".

I will conclude at this point; no doubt there are other aspects and considerations – concerning politics, perhaps, or art history, or economics – that equally illustrate the paramount importance of Late Antiquity as not just a *transitional* but a *formative* period of our history. But interesting as all this may be, these various observations do not answer the question how such a veritable revolution of intellectual commitments could have taken place. What is this invisible power that sweeps entire traditions under the carpet and establishes new paradigms that have a surprisingly long reception history, despite the fact that they are intrinsically problematic and potentially harmful? I don't have an answer to that question yet, except to say that at least some of the radically new ideas of Late Antiquity arose presumably as challenges to the overpowering cultural hegemony of the early Roman Empire, but they then morphed themselves (or were nefariously morphed) into formidable instruments of that very power. Or perhaps, rather, into instruments of power itself. How precisely this happened and still happens is quite mysterious, but in that direction lie perhaps the most pressing and most interesting questions anyone working in cultural history could ask.

On a previous occasion, I concluded this talk with the equally beautiful and haunting last sentence of *The Great Gatsby*, which I thought was a fitting epitaph for our struggle to make sense of our intellectual history. You all know the exquisite quote: “And so we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.” But why should we be borne back ceaselessly into the past and repeat, generation after generation, the timeless lessons our humanistic canon supposedly teaches us? Perhaps there is room and occasion for a different kind of humanities, one with a larger dose of critical distance, and less wide-eyed adulation. The metaphor to use might rather be one that evokes a figure like Penelope, who unravels the threads of her woven fabric and once more starts over again. Perhaps the humanistic study of the past, and of Late Antiquity in particular, whether we like it or not, must entail a certain amount of unraveling of narratives and texts, and can thereby undo, bit by bit, the tyranny of the western canon.

Paul Kalligas

6 Plotinus' criticism of Aristotle's doctrine of primary substance and its background

Introduction

Being the founder of Neoplatonism, Plotinus is mainly known as a reformer of Platonism, as the thinker who has endowed Platonic philosophy with the characteristics of a comprehensive philosophical system, one with foundational principles and an elaborately worked-out hierarchical structure, aiming to offer, among other things, a complete and exhaustive account of the metaphysical underpinnings which determine the formation and function of the sensible universe. Less well known is the contribution of Aristotelianism to the construction of this, undoubtedly impressive in its complexity, theoretical scheme. However, as Porphyry, Plotinus' biographer and trusted pupil testifies, the master had always in mind the works of Aristotle whereas, in his lectures, he made frequent reference to the commentaries that had been composed by his near contemporaries, trying to analyze the writings and to develop the doctrines of Aristotle, the result being, in Porphyry's own words (*VP* 14.4–7), that "his writings are full of concealed Stoic and Peripatetic doctrines, while Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, in particular, is concentrated in them".

Nonetheless, the use of the works of Aristotle and of his commentators by Plotinus differs quite substantially from the way in which he approaches the works of Plato. For, whereas Plato is regarded as the most authentic and the most complete exponent of a philosophical tradition Plotinus considers as his own – albeit the formulations of the old master may occasionally require not altogether insignificant alterations – the positions expounded by Aristotle need to be carefully and critically examined and assessed, and only after they have been found to involve no direct conflict with those of Plato, they may be accepted and integrated into their new theoretical environment. This means that while Plato's writings require mere working out, analysis and clarification aiming to remedy occasional unclarities or omissions, or else to prevent possible misinterpretations, the works of Aristotle were sometimes treated as objects of severe and detailed criticism, in order to be purged of various inaccuracies or even of straightforward mistakes.[1]

The main topics on which Plotinus finds room for disagreement with Aristotle are the following:

1. The viewing of the soul as the actuality of an organic body and the consequent denial of its immortality. This was seen as running against one of the most fundamental Platonic tenets, the one concerning the immortal nature of the soul,

1 For a more comprehensive account of Plotinus' attitude towards Aristotle, see Magrin 2016.

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even though Plotinus tries to reach a compromise by attributing some characteristics of Aristotle's analysis to the compound "animal" which, according to his view, is formed out of the combination of the body with an "image" of the soul itself, projected upon the body and providing it with life.

2. The positioning of a divine Intellect at the summit of the ontological hierarchy as a first principle which, by being a primary unmoved mover, sets in motion and governs the formation and the function of the universe. As opposed to this, Plotinus posited as highest principle a completely transcendent One, identical with Plato's Good and lying beyond Intellect and all the categorizations implied by intellectual activity.
3. The acknowledgement of individual corporeal entities as the foundational constituents of reality, as primary substances on which the whole edifice of being depends. The primacy of such substances in respect of all the other categories, even in respect of the universal entities sometimes designated as "secondary substances", was seen as being in direct opposition to the fundamental priority assigned by the Platonists to universal ideal essences, as opposed to their particular sensible manifestations.

For Plotinus, it was fairly evident that, in order to lay aside these Aristotelian tenets, it was necessary not only to present the alternative Platonist views, but also to embark on a detailed and complete refutation of them, so as to leave room for establishing a coherent Platonic theory. A great deal of the *Enneads* may be read, in my view, as such an attempt to answer Aristotle's objections against the philosophical doctrines of his master, and to mark out the theoretical basis on which a consistent system of thought might be erected, capable to supplant the model advocated by Aristotle.

In what follows, I wish to focus on the third of the points mentioned above, the one pertaining to the criticism Plotinus exercised against Aristotle's doctrine of substance as it appears within the framework of his theory of categories.

1 Stoics, Peripatetics and Platonists on the *Categories*

The work of Aristotle known to us today as the *Categories* appears to have been known during the Hellenistic period under the title "Before the *topoi*" and was then considered as a sort of preliminary to Aristotle's major treatise on dialectic, the *Topics*.[2] It thereby became the object of sustained criticism on the part of the Stoics who entertained a rather different conception of dialectic. As it seems, a prominent older member of this school, Athenodorus of Soloi was particularly involved in

2 See Bodéüs 2002: xxxiii-xli.

this debate. He was the brother of the famous poet Aratus and an older contemporary of his compatriot Chrysippus, who had dedicated to him a book bearing the most noteworthy title "On demonstrative statements" (Περὶ τῶν κατηγορευτικῶν).[3] In order to understand the import of this title, we must take into account that, according to the testimony of Diogenes Laertius,[4] Athenodorus had a special interest for the theory concerning a special variety of propositions, which the Stoics called "simple propositions" (ἁπλᾶ ἀξιώματα). Simple propositions were said to be composed either of "a noun in the nominative plus a predicate", e. g. "Dion walks", in which case they were called assertoric (κατηγορικά), or else of "a demonstrative pronoun in the nominative plus a predicate", e. g. "this one walks" (οὗτος περιπατεῖ), in which case they were termed demonstrative. Now, we have to keep in mind here that, for the Stoics in general, the primary denotative function of language concerns events or states of affairs. Thus dialectic, as the science dealing with significant linguistic expressions, should have as its proper object of study expressions such as the ones the Stoics termed "propositions" (ἀξιώματα). In its simplest form, such an expression may take the external form of a single verb such as "(he) walks" but comes into the domain of dialectic only if it is interpreted as a proposition either of the assertoric or of the demonstrative kind. If not, then such an expression falls into the domain of another science, namely grammar, which deals with what were described as "incomplete sayables" (ἐλλιπῆ λεκτά), namely those bearing no denotative function. We should not be surprised, therefore, by the fact that Athenodorus' criticism of the *Categories* focused on exactly this point. For him, the classification of simple expressions undertaken by Aristotle in this treatise appears to be severely defective because, if it purported to fall within the area of dialectic, then it had failed to include most "complete sayables", such as "Dion walks"; on the other hand, if it was meant to fall in the area of grammar, then it fails to examine other simple grammatical formations, such as articles, conjunctions etc.[5]

The earliest response to this line of criticism we hear of on the part of the Peripatos comes from the great renovator of this tradition, who was also the redactor of the famous "Roman edition" of the works of Aristotle in the first century B.C., namely Andronicus of Rhodes. As far as we know, it was Andronicus who first detached the work from its direct association with the *Topics*, ascribed to it the new title *Categories*, and placed it at the beginning of a series of the so-called "logical" treatises of Aristotle, as an introductory part of what came to be known later as the "Organon". Andronicus had his edition embellished with scholia, paraphrases and commentaries meant to assist the reader of the treatises in his understanding of the doctrine embedded in the text, taking care also to defend it against various criticisms that had been formulated in the meantime. Thanks to Simplicius,[6] we happen to know

3 See Diogenes Laertius VII 190.

4 *Ibid*. VII 68 – 70.

5 On Athenodorus' criticism of the *Categories*, see Griffin 2013: 204.

6 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 21.22 – 24.

the way Andronicus paraphrased the first sentence of the *Categories*, by borrowing a phrase from the beginning of the second chapter of the treatise:

> Τῶν λεγομένων τὰ μὲν ἄνευ συμπλοκῆς λέγεται, τὰ δὲ μετὰ συμπλοκῆς· καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄνευ συμπλοκῆς ὁμώνυμα μὲν λέγεται ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινὸν κλπ.
>
> Of things said, some are said without combination, others with combination; and of those without combination some are called homonyms, namely those things that have only a name in common, etc.

At first sight, this might seem like a rather inconspicuous addition to the received text given by the manuscripts, however in fact it appears to address precisely the sort of criticism made by Athenodorus by suggesting an answer which, moreover, bears some rather momentous consequences. For, in its present context, the expression 'things said without combination' can only refer to actual things and not to mere linguistic expressions, since their designation as 'homonyms' makes them the object of "the definition which corresponds to the name"[7] mentioned later in the text and explicitly distinguished from the 'name' (ὄνομα) as such. This seems to indicate that Andronicus was in fact trying to establish right from the start that terms 'without combination', that is, simple or uncombined names and predicates, may have a denotation of their own, even before they have been combined to form an assertoric or demonstrative propositional structure.

According to this view, terms have their own independent denotational function, referring directly to things or 'beings' which, in turn, may be classified or categorized according to the genius-species relations existing between them, so as to be eventually integrated within the system of the ten categories. The latter will thereby function as supreme genera to which all beings must be subsumed.[8] It is surely no accident that Andronicus is known to have ascribed special importance to the method of division by means of which such a classification of every term may be achieved. For he actually wrote a special monograph on the subject, later consulted by Boethius while composing his own *De divisione*.[9]

Andronicus' approach brought into light the fundamental differences separating the Aristotelian analysis of the basic components in a propositional structure from the Stoic one, but it further prompted, as a side effect, the emergence of a completely different type of criticism against Aristotle's treatise. This time, it was no longer focused on its putative failure to deal adequately with the various linguistic forms, but it concerned the ontological assumptions the latter seemed to incorporate. More pre-

7 *Cat*. 1a4: κατὰ τοὔνομα λόγος. The words τῆς οὐσίας that follow are now regarded as a later addition and are duly deleted from the text in the recent edition by Bodéüs.

8 On this, see Chiaradonna 2009.

9 See Griffin 2012. According to the testimony of Boethius, *De divisione* 4.5–7 Magee, presumably based on that of Porphyry in his commentary on Plato's *Sophist*, Plotinus had expressed his strong approval (*comprobatus*) for this work by Andronicus.

cisely, the positing of particular sensible things at the core of the analysis of all kinds of predication caused a strong reaction on the part of certain Platonists, especially those who were otherwise interested in appropriating elements of Aristotelian provenance into their own, often eclectic version of Platonism.

Already in Plutarch, we find the view that, in the *Timaeus* (37c), where he speaks about the cognitive powers of the World Soul, Plato offers an outline (ὑπογραφή) of the ten categories, by means of which the soul is able to apprehend events taking place in the universe.[10] About a century later, the Platonist "Alcinous" also attributes to Plato the doctrine of the ten categories,[11] which he wishes to discover, rather unexpectedly,[12] in the *Parmenides* "and in other works"; he goes on further to relate it to the requirement for the "correctness of names" that encountered in the *Cratylus*. For, as he says, the correct ascription of a name presupposes precise knowledge of the "nature" of the thing it denotes. And the method of division is the appropriate one to reveal such 'natures'. Nonetheless, such attempts appear to clash with two basic components of the Platonic view of reality: (a) with the radical and uncompromising distrust towards the data derived from sensory experience, which is never acknowledged by Plato as a reliable cognitive source, and (b) with the consequent reluctance to accept as a fact that sensible objects actually possess any kind of permanent 'nature' or 'substance'.

It is in these directions that the most prominent and meticulous critics of the *Categories* during the second century A.D., the Platonists Lucius and Nicostratus, turned their attack. They also raised, more generally, the problem of the work's cohesion and coherence, and they advanced a series of detailed arguments by which they contested both the distinctions introduced by Aristotle and the conceptual tools he had employed in order to produce them, for example the concept of homonymy, and various distinctions such as the one between 'state' and 'disposition', and even the incoherent, according to them, use of the notion of difference. I cannot embark here into a full analysis of the manifold objections 'those around Lucius and Nicostratus' (οἱ περὶ τὸν Λούκιον καὶ Νικόστρατον), as Simplicius usually refers to them, had advanced against Aristotle, so I will confine myself to some salient points.

1. By taking into consideration Aristotle's remark in *Cat*. 2, 1a24–25, according to which inherent properties do not constitute parts of the substance in which they reside, they objected that, in dealing with sensible objects, properties such as colour and shape are integral components of them, since nothing corporeal can be without colour or without shape, therefore, such properties should be regarded as inseparable constituents of them.[13]

10 Plutarch, *De anima procreatione* 23, 1023sqq.; see Karamanolis 2006: 124–25. The author of the anonymous *Commentary on the Theaetetus*, 68.7–15 B.-S., claims that in this dialogue Plato refers to at least three out of Aristotle's list of the ten categories.

11 Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* VI, 159.43–160.14.

12 Cf. however, Bechtle 2013: 558–564.

13 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 48.1–11.

2. They raised the question whether the same categories apply both to the sensible and to the intelligible realm. For if they are the same, then sensibles and intelligibles would be synonymous, sharing the same definitions, which seems absurd. On the other hand, if they are different, then why Aristotle says nothing about the intelligible ones? Finally, if they are homonymous, then they will only share their name, so the list of the categories should be extended to include more than ten.[14]
3. There is further the question of how someone can maintain that anything sensible possesses any kind of stable identity (θέσις), while all its parts, being material bodies, undergo constant change, since matter is in a continuous state of flux and is subject to unceasing and 'infinite' (ἀπείρους) additions and subtractions.[15]
4. Aristotle appears to classify colourings, such as whiteness, blackness and redness, either as affective qualities or as affections, because, as he says, "they have been brought about by some affection".[16] Now, the question is how colours consubstantial with a thing's nature, such as the whiteness of snow for example, can be regarded as due to affections.[17]

These examples suffice, I think, to illustrate the seriousness and the incisiveness of Lucius' and Nicostratus' criticism of the *Categories*, which eventually obliged later Peripatetics, such as Alexander of Aphrodisias and his teacher Herminus, to marshal some of their most elaborate and refined arguments to combat it. On the other hand, Plotinus decided to reintroduce and elaborate some of their objections with the intension, this time, not to reject or to demolish completely Aristotle's theory of categories, but to limit its application to the sensible world by altering it substantially and integrating it into his much more encompassing and ambitious project of restructuring Platonic metaphysics through the appropriation of some Aristotelian elements.

2 Plotinus' criticism of the *Categories*

Being an avowed Platonist, Plotinus considered as proper 'real' beings only the intelligible Platonic forms, which he viewed as being compound together in such a way as to constitute the unitary but at the same time multiple hypostasis of the Intellect, the second of the three principal grades of his hierarchic ontological system. The forms relate to each other by means of the pervasive genera of Sameness and Otherness. These, along with the stable and unwavering mode of being exhibited

14 Simplicius, *In Cat.* 73.15 – 32.
15 Simplicius, *In Cat.* 140.22 – 30.
16 Aristotle, *Cat.* 8, 9a28 – 35; 9b9 – 19.
17 Simplicius, *In Cat.* 257.31 – 36.

by the forms and interpreted as *stasis*, and also the fact that they are products of a timeless procession from the supreme principle of the transcendent One and interpreted as *kinesis*, constitute, as the five 'greatest kinds' introduced by Plato in the *Sophist*, the 'categories' of the intelligible realm. On the other hand, as far as the sensible world is concerned, it has to be examined to what extent Aristotle's system of the ten categories may be a suitable tool of analysis.

Plotinus' extensive treatment of this topic occurs in a work which his editor, Porphyry, has partitioned into three sections and placed at the beginning of *Ennead* VI, under the title 'On the Genera of Being'. It starts with a comprehensive attack against Aristotle's concept of primary substance, which, for obvious reasons Plotinus regards as incompatible with his own, Platonic account of reality. For, in his view, the sensible world is no more than a conglomeration (συμφόρησις) of qualities and matter, where both of these components have only a shadowy, that is dependent, kind of subsistence, while being compound together and arranged by injunctions of the World Soul and the individual souls inhabiting it, expressed as formative principles or *logoi*.[18] His main target is, therefore, to call into question the coherence of the Aristotelian notion of substance and to discredit its ontological pretensions.[19]

Two are the main arguments advanced by Plotinus for this purpose. The first of these apparently draws on the criticism already adduced by Lucius and Nicostratus, and evokes a principle which Aristotle himself seems to accept unreservedly on various instances in his works. According to its classical formulation, if the members of a class are in an order of prior and posterior, there cannot be any genus predicated of these which is separate from them.[20] For, as it is explained in the *Politics*,[21] the universal predicate pertaining to such a class would designate an entity which is either non-existent or virtually so.[22] The key concept in the above formulation of the principle is that of priority. In the *Categories* (strictly speaking, in the so-called 'Postpredicamenta') ch. 12, Aristotle distinguishes no less than five different senses of priority. These are (a) temporal priority, (b) "that of not reciprocating in the order of being", (c) "that in respect of order", (d) "that in respect of value", and (e) causal priority. A somewhat different account is offered in *Metaph.* Δ 11, where, as Ross in his commentary observes,[23] sense (b) from the *Categories* corresponds to what there is called "priority in nature and substance", and is explained as involved "in those which cannot be without other things, while the others cannot be without *them*", while the distinction is explicitly attributed to Plato (1019a2–4). The fact that the example Aristotle mentions in the *Categories* in order to illustrate this

18 On this topic, see my extensive analysis in Kalligas 2011.
19 Cf. Anton 1976: 87.
20 See *Metaph.* B 3, 999a6–7.
21 *Pol.* III 1, 1275a35–38.
22 The classic analysis of this principle is to be found in Lloyd 1962. See further Aubenque 1962; Strange 1987; Barnes 2003: 332–336.
23 Ross 1924, I: 317.

sense of being prior is that of the one being prior to two, "because if there are two it follows at once that there is one, whereas if there is one there are not necessarily two, so that the implication of the other's existence does not hold reciprocally from one; and that from which the implication of being does not hold reciprocally is thought to be prior", shows that this is the sense used in the principle under discussion. For in the passage from *Metaph.* B 3 already mentioned, the examples given as forming classes which should not be regarded as constituting separate genera are, once more, those of numbers, as well as of (geometrical) shapes or figures. Therefore, the priority which, according to the principle, precludes the members of a class from belonging to a proper genus is of the metaphysical kind, according to which the existence of a posterior member presupposes that of its prior, but not the converse. Thus, e.g., if every number is defined as the successor of its previous one, it is evident that, thereby, the series of natural numbers does not form a separate genus, but a mere class whose members conform to a strict order of priority and posteriority.

Aristotle does not say anything about the provenance of this principle, neither does he provide any clear reasons for his adherence to it. The only instance where a line of reasoning leading to its acceptance may be reconstructed is a passage from the *Eudemian Ethics*, where a specific version of the principle is introduced in the context of Aristotle's attack against Plato's doctrine of a separate Idea of the Good. The passage is worth quoting in full:

> In things having a prior and posterior, there is no common element beyond, and further, or separable from, them: for then there would be something prior to the first; for the common and separable element would be prior, because with its destruction the first would be destroyed as well; e.g. if the double is the first of the multiples, then the universal multiple cannot be separable, for it would be prior to the double, or, otherwise, the common element turns out to be the Idea, as it would be if one made the common element separable.[24]

It is clear from the passage that the aim of this argument is to prevent the acceptance of the common element in such a series as forming part of the series itself, since such a move would lead to an infinite regress analogous to the one produced by the famous Third Man Argument. This reminds us strongly of the position upheld by the so-called δυσχερεῖς, the disagreeably fastidious opponents of Philebus in Plato's eponymous dialogue.[25] According to these people, if one wishes to grasp the true nature of any kind, for example that of hardness, one should focus one's attention on whatever possesses the pertinent characteristic in the maximum degree, namely, in

24 *EE* I 9–10, 1218a1–9: ἔτι ἐν ὅσοις ὑπάρχει τὸ πρότερον καὶ ὕστερον, οὐκ ἔστι κοινόν τι παρὰ ταῦτα, καὶ τοῦτο χωριστόν. εἴη γὰρ ἄν τι τοῦ πρώτου πρότερον· πρότερον γὰρ τὸ κοινὸν καὶ χωριστὸν διὰ τὸ ἀναιρουμένου τοῦ κοινοῦ ἀναιρεῖσθαι τὸ πρῶτον. οἷον εἰ τὸ διπλάσιον πρῶτον τῶν πολλαπλασίων, οὐκ ἐνδέχεται τὸ πολλαπλάσιον τὸ κοινῇ κατηγορούμενον εἶναι χωριστόν: ἔσται γὰρ τοῦ διπλασίου πρότερον. εἰ συμβαίνει τὸ κοινὸν εἶναι τὴν ἰδέαν, οἷον εἰ χωριστὸν ποιήσειέ τις τὸ κοινόν.
25 Cf. Plato, *Philebus*, 44b6–45a2.

the above example, on whatever is the hardest of all things. Such exemplary bearers of characteristics are considered by the theory as being primary in an epistemological sense, since they allow one to grasp the pertinent characteristic in its most striking and conspicuous instance, without recourse to any universal idea of, say, hardness. It is quite conceivable that, in a Platonist environment such as the Old Academy, some people might have been tempted to regard the ideas as exemplary bearers of such features and thereby as the primary members of a class of items forming a unitary genus. It seems that it is against such a misguided version of Platonic metaphysics that the argument here recorded by Aristotle was originally addressed. In such a case, it becomes even more plausible that, as suggested by M. Schofield,[26] the δυσχερεῖς represent the viewpoint of Speusippus, of whom we know that he had abandoned Plato's theory of separate forms. Indeed, such a derivation of the principle from a context of anti-Platonic criticism would explain the readiness with which Aristotle embraces it and, furthermore, the interest that it had for Plotinus, who appears to wish to turn the tables on Aristotle and use it as a tool in his anti-Aristotelian polemic.

It should have become evident by now that the crucial component of the principle that concerns us here is that the first member of any ordered class of items cannot be considered as being identical with the generic concept that defines and delimits the class itself. Plotinus wishes to apply this amplified version of the principle in the case of the Aristotelian notion of substance as encountered in the *Categories*. If primary and secondary substances are understood as forming such an ordered series, where the former exhibits the defining features of substance in a more full-blown and complete form, as Aristotle appears to maintain, then no common genus can be expected to encompass both kinds of substance, and the category of substance would thereby collapse into an incoherent class of merely homonymous concepts. The strength of Plotinus' criticism is enhanced by the fact that Aristotle himself in the *Categories* seems to be at pains to explain that, even among secondary substances, one may establish an order between those that are 'more substances', namely the species, and those that are less so, namely the genera, and giving as an explanation for this the fact that the former "are nearer to the primary substance" and more informative of its being what it is.[27] He is also trying to point out the common features that bring together both primary and secondary substances under a common heading and thus, presumably, under a common genus, even though the term γένος is notoriously absent as a description of the categories until ch. 9, 11a38 (see also 10, 11b15). At 5, 3a7–21, e. g., he argues that both primary and secondary substances do not inhere in a subject, by adducing the fact that the definition of a secondary substance is predicated of its subject, as opposed to what happens in the case of inherent properties. And also, at 5, 3b10–21, he maintains that even though

26 Schofield 1971.

27 Cf. *Cat.* 5, 2b7–10.

a secondary substance does not, strictly speaking, designate a particular τόδε τί, it nonetheless signifies a substance of certain qualification (ποιάν τινα οὐσίαν) and thereby it is legitimate to call it a substance. Such arguments are used by Plotinus to his own advantage since, in his view, they render evident the ordered structure of the class of beings described by Aristotle as substances and hence they undermine the legitimacy of postulating a single non-homonymous genus encompassing all of them.

It appears, therefore, that the option of having substance as a genus comprising both sensible and intelligible substances as its species, as tentatively suggested at *Enn.* VI 1.1.23 – 24, is not a viable one, according to Aristotle's own principles. Aristotle further seems to neglect in his list of the ten categories the class of beings that are the ones best qualified for the designation of οὐσία or substance, namely, the intelligible entities that constitute the intelligible world of ideal forms. These can only be homonymous to their instantiations in the sensible realm and may appear there as qualitative (or other) attributes at most contributing to the formation of the fleeting phenomena that make up what is commonly but misleadingly regarded as reality.

The second main argument Plotinus advances against the option of having a genus substance comprising both intelligible and sensible substances takes the form of a dilemma (see VI 1.2.4 – 8):

(1) If such were the case, then
(2) there will be something else prior to both intelligible and sensible substance,
(3) something different and predicated of both,
(4) and this could not be anything either corporeal or incorporeal.
    For (a) if it is corporeal, it will be incorporeal,
    (b) and if it is incorporeal, it will be corporeal.

Although this argument is evidently taken to be a *reductio*, it is not immediately clear how it is supposed to work, mainly because the absurdity of proposition (4b) is less than evidently obvious. A genus is not supposed to be qualified by the differences dividing it, even when these represent exhaustive alternatives. Although a number, for instance, has to be either odd or even, it does not follow that in itself, *qua* member of the class of numbers, it is in fact either odd or even. Why, then, the supposed genus substance might not at the same time be incorporeal and be predicated of all individual corporeal substances, in the same way as, say, an incorporeal quality, such as beauty or yellowness, may be predicated of all sorts of corporeal entities, such as daisies and butterflies? It thus becomes clear that the crucial premise of the argument is proposition (2), where it is stated that what is prior to both intelligible and sensible substance has to *be* something else, that is, is assumed to constitute some kind of being. This is further highlighted in the next proposition (3), where it is said to be something different (ἄλλο τι ὄν) from them. It is, nonetheless, exactly the kind of assumption the Stoics were careful enough to avoid. For, as Alexander of

Aphrodisias reports,[28] they had posited a supreme and most general category of 'something' (τὶ), which is predicated of both corporeals and incorporeals without it constituting any kind of being, a designation relegated only to corporeal entities, thus, as Alexander notes, "escaping the *aporia*" of whether their 'something' should admit the definition of being or not. Plotinus, however, is not arguing here against the Stoics, as Armstrong suggests in his note *ad locum*, but against Aristotle and the Peripatetics, who no longer had this option open for them. If a supreme genus of substance is to be accepted, then this is bound to be in itself some kind of being. However, nothing can be a being unless it is either corporeal or incorporeal. Furthermore, the supposed supreme genus, being a genus common to the two known kinds of substance, would have to be predicated of them as of a subject, i.e. synonymously. This would have as a consequence that "whatever is predicated of it will have to be said of the subject also" (*Cat*. 3, 1b10 – 12). In that case, therefore, a corporeal entity, such as an Aristotelian primary substance, would have the genus of incorporeal supreme substance predicated of it as of a subject, that is, as part of its definition. And this is patently absurd.

It may be noted here that both of Plotinus' main arguments against the Aristotelian doctrine of primary substance are *ad hominem*, relying as they are on premises taken over from the conceptual apparatus of his opponents. This conforms to his overall strategy of indicating inaccuracies and inconsistencies within the framework of Aristotelianism. He goes on to point out that the doctrine, as presented in the *Categories*, is inconsistent with Aristotle's own teaching in his other works, most notably in the *Metaphysics*, in the central books of which, as possible candidates for the role of primary substance, are examined, one after the other, matter, form and the compound of both.[29] He protests by asking what common feature may possibly enable such disparate types of entities to qualify as candidates, or even as members of a common genus. Aristotle's contention that form may be seen as being 'more of a substance' (μᾶλλον οὐσία) than the other two[30] is not sufficient to explain how this may be combined with matter as to form anything of a unitary character. Otherwise, if it just resides in matter as some sort of accidental attribute, as Boethus of Sidon apparently had maintained,[31] then the only real primary substance would be none other than formless primary matter, an option Plotinus regards as completely absurd and unworthy of consideration.

One last option Plotinus is prepared to examine, after having shown that there can be no common genus encompassing both intelligible and sensible substance, is one that would make the latter in some way dependent on or 'derived' from the former, as possessing some sort of derivative existence in the way in a genealogical group, such as the family of the Heraclids: all the later members relate to and derive

28 Alexander, *In Top*. 301.20 – 25 (= *SVF* II 329).

29 See *Metaph*. H 2, 1043a26 – 28, and also Z 3, 1029a1 – 5.

30 Cf. *Metaph*. Z 3, 1029a29 – 32.

31 See Simplicius, *In Cat*. 78.10 – 20; cf. Themistius, *In Phys*. 26.20 – 27.

their being from their common ancestor, namely, in our example, from Heracles. This more relaxed notion of γένος was already known to Aristotle, from whom the example of the Heraclids is taken,[32] and was later canonized as an intermediate case between synonymy and homonymy designated by the expression ἀφ' ἑνός or *ab uno*.[33] It must be kept distinct from the notion of πρὸς ἕν or *ad unum*,[34] since it presupposes the ontological dependence between its members. Nonetheless, for Plotinus the notion of *ab uno* unity, even if it safeguards the priority of intelligible substance with respect to the sensible one, does not help us in the least in understanding the nature of the latter one. For only a detailed analysis of intelligible substance (such as the one undertaken in *Enn.* VI 2) can provide a proper understanding of its contribution in the formation of the sensible universe. It will then become apparent that the so-called 'sensible substance' is no substance at all, but, as already said, a mere conglomerate of qualities and matter produced by the agency of the soul by means of formative principles or *logoi*. Therefore, for Plotinus, the supposed 'family resemblance' bringing together the various members of the so-called 'family' of substances is nothing but fictitious. Even the universal entities designated by Aristotle as 'secondary substances' and predicated of sensible objects as subjects are not anything separate from these objects, since they already reside in the subject of which they are predicated, constituting its 'logical part' and thereby they are not functioning as a proper predicate marking the inherence of something in something *else* (cf. VI 3.4.8 – 17).

As already stated, Plotinus' arguments against Aristotle's notion of primary substance are not meant to eliminate it completely, only to reassess the ontological priority of the intelligible with respect to sensible reality. It also opens the ground for a new understanding of the way sensible objects are constituted, by bringing into the picture the fundamental formative role played by the soul.

32 *Metaph.* I 8, 1058a23 – 25; cf. also Δ 28, 1024a31 – 34.

33 See Porphyry, *Isagoge* 1.18 – 2.10; cf. already Aristotle, *GC*, I 6, 322b29 – 32.

34 *Metaph.* Γ 2, 1003a33-b6; Z4, 1030a34-b3.

Maria Chriti

7 The Neoplatonic commentators of Aristotle on the origins of language: a new "Tower of Babel"?

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the obligatory and negative character which is credited to the emergence of human language by some Neoplatonic commentators on Aristotle, namely Ammonius of Hermeias, Simplicius and Philoponus. Since the emergence of language is treated by these thinkers as being a result of the "fall" of the soul from the Neoplatonic One, I begin with a brief introduction to the Platonic and Neoplatonic theory of the soul's separation from the world of the intelligibles and its residual innate knowledge. The second part of my contribution deals with the semantic terms and Neoplatonic principles that Ammonius, Simplicius and Philoponus deploy as they discuss the stimulation of the fallen soul's content with the help of language, laying stress on the urgent and compulsory presence of vocal sounds in contrast to the non-linguistic communication that prevailed before the soul's embodiment. In the third part, I explore the concept of 'diversity' in human language as a consequence of the very emergence of language. Finally, I attempt to explain how the conventionality and diversity of human linguistic communication, abundantly contrasted by these Neoplatonists with the lost unitary status of the soul, came to be viewed by them as symptoms of 'decay' and 'obligation'.

1 Plato and the Neoplatonists: the soul's innate knowledge after its "fall"

The Neoplatonic commentators on Aristotle deal with the origins of human language when they discuss two fundamental principles of Neoplatonism: (a) the "fall" of the soul from the One and (b) the soul's innate knowledge after its fall, that is, during its habitation in the body. The first of these principles goes back to Plato's formulations regarding the superiority of the soul in contrast to the body in his dialogues *Phaedo*

The subject matter of this paper can be considered to combine two of Paraskevi Kotzia's main fields of interest: the Neoplatonic commentators on Aristotle and ancient approaches to linguistics. I express my gratitude to the organizers of the conference held in Thessaloniki in 2014 and to the editors of the present volume for both initiatives, which honour the memory of our beloved Professor and friend.

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and *Phaedrus:*[1] the sovereignty of the soul over the corruptible and mortal body is defined in the *Phaedo*,[2] where Plato – with Socrates' imminent death as a starting point – discusses death in general as the process by means of which the soul is liberated from the mortal body.[3] The soul's purification via philosophy before death is necessary for the ascent of the soul to the experience of truth,[4] that is, the experience of the ἀγαθόν.[5]

The concept of the 'immortality of the soul' is present throughout all the phases of Neoplatonism.[6] According to the Neoplatonists, the dichotomy between the sensible and the intelligible worlds is interpreted as comprising various levels, discussion of which goes beyond the aims of this paper. Broadly speaking, souls originate from the superior Neoplatonic One and they should be united with it, but some of them separate themselves from the Divine, that is, they "forget" their own substance and wish to become independent; matter confuses the souls and puts a distance between them and the One, resulting in the souls' embodiment.[7]

In most Neoplatonic discussions, the soul's innate knowledge after its fall is related to the knowledge of Forms that the soul tries to "remember", "remembrance" evoking the concepts of 'forgetfulness' and 'recollection', which go back to the *Republic*.[8] This innate knowledge consists in a kind of "psychic concepts": according to the Neoplatonists, human beings are able to recollect the Forms by means of "psychic concepts" that remain present to incorporated souls and may be regarded as images of the Forms.[9] Therefore, according to Neoplatonic philosophers, the innate

1 According to these dialogues, the soul's proper functions are prohibited by the body according (see next footnote). However, in *Republic* IV, 434d-435e, the body is not to be blamed so intensively, as the soul is said to possess an irrational part due to its tripartite division; see Elkaisy-Friemuth and Dillon 2009: 2.

2 *Phaedo* 79e-80a and 247c. See Bostock 1986: 27; Price 1989: 68; Gallop 1991: 88–89; Kotzia 2007: 101–102.

3 After death, the soul's further living depends on the life it had within the body, during which it should have prepared itself for this journey through philosophy. Concerning the preparation of the soul for its journey after death and the issues that arise from its description by Socrates see Werner 2012, n. 72 and 73; see also Kotzia 2007: 103.

4 *Phaedo* 67a-d, 69b-c, 108b, 114c. On the ascent of the soul see *Republic* VII 517b.

5 After its liberation from the body, the Platonic soul experiences its autonomous individuality; see *Phaedrus* 246c2–4.

6 See Remes 2008: 114.

7 See Dillon and Gerson 2004: 35–37; Corrigan 2005: 16–17.

8 Book 10, 621a-c, with the myth of *Lêthê*. Platonic *anamnêsis* refers to the recollection of the knowledge we had before the soul's incarnation. Back then, our contact with the intelligible Forms was direct and indisputable: see also *Phaedrus* 248c. Plato claims that even when we first see or hear as newly-born human beings, we are reminded of concepts that we have not acquired through living experience, because everything that we perceive stirs up knowledge that was in our souls before entering upon their present cycle of genesis and corruption.

9 On the main issues concerning the relation between concepts and Forms see Gerson 1999. Christoph Helmig, in his thorough study (Helmig 2012) of the concept of 'concepts' and their formation from Plato to the Neoplatonists, profoundly investigates knotty issues that emerge from treating

knowledge of the soul plays a crucial part in the acquisition of knowledge, that is, the access to the Forms, with which souls have lost their contact due to their imprisonment in the body.

The first term used by the Neoplatonists to denote this innate knowledge is *logoi*, a word that in their extant writings is widely employed in this technical sense, which probably had its origin in the Stoic expression "σπερματικοὶ λόγοι" ('seminal *logoi*')[10] meaning the "seeds of things", i.e. their "formative principles". The Neoplatonic *logoi* constitute the immaterial potential that can render the forms of things. Plotinus, Porphyry, Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius use the term *logoi* to designate the content of the soul's innate knowledge after its fall. Plotinus refers to the soul's *logoi* after its separation from the One as the formative principles of the sensible entities.[11] Syrianus[12] and Proclus share this approach to the soul's innate *logoi*.[13] Proclus describes the role of *logoi* in his commentary on the *Parmenides*[14] and explains that *logoi* constitute a kind of psychic concepts which immanently exist in us, being representations of things. Porphyry in his collection of writings from Plotinus' *Enneads* known as *Aids to the Study of the Intelligibles* (*Ἀφορμαὶ πρὸς τὰ νοητά*)[15] indicates the rational soul as being the bearer of the *logoi* of things, given that it remains free of imprisonment in the body.[16] Simplicius[17] also refers to the *logoi* that the soul brings along with it when it distances itself from Nous[18] by separating them from the beings with which they used to be united.

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the relation between concept formation, 'recollection' and Forms in the Platonic tradition, thus providing scholarship with valuable discussions and information about particularly subtle aspects of Platonic and Neoplatonic philosophy and psychology.

10 See also Chase 2003: 108: "*Logoi* are soul-portions as a spark buried in ashes, the stimulating of which brings the wished "recollection" and constitutes the process of learning". As Corrigan 2005: 114 explains, the Stoics considered God as an immanent rational principle organizing everything, a principle to which we belong as "individual intelligences", in the sense of being fragments of it. Seeing that this divine *logos* governs all things, God's rationality is even present in sperm, which gradually develops into a new organism; this is why the Stoics talk of "spermatic *logoi*".

11 See, e.g., Plotinus, *Enneads* IV 7.2 and IV 8.6, as discussed by Dillon & Gerson 2004: 35–49 and 56–58. On the relation and the distance between soul and body in Plotinus, see Corrigan 2005: 38; see also Caluori 2015: 183.

12 Syrianus, *In Metaph.* 12.35–36, 24.21–24. See Helmig 2012: 184–186.

13 See Helmig 2012: 184–195.

14 Proclus, *In Parmenidem* 981.11–13 Cousin. See also Proclus, *In Timaeum* III, 338.6–13, where he points out that the *logoi* are stifled by oblivion and by the emotions.

15 See Dillon and Gerson 2004: 178 sqq.

16 Porphyry, *Sententiae ad intelligibilia ducentes* 16.1–5. With *logoi*, Porphyry chiefly means the projection of Platonic ideas: what happens in the soul's corporeal state is that the human senses stimulate the soul, so that these innate *logoi* can be brought to the fore. See Dillon & Gerson 2004: 178, note 3.

17 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 12.20–21. Simplicius' approach to the soul's innate knowledge is discussed in detail below.

18 According to the Neoplatonic theory of the three hypostases: see below, section 2.

2 Language as the activator of the soul's innate knowledge

The distance between the once-upon-a-time non-corporeal state of the soul, during which it had direct access to the true beings, on the one hand, and its state of imprisonment in the body, during which corporeal matter obscures this access, on the other hand, is where Neoplatonic commentators trace the origins of human language: the emergence of language not only responds to the human soul's need to communicate with other human souls, but it also is intrinsically related to the soul's corporeal state and to its effort to "recollect" its lost unification with the One by activating its remaining innate knowledge. Thus, Proclus is the first to explicitly associate language with bringing forward the soul's innate knowledge, by pointing out that the soul wishes to "activate" its content[19] with help from *linguistic* (or *verbal*) *phantasia* (λεκτικὴ φαντασία),[20] a function of the mind that enables human beings to produce language.[21]

Proclus' student Ammonius in his commentary on the *Categories*[22] refers to the souls' embodiment, due to which they are now attached to generation and corruption, having lost the privilege of being united to beings in the ideal, "upper" level of existence:

> Εἰ μὲν αἱ ψυχαὶ ἄνω ἦσαν χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος τούτου, πάντα ἂν ἐγίγνωσκον ἑκάστη οἴκοθεν μηδενὸς ἑτέρου προσδεόμεναι, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ κατεληλύθασι πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν καὶ συνδέδενται τῷ σώματι καὶ τῆς ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀχλύος ἀναπιμπλάμεναι ἀμβλυώττουσι καὶ οὐχ οἷαί τέ εἰσι τὰ πράγματα γινώσκειν ὡς ἔχει φύσεως, διὰ τοῦτο τῆς ἀλλήλων ἐδεήθησαν κοινωνίας διακονούσης τῆς φωνῆς εἰς τὸ διαπορθμεύειν ἀλλήλαις τὰ νοήματα.[23]
>
> If souls were on high, separate from the body, each of them would on its own know all things, without need of anything else. But they descend at birth and are bound up with the body, and, filled up with its fog, their sight becomes dim and they are not able to know things it is in their

19 See the comments of Van den Berg 2008: 87.

20 The same term is used by Syrianus in his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, where he points out that *verbal phantasia* is in charge of the various combinations of the constituents that compose vocal sounds; cf. Syrianus, *In Metaph.* 163.20 sqq. Ammonius also uses the expression *verbal phantasia* in his *In Int.*, with the meaning of the power of soul which gives various forms to voice. It is difficult to trace the source of the specific term with certainty, but as Todd (1976, note 8) pointed out, the term can be paralleled to the Stoic *phantasia of reason* (λογικὴ φαντασία).

21 Helmig (2012: 33) also points out that according to Proclus, the soul further needs to articulate its concepts in order to achieve recognition of the psychic *logoi*. As he points out, the concept of 'articulation of concepts' is already traceable to the Stoics but, in a Platonic framework, articulation was for the first time connected to recollection in the Middle Platonic *Anonymous Commentary* on Plato's *Theaetetus*.

22 As is well known, this commentary is considered to be "ἀπὸ φωνῆς Ἀμμωνίου", i. e., based on the oral teaching of Ammonius: see Kotzia 1992: 137. For the term "ἀπὸ φωνῆς" see Richard 1950.

23 Ammonius, *In Cat*. 15.4 – 9.

> nature to know. This is why they need to communicate with one another, the voice serving their needs in conveying their thoughts to one another. (Transl. Cohen and Matthews 1991)

Ammonius employs a conditional clause expressive of the impossible: had souls remained "up there" and not been bound up in bodies, they would have known "things" right from the start and wouldn't have needed anything else to remind them of this knowledge; however, since they "have come down to earth" and have also become attached to the processes of genesis and corruption through the body, matter has obscured their previous knowledge like a mist and, consequently, they have ever since been in need of something to help them communicate with each other. It is worth stressing here that: (a) Ammonius brings forward the issue of communication: the souls are not just in need of accessing true beings, but also of sharing their thoughts with one another and (b) in his treatment of the soul's embodiment, he regularly makes use of the terms πράγματα ('things') and νοήματα ('concepts/notions'). The first term is used by him to denote the soul's knowledge in the "upper" world, while the second designates what has to be communicated and shared by the fallen souls, now that their former access to true beings (πράγματα), the only genuine beings that the souls were primordially destined to know, has been disrupted. As a consequence of their fall, human souls need the contribution of voice to help them serve their urge to recollect πράγματα and communicate νοήματα. Ammonius does not talk about the activation of *logoi*, but rather about the transmission of νοήματα: voice is at the service of the souls' urgent need to convey νοήματα to one another. Before we say more concerning the terms πράγματα and νοήματα, it is worth exploring how these same terms are employed by Simplicius and Philoponus in their respective treatments.

Simplicius, too, in his commentary on the *Categories* makes use of the terms πράγματα and νοήματα when, in the frame of a discussion of the Neoplatonic theory of "the three hypostases" – i.e., the One, the Intellect and the Soul – [24] he refers to the unified state that pertains at the level of the Intellect where νοῦς, ὄντα/πράγματα and their νοήματα constitute a unity, and where there arises no necessity for φωνή ('voice').[25] Simplicius uses the specification "there" (ἐκεῖ) to point to the intelligible world, where the union of things and concepts renders useless any mediation from human voice, while immediately afterwards he explains that the concepts that remain within the soul after its embodiment are there in a state of frigidity: they are like fossils of a forgotten era, the era of the original access to knowledge. The con-

24 See Plotinus *Enneads* V 1.10.

25 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 12.17–19: ὁ μὲν γὰρ νοῦς αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα ὢν καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ νόησις ταὐτὸν ἔχει τά τε ὄντα καὶ τὰ τῶν ὄντων νοήματα διὰ τὴν ἀδιάκριτον ἕνωσιν καὶ φωνῆς ἐκεῖ οὐδὲν χρεῖα. "For Intellect, being identical with realities and with intellection, possesses as one both beings and the notions of them, by virtue of its undifferentiated unity, and there [sc. in the intelligible world] there is no need for language" (transl. Chase 2003). For a more detailed discussion of this text see Kotzia 1992: 118–119.

cepts remain within our souls in a state of inactivity, waiting for the appropriate stimulus to stir them into motion:

> Πεσοῦσα δὲ εἰς γένεσιν καὶ λήθης ἀναπλησθεῖσα ἐδεήθη μὲν ὄψεως, ἐδεήθη δὲ ἀκοῆς πρὸς ἀνάμνησιν· δεῖται γὰρ τοῦ ἤδη τεθεαμένου τὴν ἀλήθειαν διὰ φωνῆς ἀπὸ τῆς ἐννοίας προφερομένης κινοῦντος καὶ τῆν ἐν αὐτῇ τέως ἀπεψυγμένην ἔννοιαν· καὶ οὕτως ἡ τῆς φωνῆς ἐγένετο χρεία προσεχῶς μὲν τοῖς νοήμασι ἐξομοιοῦσθαι σπευδούσης, δι' ἐκείνων δὲ καὶ τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐφαρμοττούσης.[26]
>
> When, however, the soul has fallen into the realm of becoming, it is filled with forgetfulness, and requires sight and hearing in order to be able to recollect. For the soul needs someone who has already beheld the truth, who, by means of language, uttered forth from the concept, also moves the concept within [the soul of the student] which had until then grown cold. This, then, is how the need for language came about: on the one hand, it strives immediately to assimilate itself to notions, while, on the other, by means of them it adjusts to realities and becomes of one nature with them...(Transl. Chase 2003)

According to Simplicius, when the soul distances itself from νοῦς, there occurs within it a dissociation of πράγματα from their νοήματα. The fall of the soul into the sensible world and its consequent "forgetfulness" make the presence of bodily functions (ὄψις, ἀκοή) necessary to stimulate "recollection". As Kotzia has rightly argued,[27] despite the fact that Simplicius uses two terms to designate mental entities – ἔννοιαι for what is frigid in the soul and νοήματα for what voice tries to assimilate itself with (in order to be adjusted to πράγματα) – he applies the two terms interchangeably in his commentary on the *Categories* when he refers to mental states that correspond to "things" and can be stimulated by linguistic utterances:[28] voice can stimulate an ἔννοια which is a fossil in the soul and, thus, linguistic utterances tend to assimilate themselves with νοήματα and regain their past unification with πράγματα.[29]

The term νοήματα is also used by Philoponus in his commentary on the same Aristotelian treatise to designate what has to be communicated by the fallen souls:

> Εἰ μὲν γὰρ γυμναὶ σωμάτων ἦσαν αἱ ψυχαί, γυμνοῖς ἂν προσέβαλλον τοῖς νοήμασι· νῦν δὲ τοῖς σώμασιν ἐγκαθειργμέναι οὐκ ἄλλως ἢ διὰ τῶν φωνῶν δύνανται σημαίνειν ἀλλήλαις τὰ ἴδια νοήματα.[30]
>
> If the souls were bare of bodies, they would be able to attend to bare notions; but now that they are enclosed in bodies, there is no other way but via vocal sounds to denote to each other their proper notions.

The imposition that the body represents for the soul after the latter's fall is vividly expressed by Philoponus, who uses the adjective γυμνός to render: (a) the soul's au-

26 Simplicius, *In Cat.*, 12.26 – 30.
27 See Kotzia 1992: 133.
28 See also *In Cat.* 24. 6 sqq.
29 See Kotzia 1992: 119 – 121.
30 Philoponus, *In Cat.* 9.31 – 34.

tonomous existence before its embodiment and (b) the autonomous state of concepts (νοήματα), when they were in no need of any vocal sound in order to be expressed, since they were directly transmitted from one soul to the other. Philoponus explains that souls are "dressed" with bodies and thus restricted. He, too, employs a conditional expressive of the impossible: if it were possible to de-corporate souls, they would be "bare", that is, they would be able to share concepts as *bare* entities, not "dressed" with vocal sounds. A little later in his commentary, Philoponus returns to the "bare soul" and states that the purpose of voice is to signify νοήματα, by means of which the souls communicate πράγματα to each other:

> Αἱ ψυχαὶ αἱ ἡμέτεραι γυμναὶ μὲν οὖσαι τῶν σωμάτων ἠδύναντο διὰ τῶν νοημάτων σημαίνειν ἀλλήλαις τὰ πράγματα· ἐπειδὴ δὲ σώμασι συνδέδενται δίκην νέφους περικαλύπτουσιν αὐτῶν τὸ νοερόν, ἐδεήθησαν τῶν ὀνομάτων, δι᾽ ὧν σημαίνουσιν ἀλλήλαις τὰ πράγματα.[31]
>
> When our souls were bare, i. e. without bodies, they were able to signify things to each other via notions. But since they have been tied with bodies, which like a cloud cover their intelligible part, they needed words, via which they signify things to each other.

To recapitulate: Ammonius, Simplicius and Philoponus, in their respective commentaries on the *Categories*, discuss the origins of language after the soul's fall using the terms φωναί, νοήματα/ἔννοιαι and πράγματα. Ammonius and Philoponus do not refer to the soul's *logoi*, while Simplicius, who does,[32] nevertheless resorts to the terms νοήματα/ἔννοιαι when he takes up the subject of the activation of the soul's innate knowledge by language. As Kotzia has shown,[33] the above terms constitute the fundamental terminology by means of which the School of Ammonius discusses the question of the *skopos* of the *Categories*, under the influence of the notorious "semantic passage" in the *On Interpretation*,[34] to which scholars trace the first attempt at a 'semantic/semiotic' approach to language,[35] and where it is explicitly said that words express things via concepts.[36]

What is worth pointing out is that the Neoplatonic commentators all use the same terms to emphasize: (a) the irreversible character of the soul's fall, as well

31 Philoponus, *In Cat*. 14.1–5.

32 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 12.20–21; see section 1 in this article.

33 Kotzia 1992, especially 177 and 249.

34 Aristotle, *Int*. 16a4–9: Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. Καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτων, ταῦτα πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα, πράγματα ἤδη ταὐτά. "Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul, and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of – affections of the soul – are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of – actual things – are also the same" (trans. J. L. Ackrill).

35 See Kretzmann 1974: 3; Irwin 1982; Weidemann 1991: 170–173 and 176 ff.; Manetti 1996; Sedley 1996; Verbeke 1996; Ax 2000: 59–63; Arens 2000: 367–370; Modrak 2001: 1.

36 See Kotzia & Chriti 2014: 129–130.

as the urgent need of the fallen soul to communicate with other souls and to regain contact with what is lost; and (b) the necessary and inevitable presence of linguistic utterance as the activator of the soul's "frozen" content. The relevant philosophical texts lay stress not so much on the "fall" of the soul itself, as on its urgent need to reestablish contact with what is lost and share it by means of linguistic utterance: language emerges only to serve the soul that wishes to communicate with other souls and to be reunited with true beings. The commentators generally describe the passing on from "then" to "now", from "there" to "here" by concentrating on the role that the body is called to play in communication after the soul's embodiment. What is no longer known can once again be brought to the fore through its remaining but inactivate memory trace in the soul; but in order for this to happen, the requisite memory traces need to be represented and perceived through a pair of processes having their respective points of initiation and termination in the body: namely, utterance and hearing.

The conditionals expressive of the impossible that are employed by the commentators (εἰ μὲν γὰρ γυμναὶ σωμάτων ἦσαν αἱ ψυχαί...) reveal the extent to which the "fall" is considered as absolutely conclusive. The soul has ended up in a dreadful situation due to which the contribution of voice has become necessary in order to assure communication. The vocabulary employed in the relevant passages serves to dramatize the distance between the "upper" and the "lower" worlds, as well as the restraints under which the soul now struggles:

- there and then: ἄνω, ἐκεῖ, ἀλήθεια, τεθεαμένου, τέως;
- here and now: κατεληλύθασι, πεσοῦσα, συνδέδενται, ἐγκαθειργμέναι, λήθης, ἀνάμνησιν, ἀπεψυγμένην, ἀχλύος, νέφους, διακονούσης τῆς φωνῆς, διαπορθμεύειν.

Given the superiority of the "upper" level over the level of sensible beings and in the light of the phraseology of the commentators, it can be deduced that a negative character is attributed to language, since it constitutes the bodily means by which the soul is now obliged to communicate, as designated by formulations such as "οὐκ ἄλλως" and "χρεῖα".[37] There is no other way for the souls to communicate with each other, and the obligatory/inevitable nature that is attributed to voice in these texts is surely not treated as a positive outcome. Language is the exclusive but also compulsory "tool" that has the capacity to bring forward what has been "forgotten". It is the result of the soul's restriction in the body; indeed, according to Philoponus, body and language may be considered as "garments" of the soul and its νοήματα respectively. These "garments" do not exist for reasons of "protection" but, in this nostalgic account, they seem to be emblematic of decadence. An impression is given that both body and language represent a kind of a "burden", since neither the soul nor νοήματα can anymore be "bare", just like Adam and Eve: the age of innocence has gone.

37 See the passage of Simplicius in n. 25.

3 Human language and linguistic diversity

According to the Neoplatonic texts that we are discussing, the necessity of linguistic utterance as the outcome of the fall of the soul produces one more effect on human communication, an effect that is, once again, ineluctable: the linguistic diversity that proceeds from linguistic convention.

The strong bond between 'convention' and 'diversity' in the case of human linguistic utterance is explicitly formulated by Aristotle in *On Interpretation*. The "semantic passage" is a declaration of the conventional and diverse character of human language and states a fundamental Aristotelian principle, namely that what is natural is the same for all human beings, whereas what is different is conventional.[38]

Linguistic diversity is discussed by Proclus as being associated with the generation of language after the separation of the soul from the Divine.[39] In the stratification that follows this separation, the gods occupy the middle ground between the Intellect and the Divine,[40] and it is in this connection that Proclus refers to the various names by which different nations signify their gods and communicate.[41] As is obvious from Proclus' approach, words originate from the need to call upon the gods, who connect humans with the Divine, while differentiation and variation are a merely human necessity, automatically arising from the existence of various peoples: different nations address the gods (and each other) by various names.

The conventional and arbitrary nature of linguistic utterance is discussed in combination with the concept of 'diversity/variety' by Ammonius in his commentary on the *On Interpretation*. Ammonius stresses that the universe to which everything belongs is one and the same, and makes everything that humans want to name the same for everyone. Thus, the species, of 'man', for example, or 'horse', or 'lion' is the same for every nation, and the same goes for the corresponding concepts: according to Ammonius, a horse and its concept do not differ among Greeks, Egyptians or Phoenicians, because things and concepts originate from the Divine and from the Intellect, and so far the contribution of humans is not needed:

> Πανταχοῦ γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀνθρώπου εἶδος καὶ ἵππου καὶ λέοντος, καὶ νόημα ὡσαύτως τὸ αὐτὸ παρὰ πᾶσι περί τε ἀνθρώπου καὶ λίθου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πραγμάτων ἑκάστου. φωναὶ δὲ καὶ γράμματα οὐ

38 According to Aristotle, vocal sounds and letters that represent them at the graphic level vary among people precisely because they are conventional, while the "affections of the soul" (the first concepts that are formed in the human mind after perception via the senses), as well as the "things", are the same for every individual because they are "by nature". However, Proclus, *In Crat*. 17.1 ff., explains that there are four ways to hold that something is "by nature".

39 On the concept of 'linguistic diversity' in Aristotle's Neoplatonic commentators see Chriti 2014.

40 See Lloyd 1990: 164–166; Sheppard 2000: 836 ff.; Dillon and Gerson 2004: 35–48 and 109–121.

41 Proclus, *In Crat*. 32.3–9.

> παρὰ πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά· φωναῖς τε γὰρ ἄλλαις μὲν Ἕλληνες, ἄλλαις δὲ Φοίνικες, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ἄλλαις χρῶνται· "ἄλλη γὰρ ἄλλων γλῶσσα" φησὶν ἡ ποίησις.[42]
>
> For everywhere the species of man or horse or lion is the same, and similarly the thought concerned with man or stone or any other thing is the same, while vocal sounds and letters are not the same among all peoples; for Greeks use different vocal sounds from Phoenicians, as do Egyptians: 'different is the tongue of different peoples' says the poet. (Transl. Blank 1996)

Ammonius explains that what has not been generated by nature is made by humans and the human factor inevitably involves diversity and variety, a characteristic example of which is the plethora of languages. As products of human intervention, the spoken and written word have to rely on convention, which entails that not all peoples share the same spoken and written words. To emphasize the connection between convention and linguistic differentiation, Ammonius begins by citing Homer, who refers to the different languages spoken by widely scattered nations.[43] Ammonius goes on to explain the issue of natural homogeneity and conventional diversity in purely Neoplatonic terms, interpreting Aristotle's approach to the relation between conventionality and diversity in terms of the Neoplatonic distinction between different orders of reality:

> Ὅτι τριῶν ὄντων ὑπὲρ τὰς φυσικὰς οὐσίας τῶν ἀρχικῶν διακόσμων, τοῦ τε θείου καὶ τοῦ νοεροῦ καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτι τοῦ ψυχικοῦ, τὰ μὲν πράγματα θεόθεν παράγεσθαί φαμεν, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν νόων ὑφίστασθαι τὰ νοήματα, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν κατὰ τὸ λογικὸν χαρακτηριζομένων καὶ παντὸς σώματος χωριστὴν οὐσίαν ἐχουσῶν ἀποτελεῖσθαι τὰς φωνάς.[44]
>
> As there are three primitive orders above the natural substances, the divine, the intellectual, and in addition to these the psychic, we say that things are derived from the divine, thoughts have their subsistence from intellects, and vocal sounds are produced by souls which are formed in accordance with the rational and contain substance separate from all body. (Transl. Blank 1996)

For Ammonius things derive from the highest order, concepts derive from the second order and linguistic utterances originate from the third.[45] This means that the concept of 'homogeneity' is connected by Ammonius to the highest order within the Neoplatonic theological hierarchy,[46] since he adopts Aristotle's view that things and concepts are the same for everyone and right afterwards attributes their origins to the first two orders respectively. The commentator makes one of the most prominent Neoplatonic approaches an explanatory principle in his discussion of a basic Aristotelian view (which is a rather usual practice in this commentary tradition). Thus, where Aristotle says that "what is the same for all people is by nature", Ammonius

42 Ammonius, *In Int*. 19.10 ff.

43 Homer, *Iliad* 2.804.

44 Ammonius, *In Int*. 24.24 – 33.

45 Blank's remark (Blank 1996: 146) that "Ammonius' point is that articulated vocal sounds are connected to the highest principles of Neoplatonic metaphysics" is not properly explained and seems rather unjustifiably generalized.

46 Note that the first primary hypostasis, i. e. the One, does not constitute an order.

reinterprets it as "what is the same for all people is by nature because it originates from the Divine". Each factor of communication in Aristotle's semantic triangle (things, concepts, words)[47] is ascribed by Ammonius to different levels within the hierarchy between the divine and the sensible world.

If we focus on the fact that Ammonius connects homogeneity with the ultimate levels within the Neoplatonic theological order, where communion is non-linguistic, and combine this with the "nostalgic" narration by Ammonius, Simplicius and Philoponus of the loss of unmediated communication, it is not unreasonable to argue that a negative character is attributed to 'diversity', since it is intrinsically related to language which does not exist at the high levels of Neoplatonic metaphysics: language and its diversity had no place in the previous divine and ideal status of the soul, where souls could communicate with each other directly via the intelligibles and without any risk of "being misunderstood".

4 Concluding remarks: A Neoplatonic Tower of Babel?

Ammonius, Simplicius and Philoponus treat the emergence of human language and its consequences as representing the end of an era: the primitive once-upon-a-time unity of the soul with the "upper" level of existence. The presence of voice is called for in order to stimulate the soul's remaining content, which is termed *logoi* by several Neoplatonic philosophers, but ἔννοιαι and/or νοήματα by the three commentators on Aristotle under discussion. These commentators take up the question of the origins of language in the course of formulating their views concerning the purpose of the *Categories*, being influenced in their approach by Aristotle's semantic theory in the *On Interpretation*. According to this, embodied souls are engaged in a constant attempt to regain contact with things (πράγματα) through vocal sounds (φωναί) which denote concepts (ἔννοιαι/νοήματα) of things. If special attention is given to the commentators' treatment of the purpose of the *Categories* from the perspective of the emergence of language, it can be said that the Platonic principle of the fallen soul is applied by the commentators in Aristotelian semantic terms as an interpretational instrument that explains (a) the negative character of the very emergence of language and (b) the – equally negative – attributes of convention and differentiation in human linguistic communication.

The language of the commentators shows that they do not treat the emergence of language as a positive fact, since it constitutes the outcome of the soul's obligatory attachment to the sensible world. To put it differently, language is not discussed from the positive perspective of stimulating the innate knowledge of the soul: there is no formulation on the commentators' part that expresses gratitude for the existence of

47 See Kotzia & Chriti 2014: 129 – 130.

vocal sounds. On the contrary, language reminds mankind of an ideal but lost status of the soul. Furthermore, linguistic convention brought with it differentiation in human communication, a feature that was also absent from the ideal "upper" world. As long as people are obliged to use language, they use different utterances. Language itself is intrinsically connected with differentiation and variation: where there does not exist linguistic utterance, that is, in divine ideal communication, there does not exist diversity either, because what did not need to be uttered was the same for all souls.

It can be said that, apart from the concept of 'bareness' of the "protoplast" soul and concepts that we saw in Philoponus' text, the homogeneity of what does not need to be uttered, i.e. the Neoplatonic "metaphysical" non-linguistic communication in the upper world, in contrast to the diversity of its "earthy" signifier, reminds us of the Bible's divine monolingual communication: in both cases, there was originally a "paradise", an ideal situation where communication was easy and without obstacles; but some kind of "sin" caused a "fall" and the loss of paradise. This meant that communication would henceforth no longer be easy but would demand effort because of its diverse means. So, for the Neoplatonists, language does not just stand as evidence of the soul's fall; it also constitutes a second "Tower of Babel".

Dimitrios Z. Nikitas

8 The early literary construct of Boethius: *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*

To understand the particularities and identity of Boethius's treatise *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* one must take into consideration the philosophical environment in which this work was created. Sten Ebbesen[1] speaks of a "revolution" in the field of philosophy of the 3rd-4th c. A.D.: a unified school of Aristotelian-Platonic philosophy, a seminal thinker of which was Porphyry (234 – 304/10), dominated. He planned the "school's" "curriculum" and its "tools" for the act of teaching, which were: 1. introductory manuals, 2. selected texts by Aristotle and Plato, 3. commentaries. The two great Greek philosophers are connected as two successive tiers:[2] Aristotle with the *Organon*, i.e. his works on logic (in a certain order) is considered the first tier, which is necessary for the student of Neoplatonic philosophy to progress to pure platonic philosophy.

Another intellectual reality which significantly influenced Boethius's literary output was the *artes liberales*.[3] Their content "ist zu Beginn des Neuplatonismus nach allmählicher Vorbereitung durch den Mittelplatonismus konzipiert worden".[4] Boethius,[5] true to the prevailing philosophical climate of his age,[6] clearly and thoroughly expresses[7] his opinion on the necessity of a graduated preoccupation with the four *disciplinae* of the *quadruvium*[8] of mathematical sciences, with the help of which man can ascend from earthly affairs and have his spirit enlightened by the *vestigatio*

1 Ebbesen 2009: 34 – 35.

2 See extensively in Hadot 1990: 44 – 47.

3 Hadot 2005 gave us a thorough picture of them; more concisely, see Hadot 1997. It is a seven-tierd ladder, at the roots of which are the Roman M. Terentius Varro Reatinus (1st c. A.D.) with his work *Disciplinae* and the Greek Nicomachus of Gerasa (2nd c. A.D.) with his work *Ἀριθμητικὴ Εἰσαγωγή*. Its main influencers were the Christian Latin 4th c. father Augustine (*De ordine*) on the one side and Boethius's slight predecessor Martianus Capella (*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercuriae*). Boethius was proven to be familiar with all the aforementioned writers (see in synopsis von Albrecht ²1994: 1357 – 1359).

4 Hadot 1997: 28.

5 In Hadot 1997 and Hadot 2007 Boethius is not investigated.

6 See Chadwick 1981: 109 – 111; Obertello 1974: 565 – 567; Gruber 1978: 64.

7 Mostly in the preamble to his work *De institutione arithmetica* (9.1 – 12.8). Regarding this, see White 1981: 162.

8 The term was coined by Boethius himself, *De institutione arithmetica* 9.28 – 10.3: "Hoc igitur illud quadruvium est, quo his viandum sit, quibus excellentior animus a nobiscum procreatis sensibus ad intelligentiae certiora perducitur. sunt enim quidam gradus certaeque progressionum dimensiones, quibus ascendi progredique possit..." By using the term quadruvium (which means "four roads": *quattuor viae*) Boethius wished to effectively render, using only one word, Nicomachus of Gerasa's "τέσσαρες μέθοδοι", *Introductio arithmetica* 1.4.1: Τίνα οὖν ἀναγκαῖον πρωτίστην τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων μεθόδων ἐκμανθάνειν; compare Pizzani 1981: 211 – 218; Hadot 2005: 68 – 69.

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and the *speculatio veritatis*.[9] These opinions of Boethius can be traced to Nicomachus of Gerasa, who argued that

> the mathematical sciences transfer our thought from the perceptible and the hypothetical to the conceivable and dominated by knowledge and from the common to us material and bodily [things] to the unusual and not detectable with the senses.[10]

Of the four mathematical sciences, Boethius, following Nicomachus,[11] prioritises Arithmetic.[12] Therefore it must be considered absolutely explainable and certain that the earliest of his works is *The teaching of Arithmetic* (*De institutione arithmetica*).[13]

However, according to Boethius, the *artes philosophiae* are not confined to the seven Liberal Arts.[14] He includes an *ars* which has the unique privilege of simultaneously being an *instrumentum* (tool) and a *pars* (part) of philosophy.[15] This is *logica* (*disciplina*), Logic,[16] which is interlaced with Ratio, that element which separates

9 For the tiered progress of the *artes*, the desired goals and the ultimate results, see Nikitas 1990: XIV-XV and n. 20 – 23.

10 Nicomachus, *Introductio arithmetica* 1.3.6: δῆλον γάρ, ὅτι κλίμαξί τισι καὶ γεφύραις ἔοικε ταῦτα τὰ μαθήματα διαβιβάζοντα τὴν διάνοιαν ἡμῶν ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν καὶ δοξαστῶν ἐπὶ τὰ νοητὰ καὶ ἐπιστημονικὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν συντρόφων ἡμῖν καὶ ἐκ βρεφῶν ὄντων συνήθων ὑλικῶν καὶ σωματικῶν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσυνήθη τε καὶ ἑτερόφυλα πρὸς τὰς αἰσθήσεις. This work by Nicomachus "achieved the status of being a standard textbook in the Neoplatonic schools of Athens and Alexandria", Chadwick 1981: 71.

11 Nicomachus, *Introductio arithmetica* 1.4.1 – 2: Τίνα οὖν ἀναγκαῖον πρωτίστην τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων μεθόδων ἐκμανθάνειν; ἢ δηλονότι τὴν φύσει πασῶν προϋπάρχουσαν καὶ κυριωτέραν ἀρχῆς τε καὶ ῥίζης καὶ οἱονεὶ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας μητρὸς λόγον ἐπέχουσαν. ἔστι δὲ αὕτη ἡ ἀριθμητική.

12 Boethius, *De institutione arithmetica* 10.8 – 10: "Quae igitur ex hisce prima discenda, nisi ea quae principium matrisque quodammodo ad ceteras obtinet portionem? Haec est autem arithmetica". It is clear that Boethius draws in this case from Nicomachus, given the similarities even in vocabulary.

13 There is no consensus among scholars regarding the first work written by Boethius being *De institutione arithmetica*; some consider *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima* earlier. In my opinion, of exceptional importance is Boethius's declaration at the end of his *Letter to Symmachus* (*De institutione arithmetica*, praefatio, 5.22 – 23): "Ita et laboris mei primitias doctissimo iudicio consecrabis". Boethius himself in this Letter, which is a prefix to the work *De institutione arithmetica*, describes the work that follows as his "*first labour*", and this declaration is made at an especially important point, at the end of the Letter. Related searches in Brandt 1906: LXXXII, de Rijk 1964: 129 with n. 2, Obertello 1974: 297 – 299, also see below, n. 36.

14 Boethius does not seem to confine the *artes* numerically, and thus speaks of many *artes*, see *In Categorias Aristotelis*, II, *PL* 64, 230C): "Multae quoque sunt artes, quas esse quidem in suae naturae ratione perspicimus, quarum neglectus scientiam sustulit". He describes as *artes*, for example, dialectics and apodeiktike (*In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* [Brandt p.] 13.3), rhetoric (*In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* 34.18), topology (*In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio secunda,* 139.24).

15 *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio secunda,* 140.13 – 17. Compare Hadot 2005: 183 – 188, Chadwick 1981: 108 – 111.

16 Logic is characterized by Boethius in a number of (equivalent) terms: (commonly) *logica disciplina* (e. g. *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio secunda,* 140.13; 141.7; 142.4 et al.), *logica* (e. g. *In Isag-*

man from beast and flora and allows him to approach the divine.[17] The immense value of Logic is in its unique ability to ensure the *certain* approach to the truth.[18]

At this point, Boethius turns to the "program" of the School of Alexandria. For the operating rules of logic one must study the Aristotelian *Organon*. The Alexandrian commentators of Aristotle, in using the term *Organon*, meant the corpus comprised of the Aristotelian treatises *Cat*., *Int*., *APr*, *APo*, *Top*. and *SE*. This corpus had been included as an exceptionally important and integral introductory text in Porphyry's *Introduction*.[19] This text was considered so important, in fact, that the Aristotelians of Boethius' time, such as Ammonius Hermiae, Olympiodorus and his students Elias and David, had composed an addendum to it, in other words a form of "introduction" to Porphyry's *Introduction*, which had been added to the "canon" of *Organon*, before Porphyry's *Introduction*.[20] Of course, apart from the standardization of the teaching of Aristotle's *Organon*, a detailed standardization for the approach to the Platonic studies, to which the Aristotelian studies led, had also been formulated.[21] "To be a good Platonic, one must first become a good Aristotelian".[22]

The above Aristotelian-Platonic teaching curriculum attracted Boethius's lively interest and, if we judge from the extensive knowledge of it that he displays in his writings, we must conclude that he achieved this knowledge through the Greek centers, Athens and mainly Alexandria.[23] A century before Boethius, certain other Roman scholars, Praetextatus and Marius Victorinus,[24] whose works were known to Boethius,[25] had also, to a limited extent, concerned themselves with the field of Aristotelian studies. Boethius resolved to transport the Alexandrian Neoplatonic School's wealth to the West. In his work *In librum Aristotelis Perihermeneias, editio*

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ogen Porphyrii commenta, *editio prima,* 10.10, *In Categorias Aristotelis*, I, *PL* 64, 161D et al.), *ars logica* (e. g. *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* 15.15), (more rarely) *logica scientia* (*In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* 15.15 and 19), Λογική or *Rationalis* (*In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* 9.25). Compare Nikitas 1990: XV-XVI.

17 The nature and goals of Logic are exhaustively analyzed in passages in *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio prima,* 9.23 – 10.10 and *editio secunda,* 140.13 – 143.7.

18 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta*, *editio secunda,* 143.6 – 7: "per eam inquisita philosophiae veritas vestigatur".

19 See Ebbesen 1987: 292 – 293, compare Obertello 1974: 163 – 167.340, Solmsen 1944, Nikitas 1990: XI n. 3.

20 See analytically Hadot 1990: 23 – 25, compare Westerink 1962: x, xx, xxii, xxv, Nikitas 1994: 134.

21 An analytical study and presentation of the content of the Aristotelian and Platonic studies of the Alexandrian Neoplatonists in Hadot 1990: 26 – 47.

22 Ebbesen 2002: 113, compare Ebbesen 2009: 51.

23 See Nikitas 1994: 133 with n. 12 (where bibliography). Scholars have offered differing opinions on the matter of Boethius travelling to Athens or Alexandria, see summarized presentation of the matter in Magee 1989: 2 – 4 and 54 n. 14 (Magee is negative).

24 Ebbesen 1987: 287 with n. 3, Ebbesen 2002: 17 with n. 5, Chadwick 1998: 115 – 118 (Victorinus), Barnes 1981: 81.

25 E. g. in *In librum Aristotelis Perihermeneias, editio secunda*, 3 – 4, Boethius mentions Vettius Praetextatus and Albinus as his forerunners, see Barnes 1981: 75.

secunda he describes his "dream", which is a literary plan: he will first translate all of Aristotle, then Plato, then provide commentary and finally prove beyond doubt their complete agreement.[26] Unfortunately, he managed to complete only a part of the first segment.

Here we must make a few necessary basic observations. Boethius did not achieve all this knowledge having in mind only his own personal spiritual fulfillment or literary advancement. His *doctrina* has "patriotic" purposes. Essentially, he continues the Ciceronian view of *translatio studiorum*,[27] i. e. the understanding and transferal of the Hellenic intellectual civilization to Rome. This patriotism assumes even greater importance, if one considers the difficult times for Rome in which Boethius lived. This patriotic view is clearly expressed in the preamble to the second book of Boethius's work *In Categorias Aristotelis commentum*, written in 510, the year of his consulship.[28] There, Boethius states:

> I believe that I will offer a significant service to my fellow citizens, if, when the vigour of the ancient [Romans] led to the other cities co-constituted our own single nation, dominance and power, I will do what remains: I will guide our nation's morals with the arts of Greek Wisdom.[29]

His goal, therefore, is the amelioration of Rome's social mores, obviously in a return to *mos maiorum*,[30] a goal we can also observe in previous writers. In the period of Ostrogothic Rome, however, this has other dimensions.

This patriotic view is combined, as was made clear by the aforementioned text, with educational and pedagogic goals of national scope. This is declared even more clearly in another part of the same textual context: "I am convinced that it must be the duty of the state to guide the citizens with the teaching of enlightened ideas".[31] Boethius therefore had in mind a national pedagogic – educational program, with the goal of returning the nation to its ancient glory. The recent studies, of Sten Ebbesen mainly, detected the pedagogical intentions of Boethius even in his translational

26 Boethius, *In librum Aristotelis Perihermeneias, editio secunda*, 79.9 – 80.9 Meiser. The matter of the two great philosophers', Plato and Aristotle, agreement was a matter of concern for all Neoplatonic philosophers after Porphyry, see regarding Chadwick 1998: 125. For Boethius's famous passage above and its authorial plan, see Obertello 1974: 157 – 172 ("Il programma di lavoro"), Chadwick 1998: 125.134, Ebbesen 1987: 287 – 88, Ebbesen 2009: 35, Shiel 1990: 368, Lerer 1985: 14 – 16.

27 For the Ciceronian view of *translatio studiorum* see Nikitas 2013: 382 with n. 18.

28 Analytical examination of this preamble, see Nikitas 2013.

29 Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis commentum*, II, prooem., *PL* 64, 201B: "Nec male de civibus meis merear, si cum prisca hominum virtus urbium caeterarum ad hanc unam rempublicam, dominationem, imperiumque transtulerit, ego id saltem quod reliquum est, Graecae sapientiae artibus mores nostrae civitatis instruxero".

30 Boethius' deep desire is expressed in the optimal way by Philosophy in the *De consolatione Philosophiae* 2.m.5.23 – 24: "Vtinam modo nostra redirent / in mores tempora priscos !"

31 Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis commentum*, II, prooem., *PL* 64, 201B: "pertinere tamen videtur hoc ad aliquam reipublicae curam, elucubratae rei doctrina cives instruere". For the meaning of *doctrina* in Boethius see Nikitas 2007: 380 with n. 9.

choices: he chooses to translate that which is more succinct and easily communicable.[32] We must remember at this point that the Alexandrian Aristotelians of Porphyry's time attributed pedagogical intentions to Aristotle himself: They believed he had defined the way in which his works ought to be taught, and had adopted it in the "program" of the School of Alexandria.[33] Boethius himself talks of Aristotle being conscious pedagogist.[34]

But the general image of Boethius's entire Aristotelian output shows pedagogic educational intentions. This brilliant[35] erudite of Aristotelian thought, completing his exceptional translations of the works of the *Organon* to Latin, does not leave the Roman reader helpless. He proceeds to offer his own analytical footnotes to the translations and also writes separate treatises on logic. In this way, the Latin student of Aristotelian logic can also make the Stagirite's difficult thought his own.

It is, therefore, not a surprise that Boethius began his Aristotelian authorial activity with the first work of the didactic "canon" of the Alexandrian Neoplatonists: Porphyry's *Introduction*. In fact, he was obliged to offer the Roman neophyte not just a Latin *Introduction,* of Porphyry, but also, as was the norm of the contemporary Greek Neoplatonists, with analytical commentary. Boethius writes this commentary for his young fellow citizens, being young himself, roughly 25 years old (around 505).[36] However, because Victorinus had translated Porphyry's *Introduction* to Latin a century before, he himself composes the commentary within which he includes the already extant translation of Victorinus, splitting it into small passages.[37] He names this early Aristotelian creation (see below) *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*. For this work, he chooses the discursive form and compiles it in two books (comprising 132 pages in the Samuel Brandt edition). Already though, at several points in the work Boethius expresses his disagreement[38] with the way Victori-

32 Ebbesen 2009: 40.49 – 50, Ebbesen 2002: 111, Ebbesen 1987: 292.

33 Ebbesen 1987: 292 – 293.

34 Ebbesen 1987: 294.

35 von Albrecht [2]1994: 1365 notes: "Neben dieser Fähigkeit zu Distanzierung, Überschau und Transfer steht jedoch mindenstens gleichwertig die entgegengesetzte: Scharfsinn und Vertiefung, das Bestreben, Sachgebiete klar voneinander zu scheiden und auch innerhalb jeder Disziplin einzelne Probleme wie mit Seziermesser herauszupräparieren".

36 On the matter of the dating of *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* we agree with Chadwick 1998: 300 n. 50, who follows the dating of de Rijk (see below) and notes: "Some scholars (e. g. E. K. Rand and Obertello) have wanted to date the first *Isagoge* commentary before the *Arithmetica*. This is unlikely because it does not follow the Platonic order". We quote these scholars' opinions on the matter of dating: de Rijk 1964: 129.159: "about 504 – 505"; Obertello 1974: 305: "ca. 500"; Barnes 1981: 87 n. 9: "His first *opus* was *in Isag* ed. 1, composed in 504/5"; Dod 1982: 79: to the years 510 – 522; Lerer 1985: 69: "It is arguably Boethius' first work"; Shiel 1987: 329: "shortly before the year 510 AD"; Magee-Marenbon 2009: 305: to the years 504 – 9; Ebbesen 2009: 42: "obviously an early work".

37 See Colish 1985: 269, Ebbesen 2009: 36 – 37.

38 At 95.14 he notes that Victorinus did not understand Porphyry ("Victorinus intellexisse minus uidetur"); elsewhere he accuses him of making mistakes (64.8: "hic tamen a Victorino uidetur erratum") and corrects him (35.5 – 6: "Victorini culpam uel, si ita contingit, emendationem aequi bonique

nus (for whom he speaks in otherwise very complimentary terms) translates Porphyry's text[39]. Thus, about five years later[40] he writes a second commentary to Porphyry's *Introduction*, in which he includes, this time, a new, personal translation of the work.[41] To this second work of commentary, the *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio secunda*, Boethius will give a different external appearance and length. First, he structures it in five books and doubles its length (213 pages in total, in the Samuel Brandt edition). The most basic difference, however, is the new commentary, which is not written in dialogue form but in that of impersonal text.

We mentioned before that Boethius did not completely agree with Victorinus's translation: he had his own translating methodology.[42] Regardless, the reasons that led him to begin a new attempt were not due to translation. He explains his reasons thus:

> The first edition was enough for a simple understanding of this book [i.e. Porphyry's *Introduction*], while the second has been written for a more esoteric point of view for all those who achieved solid knowledge and do not stumble over isolated words which denote concepts.[43]

The *editio prima*, therefore, attempted an "understanding of the first degree" of Porphyry's work, while the *editio secunda* was meant for students of philosophy, to which it would offer "deeper considerations". This exceptionally important declara-

faciamus"); he also accuses him of translating vaguely (94.11 "obscuritas"). Despite all this, he describes Victorinus as (4.12) "orator sui temporis ferme doctissimus". Compare Brandt 1906: XI, XIV-XVIII, LXXX, Shiel 1990: 362.

39 Compare Colish 1985: 269: "the second (translation) made by Boethius himself out of his irritation with Victorinus' alleged mistakes".

40 Chadwick 1998: 132 notes that the *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio secunda* was written a few years (perhaps five) after *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*, therefore placing it around 510; Magee-Marenbon 2009: 305 agree with this dating: "Second commentary on Porphyry, *Isagoge*. Using Boethius' own translation of the text. After the *Categories* commentary – i.e. after 510". De Rijk 1964: 144.159 dates the writing of the work to the period 507–509.

41 Chadwick 1998: 134 notes: "Boethius' first philosophical translation was the *Isagoge* or 'introduction' by Porphyry". For this translation see in brief Magee-Marenbon 2009: 304 (they date it to the period 511–13), compare Shiel 1990: 362.

42 Boethius followed the tactic of *fidus interpres*, see Ebbesen 1987: 288–289, Ebbesen 2009: 37.45. Boethius announces his translational "stance" at the beginning of the work's first book *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio secunda*, 135.5–13: "Secundus hic arreptae expositionis labor nostrae seriem translationis expediet, in qua quidem uereor ne subierim fidi interpretis culpam, cum uerbum uerbo expressum comparatumque reddiderim. Cuius incepti ratio est quod in his scriptis in quibus rerum cognitio quaeritur, non luculentae orationis lepos, sed incorrupta ueritas exprimenda est. quocirca multum profecisse uideor, si philosophiae libris Latina oratione compositis per integerrimae translationis sinceritatem nihil in Graecorum litteris amplius desideretur".

43 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio secunda*, 135.4–8: "eum hoc scire conuenit, nos, ut in prima editione dictum est, hanc expositionem nostro reseruasse iudicio, ut ad intelligentiam simplicem huius libri editio prima sufficiat, ad interiorem uero speculationem confirmatis paene iam scientia nec in singulis uocabulis rerum haerentibus haec posterior colloquatur".

tion has to do with the quality of the two works' content, which is closely connected with those reading them. Is this important distinction unrelated perhaps to the external differences we discovered before?

To answer this question, we must bring to mind a common division among contemporary Greek Alexandrian Aristotelians of Aristotle's works into *discursive* or *exoteric* on the one hand and *personal* or *auditory* on the other.[44] The first category included those works that were considered "created in the form of questions and answers between more than one person" (ὅσα δραματικῶς διεσκεύασται κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν πλειόνων προσώπων).[45] These works were also called exoteric "because they were written for those who understand in a superficial way" (ἐπειδὴ πρὸς τοὺς ἐπιπολαίως συνιέντας γέγραπται).[46] The *personal* works are all those considered to have been written by Aristotle "as if he himself was talking" (ὅσα γέγραφεν ὡς ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ). These works were also called *auditory* for the following reason: "Having been created only for the lovers of philosophy, they were created for being heard" (διότι μόνοις τοῖς ἐρασταῖς φιλοσόφοις ... πεποίηνται πρὸς ἀκρόασιν).[47] In these texts the two categories of Aristotle's works were differentiated not only based on the readers and the level of the content but also based on their external appearance: works meant for novices ("exoteric" works) had a "dramatic" construction, they were written, in other words "in a form of question and answer" (κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν), while the works for the true lovers of philosophy (the "esoteric"

44 Ammonius, *In Cat*. 4.15–19: τὰ μέν ἐστι διαλογικά, ὡς ὅσα δραματικῶς διεσκεύασται κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν πλειόνων προσώπων, τὰ δὲ αὐτοπρόσωπα ὡς ὅσα γέγραφεν ὡς ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ. Καλεῖται δὲ τὰ μὲν διαλογικὰ καὶ ἐξωτερικά, τὰ δὲ αὐτοπρόσωπα καὶ ἀξιωματικὰ ἤτοι ἀκροαματικά. Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 7.3–8: τὰ μέν ἐστιν αὐτοπρόσωπα, τὰ δὲ διαλογικά. καὶ αὐτοπρόσωπα μὲν ὅσα ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου προήνεγκεν, διαλογικὰ δὲ ὅσα δραματιωδῶς ἐστι κατεσκευασμένα κατὰ πεῦσίν τε καὶ ἀπόκρισιν πλειόνων προσώπων. ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τὰ διαλογικὰ καὶ ἐξωτερικὰ ὀνομάζεται τὰ δὲ αὐτοπρόσωπα καὶ ἀκροαματικά, φέρε εὐλόγως ζητήσωμεν πόθεν τὴν τοιαύτην προσηγορίαν ἐκτήσαντο.
45 See previous note.
46 Ammonius, *In Cat*. 4.22–27: ἐξωτερικὰ γὰρ ὠνόμασται, ἐπειδὴ πρὸς τοὺς ἐπιπολαίως συνιέντας γέγραπται ἐπιτηδεύσαντος τοῦ φιλοσόφου ἐν αὐτοῖς φράσιν τε σαφεστέραν καὶ τὰς ἀποδείξεις οὐκ ἀποδεικτικὰς ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον πιθανὰς ἐξ ἐνδόξων, τὰ δὲ ἀκροαματικὰ ὡς ἂν δέον αὐτῶν ἀκροάσασθαι τὸν σπουδαῖόν τε καὶ τῷ ὄντι γνήσιον ἐραστὴν τῆς φιλοσοφίας. Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 7.15–23: ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐλέγομεν ὅτι ἐξωτερικὰ ταῦτα ὠνόμασται, ὅσα πρὸς τοὺς ἐπιπολαίως γέγραπται καὶ μὴ γνησίως φιλοσοφοῦντας. τοιαῦτα δέ ἐστι τὰ ἔχοντα σαφεστέραν τὴν φράσιν, τὰ μὴ ἀποδεικτικῇ ἐπιστήμῃ ὑποβαλλόμενα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον πιθανοῖς λόγοις κεκαλλωπισμένα, καὶ πρὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις τὴν ἀνάτασιν ἔχοντα πρὸς ἔνδοξα πρόσωπα. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἱκανὰ περὶ τῆς κλήσεως τῶν διαλογικῶν, διὰ τί ἐξωτερικὰ καλοῦνται. τὰ δὲ αὐτοπρόσωπα καλοῦνται καὶ ἀκροαματικά. τοιούτῳ δὲ ὀνόματι προσηγορεύθησαν, διότι μόνοις τοῖς ἐρασταῖς φιλοσόφοις καὶ πολλοὺς κατορθώσασιν λόγους πεποίηνται πρὸς ἀκρόασιν.
47 See previous note.

ones, in a manner of speaking)[48] had a "personal" or "auditory" construction, written as a constant stream of impersonal text.[49]

It is, therefore, clear that Boethius follows the same educational logic. He first creates a manual for novices, written in the form of dialogue, and then creates a textbook for advanced students utilizing impersonal speech. The meaning of the "novice" is disseminated by Boethius, using literary terms,[50] in the beginning of this "introductory" work, and his partner, Fabius, presents a general image of the studious (and of the "naïve") novice[51].

However, the Alexandrian Aristotelians noted that the two aforementioned categories of works were also differentiated by the quality of the language used. They stress[52] that in the discursive works the language is "fine, full of grace, not meager,

48 The term "internal" (works), the counterpart to the term "external", is not extant in the Neoplatonists of Alexandria. However, Boethius's phrase *interior speculatio* in the passage of *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio secunda,* 135.4 – 8 (see above) recalls the term "internal" (works).

49 See previous notes.

50 Boethius defines the meaning of the term "novice" with the following literary ways: 1. With the image/approximation of those who enter (*ingredientes*) for the first time into an unknown or dark place/path, in the passages *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima,* 23.21 – 23: "ut ingredientium uiam ad obscurissimas rerum caligines aliquo quasi doctrinae lumine temperaret" and 12.20 – 22: "omnes post Porphyrium ingredientes ad logicam huius primum libelli traditores fuerunt, quod primus hic ad simplicitatem tenuitatis usque progressus, quo procedentibus uiandum sit, praeparat". 2. With the image/simile of the person who trains in the wrestling arena in order to effortlessly compete in boxing, in the passage *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima,* 12.13 – 16: "quod assuescendus animus auditoris et mediocri subtilitate imbuendus est, ut cum sese hic primum exercuerit palaestra ingenii, quasi quodammodo prius luctatus ea quae sequentur sine ullo labore conficiat". 3. Comparing the first book of Porphyry's *Introduction* with the entrance and gate which leads those entering it to Aristotle's *Categories,* in the passage *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima,* 15.2 – 4: "quo enim alio melius quam introductionis nomine nuncupetur hic liber? est namque ad Categorias Aristotelis introitus et quaedam quasi ianua venientes admittet". 4. Personifying the first book of Porphyry's *Introduction* as *praegustator* and *initiator*, which helps the reader, in the passage *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima,* 14.23 – 25: "recte igitur et filo lineae quodam hic Porphyrii liber primus legentibus studiorum praegustator et quodammodo initiator occurrit".

51 Brandt 1906 characteristically notes: IX: "Boethius eum (sc. Fabium) fingit cupidissimum discendi, ita ut haec eius cupiditas uoluntasque prima causa colloquii (p. 4, 3. 85, 1. 11. 131, 20), et studiosissimum sui audiendi, cuius uel etiam Porphyrii prudentiam disserendique subtilitatem effuse ac proprie stupide ille admiratur (p. 8, 9. 12, 10. 16, 10. 44, 6. 85, 11), atque satis hebeti ingenio".

52 See Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 11.14 – 19: ἐν δὲ τοῖς διαλογικοῖς ὡραῖος, μεστὸς χαρίτων, οὐκ ἐνδεής, ποικίλος ἐν ταῖς μιμήσεσιν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς αὐτοπροσώποις συνεστραμμένος, γοργός, πυκνὸς τοῖς νοήμασι, καθαρὸς τοῖς ὀνόμασι, μηδαμοῦ ποιητικαῖς δουλεύων μεταφοραῖς, ἀκαλλωπίστῳ εὐρυθμίᾳ κοσμούμενος ..., ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐξωτερικοῖς κεκαλλωπισμένος ταῖς λέξεσιν. Compare Ammonius, *In Cat*. 6.26 – 7.4: ἐν μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἀκροαματικοῖς κατὰ μὲν τὰ νοήματα πυκνός ἐστι καὶ συνεστραμμένος καὶ ἀπορητικός, κατὰ δὲ τὴν φράσιν ἀπέριττος διὰ τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εὕρεσίν τε καὶ σαφήνειαν, ἔστι δὲ ὅπῃ καὶ ὀνοματοθετῶν, εἰ δέοι· ἐν δέ γε τοῖς διαλογικοῖς, ἃ πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς αὐτῷ γέγραπται, καὶ ὄγκου φροντίζει τινὸς καὶ περιεργίας λέξεων καὶ μεταφορᾶς, καὶ πρὸς τὰ τῶν λεγόντων πρόσωπα μετασχηματίζει τὸ εἶδος τῆς λέξεως, καὶ ἁπλῶς ὅσα λόγου καλλωπίζειν οἶδεν ἰδέαν. See Hadot 1989: 75 with n. 61.

varied in its mimeses, with carefully chosen words and metaphors" (ὡραῖος, μεστὸς χαρίτων, οὐκ ἐνδεής, ποικίλος ἐν ταῖς μιμήσεσιν, with περιεργία λέξεων and μεταφορά). To the contrary, the "personal" works have a language that is "concise, quick, thick with meaning, cleanly worded, without bowing anywhere to poetic metaphors, sparse" (συνεστραμμένος, γοργός, πυκνὸς τοῖς νοήμασι, καθαρὸς τοῖς ὀνόμασι, μηδαμοῦ ποιητικαῖς δουλεύων μεταφοραῖς, ἀπέριττος). The external works in general are "adorned with words" (κεκαλλωπισμένα ταῖς λέξεσιν), while the internal works are distinguished by their "good pace without frivolities" (ἀκαλλώπιστον εὐρυθμίαν). In short, the "external" works, written in discursive form, had a literary style and embellished language, while the "internal" works were not literary and used simpler language.

This difference in quality is detectable in both of Boethius's *editiones*. The later edition is "simpler": a clearly technological commentary text which offers in-depth analysis of the concepts with spare language. This is not the case with the earlier edition. Truly, an exhaustive examination of the treatise *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* reveals its literary treatment. Simpler or more complex literary graces dot almost every point of the text. We will first examine the treatise's "embellished" and then we will explore wider literary characteristics, such as the structure, the preamble and epilogue, the dialogue, the direction, intertextual references and finally, we will focus on examining its connections to the Ciceronian and Deipnosophistian tradition.

Firstly, because the technical content of the work is not by itself particularly attractive, Boethius takes care to embellish it, wherever possible, with language such as that mentioned by Olympiodorus and Ammonius: ὡραῖον, μεστὸν χαρίτων, οὐκ ἐνδεῆ, ποικίλον ἐν ταῖς μιμήσεσιν, with περιεργίαν λέξεων and μεταφοράν. He therefore writes in a language which uses at times long sentences and at other times shorter sentences, and words or combinations of words chosen to achieve, in each case, the intended impression. To achieve this, he utilizes every form of literary embellishment, from alliterations to images, metaphors, similes, and personifications. The start of the work's preamble is characteristic:

> As the winter had begun to approach, we had retreated to the mountains of Aurelia and there, then, when a particularly violent southerly wind had begun howling, shattering the peaceful calm of the evening, it seemed fitting for us to examine those introductory commentaries which certain learned men had seen fit to publish in order to enlighten in a way things which, due to their density of meaning, are exceptionally dark.[53]

53 *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*, 1.1–2.3: "Hiemantis anni tempore in Aureliae montibus concesseramus atque ibi tunc, cum violentior auster eiecisset noctis placidam atque exturbasset quietem, recensere libitum est ea quae doctissimi viri ad inluminandas quodammodo res intellectus densitate caliginantissimas quibusdam quasi introductioriis commentariis ediderunt". From hereon, I will refer only to the page/pages and the line/lines of this edition (e. g. 1.1–2.3).

Above, we have the description of a winter scene complete with inclement weather and powerful winds, some night in mountainous Aurelia (Northwestern Italy), where the writer and certain other figures have withdrawn with the goal of studying an introductory commentary, written by a very learned man, who wanted to shine a light upon dark and dense concepts. Within these few lines, we have the place, the time and the external conditions of the dialogue, as well as the meeting's purpose. The passage's literary appearance, however, is what is truly impressive. The arrival of winter to the Aurelian Mountains is emphasized by the alliterations of the letters m and n,[54] while the howling whine of the powerful Auster with the expected shattering of the peace of the night is underlined by the alliterations of the letters t/d and c/qu.[55] A careful examination yields further cases of literary treatment:

- Alliterations: ***Au**reliae – **Au**ster, mo**nti**bus – viole**nti**or, **qu**ae – **qu**odammodo – **qu**ibusdam – **qu**asi, doc**tissim**i – caliginan**tissim**as, **inl**uminandas – **intell**ectus, **densit**ate – **edid**erunt.*
- Antitheses: *violentior ~ placidam, exturbasset ~ quietem, inluminandas ~ calligantissimas.*
- Hyperbata: *placidam ... quietem, inluminandas ... res, quibusdam ... commentariis.*
- Postposition of a clause: *cum...eiecisset noctis placidam atque exturbasset quietem.*
- Hysteron Proteron: *cum ... eiecisset noctis placidam atque exturbasset quietem.*
- Words with metaphorical content: *eiecisset* (eicio = reject, translocate), *exturbasset* (exturbo = repel noisily), *inluminandas* (inlumino = shine light into something), *densitate* (densitas = density), *caliginantissimas* (caliginans = He who darkens).
- The allegorical correlation of the stormy winter night with the density of pitch-dark meaning and the following antithesis with the commentaries, which are in the light of publicity, and have as their goal to shine a light on dark concepts.
- Also, the concealment of the second conversation partner's name and the enigmatic hiding of Porphyry behind the alternate title of "learned men" and the title of the treatise Introduction behind the extensive periphrasis "introductory commentaries which certain learned men had seen fit to publish in order to enlighten in a way things which, ... are exceptionally dark", pique the reader's curiosity.

Therefore the beginning of the preamble of Boethius's work is "full of grace" and "not meager". Obviously it was subjected to great care and treatment by the author, both regarding its content and its literary qualities. The young Roman begins his dialogue with "fine" and "embellished" language, as befits an "external" work in the spirit of the Aristotelians of Alexandria.

54 3.5: Hie**m**a**n**tis a**nn**i te**m**pore i**n** Aureliae **m**o**n**tibus co**n**cessera**m**us.

55 3.6 – 7: **c**um violen**t**ior aus**t**er eie**c**isse**t** no**ct**is pla**cid**am a**tqu**e ex**t**urbasse**t qu**ie**t**em.

We see the same picture, more or less, in the entire work, to the extent that it is possible, due to its Aristotelian content. As it is impossible within the constraints of an article to exhaustively examine all the text, I will limit myself to collectively presenting, with demonstrative examples, certain dimensions of the work *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*, which clearly denote its literary style. At this point, I wish to stress that in the bibliography (either in collections of works or in specialized studies of Boethius's authorial output) only Boethius's swan song, the *Consolatio,* is exclusively presented as a literary creation. In contrast, the work which concerns us has not been studied systematically and exhaustively from a literary point of view. Simply the fact that this work is in dialogue form has led certain researchers to recognize in it certain literary elements.[56]

A scan of the work reveals literary virtues of lesser or greater scope. A commonly found form of lingual beautification is that which we already detected in the opening passage: the use of alliterations. Boethius constantly uses these throughout the work, be it among fewer words[57] or larger clusters of words[58].

Another category of literary treatment, this time of a stylistic nature, which we also observed in the opening passage, is the use of figures of speech. The philosopher embellishes his entire dialogue with varied figures of speech. Some of them are simpler, such as the hyperbaton[59] or the chiasmus.[60] At certain points however, more potent figures are used, such as the hypallage,[61] anaphonesis,[62] hypophora[63] et

56 Barnes 1981 characteristically noted: 78: "His earliest essay ... the first commentary on the *Isagoge*, is cast in dialog form and makes some small gesture towards literary style". Shiel 1987: 312–313, induced by the work's discursive nature, sparingly mentions certain literary aspects, but does not seem to recognize its overall literary nature – the goal of this study is, of course, different (also compare Shiel 1990: 368–369). Lerer 1985: 70–71 and Ebbesen 2009: 42 took a few further steps in showing the work's literary value.

57 Examples: 4.18: "praelibent praedocent", 5.12: "introductionis intentio interrogavit", 5.19: "subterentur ... subdita", 6.19: "subiectis et subiacentibus", 9.9: "merito medio", 15.9: "introducenda quaedam et praegustanda praecurrat", 17.1: "praediximus...pauca...superius", 1.7–8: "uarietatem diversa ...diuideret", 1.13: "definitionibus different", 21.1: "definitionem ducere supersedere".

58 An example of this is passage 9.9: "iustitiae libra et fortitudinis stabilitate et temperantiae patientia mederentur" (alliteration of -t-).

59 Examples of hyperbata: 7.6–7: "multiplex ... commoditas", 8.21–22: "omnium caelestium suprema divinitatis operum", 10.7–8: "in omni nobis philosophiae cognitione", 17.7: "omnem sermonum significantium varietatem", 2.5–6: "haec solagenerum specierumque cognitione", 21.15–20: "ab aliis sub eodem genere speciebus", 20.22: "necessaria generis specieique cognitione", 23.7: "ex quo id ipsum fonte manet ignores".

60 Examples of chiasta: 7.5–6: "Exedisti ...de intentione, nunc utilitatem explica", 8.16–17: "ad speculationem dei atque ad animi incorporalitatem", 32.18: "Venus ipsa et statua Veneris", 37.7: "nomen Romuli Romanos omnes continent".

61 See e.g. 83.4: "in futuris noctis uigilias" instead of "in futuris noctis uigilias".

62 Thus, in 20.3 Boethius exclaims: "By Heracles, what a ridiculous and foolish proposition!" ("ridicula mehercule atque absurda propositio!"). Compare 25.20–21: "nimis acute subtilis inquisitio atque ad rem maxime profutura!"

al. Also, the text is enlivened by questions, real or rhetorical,[64] which are interjected, occasionally addressed to the reader.[65] The common use of verbs in the second singular person,[66] a form of addressing the reader, creates the impression of an indirect dialogue.

One of Boethius's particularly potent literary tools is the *metaphor / tra(ns)latio*, which, as we have seen,[67] Ammonius and Olympiodorus explicitly name as a trait of the language of "external" discursive works. The metaphor belongs to the wider category of "tropos"[68] and was already by the time of Quintilian considered "exceptionally fine" and "exceedingly common".[69] The metaphorical uses of words in Boethius are indeed "exceptionally fine" and "exceedingly common". On almost every page of this early work we encounter a host of words of this type, which draw their literal content from various sources: 1. From nature, for example the cloudy sky, the branches of a tree, the spring et al.[70] 2. From everyday human life and activities, such as a highway, a boxing ring, the foundations of a home, the reigns, the thread, the ascent and descent et al.[71]

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63 12.16: "sed 'quid restat?' dicas licebit"; 19,23: "dicat quis ad haec horum cognitionem nihil omnino prodesse".

64 Therefore in 23.4 – 10 Boethius poses three consecutive queries with similar structural form: "enim digne monstrare queas, cuius si differentias nescias, id ipsum quale sit scire non possis? quid autem digne exequeris, cuius si genus nescias, ex quo id ipsum fonte manet ignores? vel quid in probationibus ratione possis ostendere, cuius si speciem nescias, id ipsum de quo aliquid probare vis, quid sit non possis agnoscere?"

65 E. g. at 19.15 – 17 Boethius asks: "Do you not see that...?" ("videsne ut ... colligetur?").

66 6.10 – 11: "porro autem cum corpus, id est substantiam videris, ... respicies". 11.5 – 9: "nam cuiuscumque rei genus dixeris, ad quam rem illud dixeris, speciem facis, ut si quid sit homo definias, dicas hominem esse animal. igitur quoniam ad hominem aptasti animal, genus esse animal et hominem speciem a te declaratum est". 20.11 "cum enim id quod dicis, ab aliis rebus omnibus adiunctis differentiis segregaueris et propriis impressis formam eius figuramque monstraveris". Compare 21.13 – 19; 22.15 – 16; 23.4 – 11 *et al.*

67 See above, n. 52.

68 Compare Quintilian's famous definition (8.6.1): "Tropos est uerbi uel sermonis a propria significatione in aliam cum uirtute mutatio".

69 Quintilian 8.6.4: "Incipiamus igitur ab eo qui cum frequentissimus est tum longe pulcherrimus, tralatione dico, quae μεταφορά Graece uocatur".

70 Clouds: 22.20 – 21: "in tales enim erroris nebulas incidit". Darkness: 15.8: "ut in his rebus quae sunt obscurissimae". Light: 17.5: "elucubratior animus auditoris". Branches: 10.17 – 18: "harum quinque rerum scientia ramosa quadam et multifida ui", compare 78.10 – 11: "in multifidas ramosasque species segregabitur". Knobs: 35.8: "eius... verba enodanda". Spring: 23.7: "ex quo id ipsum fonte manet ignores"; 23.19: "si ea nobis a primordio fundaret"; 75.3 – 4: "sub eiusdem generis fonte poni non poterunt". Seeds: 6.4 – 5: "omnis omnium disparilitas in gemina rerum principia secaretur".

71 Highway: 10.8: "disputatio...quasi quandam viam parat". Foundations of a house: 66.22: "quoniam nulla sunt in his scientiae fundamenta". Bridge: 5.12 – 13: "Aristoteles, cui factus est introductionis pons". Reigns: 24.8 – 9: "nos autem adhibito moderationis freno". Thread: 70.11: "filo quodam atque ordine ad inferiora composita genera". Limitation: 75.22: "nullo scientiae termino concluduntur". Impression (in memory): 75.7 – 8: "de his rebus frequentius inculcatum est". Ascent – Descent: 75.24 – 25: "dicendum necessario est posse nos ascendentes usque ad tale aliquid peruenire". 67.2 – 6:

The literary intentions of the "last of the Romans" are evidenced by the high-level "modal" forms of *simile* and *personification*, which are also interspersed among the Aristotelic content of *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*.

Our first examination is of the *simile* / *similitudo*, which, according to Quintilian,[72] contributes to the *orationis ornatum*, in other words to the creation of the "embellished language" of the Alexandrian Neoplatonists. Boethius' similes are indeed superb; we already mentioned three similes with which he casts the term of "novice" in vivid relief.[73] We mention three more characteristic examples of similes: 1. He likens the certain extraction of conclusions from a previous concept to the flow from a spring.[74] 2. He believes that "conversation clears a certain sort of 'path' to every form of philosophical knowledge".[75] 3. He employs as a simile the image (known to everyone from the parables of Christ)[76] of a home with sturdy foundations.[77] Quintilian's observation that a metaphor is a "more concise form of simile"[78] is enacted by Boethius, as in certain cases there is a common thematic content, such as in the subject matter of the spring, the foundations and the road.

Boethius also took care to make his early Aristotelian treatise ποικίλον ἐν ταῖς μιμήσεσιν. Two high literary tools are included in the category of mimeses: *prosopopoeia* and *ethopoeia*.[79] A common point of these two "figures of speech" is that they emulate a person who is speaking. They differ in that prosopopoeia is the literary configuration (διάπλασις) of a person or, more exactly, when "an object adorns itself

"sed si hoc in genere contingit, ut ascendentes alicubi consistamus, non est dubium quin descendentes iterum per species ad aliquem quodammodo calcem offenso termino consistamus. igitur cum descendentes per species…"

72 Quintilian 5.11.5: "Similitudo adsumitur in terim et ad orationis ornatum".

73 See n. 50.

74 5.16: "omnia velut ex aliquo fonte manarent"; 73.20 – 21: "quae velut aliquis fons, ita … profuderint".

75 10.7 – 8: "disputatio in omni nobis philosophiae cognitione quasi quandam uiam parat". Let it be noted here that we include within the category of similes not only all those that are joined with the parabolic conjunctions *ut*, *velut* et al., but also all those which are joined with the parabolic adverb *quasi*.

76 See Matthew 7.24 – 27, compare Luke 6.47 – 49.

77 66.3 – 6: "ut enim in domibus, nisi prius fundamenta subicias, nulla umquam fabrica, sic, nisi prius substantiae fundamenta sint, nulla umquam accidentia superponentur".

78 Quintilian 8.6.8 – 9: "In totum autem metaphora breuior est similitudo, eoque distat quod illa comparatur rei quam uolumus exprimere, haec pro ipsa re dicitur. Comparatio est cum dico fecisse quid hominem 'ut leonem', tralatio cum dico de homine 'leo est'".

79 The classical technical critics inform us splendidly regarding these two figures of speech: 1. Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 9: Ἠθοποιία ἐστὶ μίμησις ἤθους ὑποκειμένου προσώπου … προσωποποιία δέ, ὅταν πράγματι περιτιθῶμεν πρόσωπον. 2. Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 10.34: Ἠθοποιία ἐστὶ μίμησις ἤθους ὑποκειμένου προσώπου … καὶ ἠθοποιία μὲν ἡ γνώριμον ἔχουσα πρόσωπον, πλαττομένη δὲ μόνον τὸ ἦθος·… προσωποποιία δέ, ὅταν ἅπαντα πλάττηται, καὶ ἦθος καὶ πρόσωπον. 3. Alexander, *De figuris* 19: Ἡ προσωποποιΐα δέ ἐστι προσώπου διάπλασις ἤτοι τὴν ἀρχὴν μὴ γενομένου πώποτε ἢ γενομένου μέν, οὐκ ἔτι δὲ ὄντος. 4. Rhetorica anonyma, *Περὶ τῶν σχημάτων τοῦ λόγου* 3.177: Προσωποποιΐα δέ ἐστι προσώπου διάπλασις ἢ μηδέποτε γενομένου, ἢ γενομένου μέν, οὐκέτι δὲ νῦν ὄντος.

with a person's mask",[80] while ethopoeia is the literary "emulation of the style of a famous person", in other words when a writer presents a famous person speaking with his own well-known style, but speaking invented words.[81] It goes without saying that these two figures of speech are adapted in content by Boethius to the logical-philosophical concepts with which this particular work concerns itself.

Boethius frequently uses prosopopoiea, which Quintilian already described as "incredibly useful" (*utilissima*) for writers[82]. In the treatise *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* we detect at least seven instances of prosopopoiea, which, depending on their subject, are categorized as follows:

1. Personifications of logical-philosophical concepts. There are three personifications in this category: one of them[83] personifies the six concepts "goal, usefulness, order, authenticity, inscription, which part of philosophy is it subject to", which were the basic roadmap for analyzing an Aristotelian work by the Neoplatonic Aristotelians of Alexandria,[84] as *magistri*. Another personifies the concept of order (*ordo*).[85] The concepts of definition and accidens are personified in the third.[86]
2. Personifications of Philosophy or its different disciplines. Of the two personification of this category, one is of Philosophy itself: it is an extensive personification of the deified Philosophy.[87] (Here Boethius masterfully summarizes the six Neoplatonic definitions of philosophy).[88] This personification foreshadows the personified Philosophy which plays the leading part in Boethius's other great literary creation *De consolatione Philosophiae*. The second personification in this category concerns the fields of Practical Philosophy.[89]

80 See above (n. 79) Hermogenes' testimony (1). Quintilian (6.1.25) says that *prosopopoeiae* are "fictae alienarum personarum orations" or, more succinctly (3.8.49), "personam induere".

81 See n. 79.

82 Quintilian 3.8.49 – 50: "Vtilissima uero haec exercitatio, uel quod duplicis est operis uel quod poetis quoque ut historiarum futuris scriptoribus plurimum confert: uerum et oratoribus necessaria".

83 4.17 – 5.10: "Sex omnino, inquam, magistri in omni expositione praelibant. praedocent enim quae sit cuiusque operis intentio, quod apud illos σκοπός uocatur; secundum, quae utilitas, quod a Graecis χρήσιμον appellatur; tertium, quid ordo, quod τάξιν uocant; quartum, si eius cuius esse opus dicitur, germanus propriusque liber est, quod γνήσιον interpretari solent; quintum, quae sit eius operis inscriptio, quod ἐπιγραφήν Graeci nominant. … sextum est id dicere, ad quam partem philosophiae cuiuscumque libri ducatur intentio, quod Graeca oratione dicitur εἰς ποῖον μέρος φιλοσοφίας ἀνάγεται".

84 For the "six standard item of prologues to philosophical works" see Ebbesen 2009: 42 and mainly Mansfeld 1994.

85 12.19 – 24.

86 20.19 – 21.

87 7.12 – 24. Boethius describes philosophy as a clear and vibrant mind and deity (7.15: "vivax mens", 7.19 – 20: "diuinitatis et purae mentis", 7.21: "suae diuinitatis").

88 See Nikitas 1994.

89 9.14 – 21.

3. A brief personification of a book by the Greek founder of Neoplatonic studies, Porphyry, comprises a third category.[90]
4. A special category includes personifications of the animus and intelligentia of man.[91]

Boethius exploits the figure of ethopoiea in order to display two personalities which have special importance for him. One of them is the great authority of the Neoplatonic School of Alexandria, Aristotle. The other is Porphyry, the writer of the work Boethius is commenting on and which was considered necessary for the Aristotelian-Platonic studies of Alexandria. Therefore this important literary tool is chosen in a deliberate way only for these two figures. Also, this early literary construct of Boethius' achieves prestige and monumentality with the "lively presence" and participation of these two imposing figures. The quantitative dimension of the ethopoieae is also characteristic: For Porphyry, Boethius creates three ethopoieae, and only one for Aristotle. We must note, however, that all the ethopoieae, excepting Porphyry's third (see below) are of a "depleted" form: The person being personified does not speak in the first person, but is presented in the third person.

First in the dialogue's text (almost at the beginning of the dialogue), is Porphyry's first ethopoiea.[92] It is included in Boethius's answer to Fabius's question "what is the purpose of the Introduction".[93] Porphyry, through ethopoiea will make clear in earnest the purpose of his *Introduction*. The ethopoiea begins with a reference to Porphyry's name[94] and at its conclusion Porphyry will be labeled an "immensely wise teacher" (*prudentissimus doctor*)[95]. The extensive text in between contains Porphyry's opinions, which are introduced with the participles *videns, videns, speculatus* and the verbs *statuit* και *instituit*.[96]

Boethius's next ethopoiea concerns Aristotle[97]. It is brief and has the same structural image with Porphyry's first: it is introduced with the phrase "uidit enim Aristoteles" ("because Aristotle observed") and presents one of his opinions regarding order (*ordo*).

Porphyry's second ethopoiea follows almost directly after Aristotle's[98], again using the same structural image: *speculatus … videns … praelibat*[99]. Porphyry's

90 14.23 – 25: "recte igitur et filo linae quodam hic Porphyrii liber primus legentibus studiorum praegustator et quodammodo initiator occurrit".
91 24,13 – 16 and 18 – 24.
92 5.14 ("videns Porphyrius") – 7.2 ("segregetur").
93 5.11 – 12: "Tunc Fabius quae esset introductionis intentio interrogavit".
94 5.14: "videns Porphyrius quod…"
95 6.23 – 24: "ita enim nos prudentissimus doctor instituit…"
96 5.14 *videns*, 6.3 *videns*, 6.14 *speculatus*, 6.18 *statuit*, 6.24 *instituit*.
97 14.3 – 7.
98 14.8 – 18.
99 14.8 *speculatus*, 14.10 *videns*, 14.16 *praelibat*.

brief third ethopoiea[100] does not have a "depleted" form, but is normal, in other words he speaks in the first person. Boethius introduces him with the phrase "So Porphyry, while he had promised to hold his peace after these, confirms that he will discourse upon these briefly and with prudence ..., something which is similar to saying the following...".[101] Accordingly, Porphyry expounds his opinion using verbs in the first person.[102]

Besides the above *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* exhibits other linguistic particularities, which contribute to the work's literary quality. A common stylistic trait is the use of *pairs of words* accompanied by copulative words (e. g. "segregauit atque distinxit").[103] The members of the pair might, from a semantic point of be either synonyms (as in the aforementioned example) or complementary terms (e. g. "quaeri atque expediri").[104] The pair's words are occasionally either unusual (e. g. *subterfugere*[105], *supervadere*[106]) –rarely unattested[107]– or even of imagery-metaphorical content (e. g. *enodanda*[108]). Pairs might be used for: 1. Literary embellishment, when, for example, a word with imagery-metaphorical content is used (e. g. *enodare, conglutinatae*), or when alliteration is caused (e. g. *cogitantem meditantemque, formam figuramque, uim ueritatemque*). 2. Educational purposes, to better transmit the things being said.

An exceptional student of Greek, and later a formidable translator of Aristotelic texts, Boethius, in this early work, includes Greek terms which he translates concurrently into Latin. They are *bilingual pairs,* in the form of glossemata, which simultaneously show Boethius's respect for the original Aristotelian terminology and enlighten the Roman novice who is introduced to Aristotelian philosophy. This

100 31.2 – 7.

101 30.22 – 31.2: "Haec sese igitur Porhyrius tacere pollicitus breuiter mediocriterque super his rebus tractare promittit ..., quod simile est ac si diceret: ..."

102 31.4: "haec tractaturus assume", 31.5: "eatenus de his disseram".

103 21.16 – 17. Compare 4.5: "cogitantem meditantemque", 4.9: "enodare atque expedire", 5.1 – 2: "germanus propriusque", 7.6: "uaria et multiplex", 20.12 – 13: "formam figuramque", 23.24: "parce breuiterque", 26.4: "conglutinatae et coniunctae", 35.8 – 9: "enodanda atque expedienda", 74.16 – 17: "angustationem compressionemque" *et al.*

104 5.9 – 10. Compare 5.1 – 2: "germanus propriusque", 6.2 – 3: "propriis solitariisque", 7.7: "commoditas utilitasque", 8.22 – 9.1: "beatiore atque puriore", 9.15 – 16: "exornat augetque", 12.4: "rite atque ordinate", 22.22: "uim ueritatemque" *et al.*

105 60.22: "subterfugere atque euadere". According to the digital Thesaurus TLL, the verb *subterfugere* is found mainly (10 instances) in Cicero, of whom Boethius, as is known, is a fervent "supporter"; in other Roman literature the verb is encountered only 5 times. A similar case is that of the verb *supersedere* (9.22: "quas nunc persequi supersedendum est"), which has 11 instances in Cicero and sporadic ones in other writers.

106 79.25 – 80.1: "superuadunt et exsuperant". The verb *superuadere* is encountered in texts only 3 times. Boethius, in this early work, does not generally eschew using rare words, such as 4.18 *praedocent*, 14.25 *praegustator,* 26.4 *conglutinatae*, 51.3 *pluralitatem*, 72.16 *parentelam* et al.

107 E. g. 74.16 *angustationem.*

108 35.8.

bilingual pair is, at times, comprised of only two words (Greek and Latin, e. g. *λογική* = *rationalis*),[109] and at other times of more words, up to entire phrases (e. g. εἰς ποῖον μέρος φιλοσοφίας ἀνάγεται = *ad quam partem philosophiae ducatur intentio*).[110] In certain cases, Boethius declares his difficulty in rendering a Greek term with an already extant Latin word, due to Latins linguistic constraints (such as for example for the Greek term ὄντα, which he renders with the Latin word *entia*),[111] where he attempts neologisms (ex. νοητά = *intellectibilia*,[112] ὑπογραφικὸς λόγος = *subscriptiva ratio*[113]).

Boethius is, as is well known, one of the great creators of the Latin philosophical vocabulary. Already in this early treatise, he creates new terms (e. g. *adunativus*)[114] or adopts neologisms which his immediate predecessors coined, such as the term *intellegibilis*[115] from Seneca or Apuleius[116], the term *pluralitas*[117] from Ambrosius or Augustine[118] or the term *incorporalitas*[119] from Macrobius.[120]

This practice of creating bilingual pairs and the use of rare Latin terms as well as the invention of new words is part of the principle of περιεργία λέξεων, described in the external-discursive works of the Aristotelians of Alexandria[121] and undoubtedly,

109 9.25: "quam Graeci λογικήν, nos rationalem possumus dicere". Compare 13.3 – 4 Ἀναλυτικοί = *Resolutorii*, 13.17 – 18: Περὶ ἑρμηνείας = *de propositionibus*, 17.10 – 11: γενικώτατα = *generalissima*, 25.10 – 11: φαντασίαι = *uisa*, 34.19 – 20: σχήματα = *figurae*, 47.11: ἄτομον = *indiuiduum*.

110 5.6 – 8.

111 74.13 – 17: "at dicat quis haec omnia decem genera si vere sunt subsistentia, uel entia dici posse. flexus enim hic sermo est ab eo quod est esse, et in perticipii abusionem tractum est propter angustationem linguae Latinae compressionemque".

112 See 8.9 – 13: "Tunc interpellauit Fabius miratusque est, quid hoc noui sermonis esset, quod unam speculatiuae partem intellectibilem nominassem. – Νοητά, inquam, quoniam Latino sermone numquam dictum repperi, intellectibilia egomet mea uerbi compositione uocaui".

113 See 42.14 – 16: "horum ergo quos ὑπογραφικοὺς λόγους Graeci dicunt, Latini subsctiptiuas rationes dicere possunt, reddemus". The adjective *generalissima* is also a neologism, which renders the Greek adjective *γενικώτατα* (17.10 – 11).

114 78.6. Brandt (in the *Index locorum* of the edition, p. 357) informs us that this term renders the Greek term *ἑνοποιός*. The nouns *adunatio* (78.15), *docibilitas* (4.16) and the adjective *caligantissimas* (4.2) are also neologisms.

115 8.19, also 9.3 – 5.

116 Seneca, *Epistulae* 124.2 (and 12) and Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate* 1.9.

117 51.2 – 4: "uel ab his quae ad unitatem dicuntur uel ab eis quae ad pluralitatem congruent" (compare also 67.12 – 14).

118 In Ambrosius, the two terms *unitas* and *pluralitas* coexist (as in Boethius's passage 51.2 – 4, see above), e. g. in *De fide* (*Ad Gratianum Augustum*), prol. 2: "Quantam unitatem ostendit, ut consolationis unitas, non pluralitas sit!" and 5.3: "Pluralitas ergo excluditur, non unitas sequestratur". The term *pluralitas* is often encountered in Augustine, e. g. *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 68.1.5, *De ciuitate dei* 16.6. In Christian Latin writings (e. g. in Augustine), the terms were often used in regard to the Holy Trinity.

119 8.17 (also 30.4 and 31.14).

120 Macrobius in his work *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 1.11.12 and 1.14.20 speaks of the *incorporalitas* of beings, while in the *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 1.5.4 and 1.5.13 he speaks of the *incorporalitas* of numbers. Boethius knew this work by Macrobius; see below.

121 See the text of Ammonius in n. 52.

apart from serving the work's philosophical needs, it enriches the literary aspect of this Boethius's early Aristotelian manual.

We come now to the *general literary features* and first to the aspect of *dialogue*. We mentioned before that it was dictated by the entry of the treatise into the Neoplatonic genre of texts κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν, meant for novices of the Neoplatonic studies of Alexandria. Apart from that, though, Boethius, a Roman aristocrat with exceptional knowledge of his national literary history, possesses on this subject a rich genological tradition, especially the tradition of the Ciceronian dialogue. He is, after all, a proven supporter of Cicero.[122] Thus, it is only to be expected that this early work of his was based upon the foundations of the famous Ciceronian dialogue, which is in essence an evolution of the Aristotelian dialogue.

The *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* has been deliberately constructed as a Ciceronian dialogue. More exactly, Boethius constructs a first-person "narrative" dialogue (with the use of the verbs *inquam, inquit*), as are most of Cicero's own dialogues.[123] In Boethius's dialogue, two (as in certain Ciceronian dialogues)[124] are the *personae dramatis:* the writer himself has a central role (as in certain Ciceronian dialogues)[125] in the capacity of teacher, while his partner in discourse is Fabius (a most likely invented name),[126] a neophyte but studious pupil, whom he envelops with paternal affection.[127] Fabius' role is at first to ask his teacher to explain, with

122 Alfonsi 1951: 142–148 ("I. Cicerone in Boezio"); Obertello 1974: 561–562; Nikitas 1989.

123 Cicero in *Laelius* 3 declares: "quasi enim ipsos induxi loquentes, ne 'inquam' et 'inquit' saepius interponeretur, atque ut tamquam a praesentibus coram haberi sermo videretur". Also in *Tusculanae disputationes* 1.8, Cicero declares: "Sed quo commodius disputatio nes nostrae explicentur, sic eas exponam, quasi agatur res, non quasi narretur". Only four of Cicero's discursive works (*Laelius, Cato Maior, Tusculanae disputationes, Partitiones oratoriae*) are written in the discursive style of the "*coram* or *quasi agatur*" dialogues, in other words of the "dramatic" dialogues. All the rest are written with the form of the "narrative" dialogue ("*quasi narretur*" with *inquam* et *inquit*). It is telling that the Neoplatonist Boethius chooses the form of "narrative"dialogue, in which most of the Platonic dialogues are written.

124 As in the Ciceronian dialogues *De divinatione* (Cicero and his brother Quintus), *De officiis* (Cicero and his son Marcus), *Tusculanae disputationes* (in which participate M. = Marcus or Magister and A. = Adulescens or Auditor), see King 1971: XXVII.

125 In the dialogues *De divinatione, De officiis, De legibus, De finibus.*

126 de Rijk 1964: 128, Shiel 1987: 312, Chadwick 1998: 132.

127 We cite the passages which show the paternal relationship of the affectionate teacher and pedagogist Boethius with the neophyte but studious pupil Fabius. Already from the dialogue's beginning Fabius requests that Boethius teaches in the style of the commentators, in order to instill their students with a sence of studiousness (4.14–16): "et primum didascalicis quibusdam me imbue, quibus uel etiam commentatores, ut discipulorum animos docibilitate quadam assuescant, utuntur". A short while later (12.10–11) Fabius, a neophyte (*inchoans*), speaking to Boethius, declares his admiration for being taught in such a way: "Demiror, inquit, cur inchoanti mihi tam subtilius inuentas exercitatasque res edideris". In the beginning of the second book (85.2–3) Boethius, describing the commencement of the second night's dialogue, highlights Fabius' thirst for learning: "qua ipse est cupiditate discendi audendique studio". In the second book's beginning dialogue, Boethius, speaking to Fabius, exhorts him (85.7–9) to continue to be pleasantly studious and it will be very pleasing to him

commentary, Porphyry's *Introduction* and subsequently with brief interjections to ask for explanations or clarifications for his queries, as well as to include excerpts from Porphyry for his teacher to comment upon.[128] Boethius's answers are more extensive. The discursive character is more pronounced in the first book (17 queries and answers) and lessens considerably in the second book (only 3 queries and answers).

The preamble and the epilogue of the work are of particular interest. In particular, the brief preamble[129] has been subject to careful treatment by Boethius. We already approached the beginning of the preamble and discovered its literary virtues. At this point, Boethius directs, with Ciceronian[130] nuance,[131] the dramatic time (winter's arrival and evening) and scene (in the mountains of Aurelia, obviously at a villa[132]), the external conditions (violent and noisy wind), the general purpose of the stay there (vacation) but also the purpose of the particular meeting (study of the commentary of a learned man).

In the following part[133] of the dialogue's first section, Boethius' partner Fabius is mentioned, and Boethius's stance is described: he is reclining on the sofa (*lectulo*

as well: "tu hanc mihi iucunditatem studio tuo augeas, quod mihi perquam gratissimum est". At the work's end, Boethius declares (131.22–23) to Fabius that, if he needs his help, especially for his studies, he will gladly offer it: "post uero si quid umquam mei egueris, studiis praesertim tuis. … libens animo hortatorque ad easdem cupiditates parebo". Fabius, in turn, recognizes his teacher's paternal interest and voices his eagerness to continue his studies by the side of the same teacher (131.25–132.2): "Tu, inquit paterno haec mihi animo polliceris, uerum ego numquam deficiam ab his studiis, te presertim docente, a quo totam fortasse logicae Aristotelis, si uita suppetet, capiam disciplinam". The work is bookended by a final affectionate declaration by the teacher: "I will help you with all my heart" (132.2: "Faciam, inquam, libentissime").

128 Summarily for Fabius's role, see Brandt 1906: VIII-IX, Lerer 1985: 71.

129 3.5 ("Hiemantis anni tempore") – 4.8 ("cessabant"). Afterwards (4.8 "interrogatus") the dialogue between Boethius and Fabius begins.

130 Ebbesen 2009: 42 describes the preamble as "ciceronian mise en scene", compare Lerer 1985: 70: "The work's opening is in fact so littered with reminiscenses of Cicero and Aulus Gellius that the litterary status of the commentary seems very self-conscious" (for Aulus Gellius see below).

131 This is made evident if we remember the directorial conditions in the Ciceronian dialogues. The dialogue *De divinatione* takes place in Tusculanum (10 miles north of Rome); in *De natura* the dialogue takes place in Cotta's home during the Feriae Latinae; in *De republica* the dialogue takes place in the gardens of Scipio Africanus the Younger during the Feriae Latinae; in *De legibus* at Cicero's house in Arpinum on a long summer day; in *De finibus* the second dialogue takes place, when Cicero withdraws for a brief vacation to Tusculanum; in *Academica* the dialogue takes place at Hortensius's villa in Poteoli (*Academica posteriora*); and finally in the *Tusculanae disputationes*, the dialogue partners partake in an ambulatio (2.9) and carry out their conversation there before dinner. It is clear that Boethius does not exactly copy any of the aforementioned conditions, but he takes inspiration from them and creates his own direction. Lerer 1985: 70–71 believes that the preamble mostly recalls the *Tusculanae disputationes* but also Augustine's withdrawal to Cassiciacum: it is a fact that in all three writers, the traditional topos of otium-negotium is present. For direction in Cicero, see von Albrecht 1973: 1296 and von Albrecht 2003: 89.

132 Compare Brandt 1906: VIII.

133 4.3–8.

recumbentem)[134] and thinking (*cogitantem medidantemque*); in the meantime, the greetings with familiar people (*familiarium salutationes*)[135] and the household occupations (*domestica negotia*)[136] are over; Fabius requests that Boethius teach him, and Boethius agrees.

The epilogue at the end of the second book is also brief. Here Boethius promises Fabius wholehearted support in his further studies, while Fabius recognizes his teacher's paternal affection and requests to be taught all of Aristotle's logic.[137] The epilogue's conclusion, and that of the entire dialogue, is a pleasant surprise: "But because the morning sun smiled, as Petronius says, upon the rooftops, let us rise and speak again later with a more meticulous examination".[138] The dialogue began on a winter's evening with inclement weather, but ends with a sunlit morning. The allegorical association is unmistakable: the darkness of the initial ignorance ends with the rich light of knowledge.[139] At the beginning of the work, Boethius was reclining and contemplative; now, with the light of truth shining forth, he rises, ready for a more meticulous examination at some other time. This approach to the preamble and the epilogue denotes their important literary-structural, but also essential role.[140]

134 Boethius is also reclining on a sofa at the beginning of *De consolatione Philosophiae:* 1.pr. 1.7 ("toro"). 14 ("lectulo"), before the philosophical dialogue begins there, as well.

135 Greetings and compliments are mentioned in Ciceronian templates: *De finibus* 3.8–9 and *De natura deorum* 1.16. In *Academica posteriora* 1.1 ("illum amplexi ut mos amicorum est") embraces are mentioned.

136 At this point, the writer introduces the traditional motif in Roman writing of *otium-negotium*, which will be referenced even more succinctly at the beginning of Fabius' first speech to Boethius (4.10–11): "Quoniam, inquit, tempus ad studia uacat et hoc otium in honestum negotium conuerti licet, rogo ut mihi explices..."

137 See above, n. 127.

138 132,3–4: "sed quoniam iam matutinus, ut ait Petronius, sol tectis arrisit, surgamus, et si quid illud est, diligentiore postea consideratione tractabitur". Brandt 1906: 353 "Petronius" quotes Bücheler's opinion on the citation from Petronius: "fortasse excerptum ex hexametris".

139 Here is recalled, I think, the poem III.m.11 of *De consolatione Philosophiae* (vv. 1–3, 7–12): "Quisquis profunda mente uestigat uerum / cupitque nullis ille deuiis falli / in se reuoluat intimi lucem uisus ... dudum quod atra texit erroris nubes / lucebit ipso perspicacius Phoebo. / Non omne namque mente depulit lumen / obliuiosam corpus inuehens molem ; / haeret profecto semen introrsum ueri / quod excitatur uentilante doctrina", and also the poem III.m.10 (vv. 1–3, 7–12): "splendor quo regitur uigetque caelum / uitat obscuras animae ruinas; / hanc quisquis poterit notare lucem / candidos Phoebi radios negabit".

140 It is worth noting that a brief directorial epilogue is found at the end of the first book (83.3–5: "et quoniam matutinae salutationes uocant, in futuras uigilias quod est reliquum transferamus": daylight and heard the morning greetings, interrupted the conversation on the next night), while the second book begins (84.1–19) with an extensive philosophical intervention, followed (85.1–6) by a brief directorial introduction comparable to that of the first book. We should note here that the fact that both books of *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* have their own preamble recalls the similar Cicero's method, e. g. in his dialogues *De divinatione* (two books with extensive pre-

A Ciceronian influence can also be seen in: 1. The work's two-book structure[141] and the fact that each of the books contains a night-long conversation,[142] and 2. The philosopher's withdrawal to a country manor outside of Rome for a brief vacation and contemplation.[143] Finally, the first-person philosophical digression in the second book of Boethius's dialogue[144] recalls similar contemplations of Cicero in *De republica* and *Tusculanae disputationes*.[145]

The Ciceronian clime in which our dialogue is placed, coincides with another Latin tradition: the deipnosophistic tradition which begins with the *Attican Nights* (*Noctes Atticae*) by Aulus Gellius and is continued in Macrobius's *Saturnalia*. The *Attican Nights* is a dialogue of commentary nature (*commentationes* or *commentaria*)[146] as is Boethius' early work, which already in its title is described as *commenta* or *commentaria*.[147] However the designatory terms *commentaria* and *commentator* are also extant inside the work.[148] Boethius' dialogue is carried out in "vigils" (*vigiliae*) during two successive winter nights.[149] But the dialogues in the *Attican Nights* are also carried out in "vigils" (*vigiliae*) "during the long winter nights" (*longinquis per hiemem noctibus*)[150], when the *otium* is transformed into an intellectual *negotium*.[151] Finally, in the *Attican Nights* contemporary or older *docti*/*doctissimi uiri*,[152] among them Ar-

ambles), *De republica* (three days lasting dialogue [books 1–2, 3–4, 5–6] with a preamble at the biginning of each day), *De finibus* (preambles to books 1, 3, 4, 5).

141 In two books are structured Cicero's dialogues *Academica priora*, *De divinatione*, *De officiis*.

142 *De republica* is structured according to the dramatic time of one day; see above, n. 141.

143 Thus, e. g., in *De finibus*; see above, n. 132.

144 84.1–14. We will examine this proem in a following publication.

145 *Tusculanae disputationes* 5.37 and mainly *De republica*, second preamble, at the beginning of the third book.

146 The terms *commentationes* or *commentaria* (*-ii*) reappear often in the preamble to Gellius's work, e. g. pr.pr. 1. 3. 4. 8. 15. 20. 22 et al. In pr.pr. 8 the term *commentaria* corresponds to the Greek term εἰσαγωγικόν, and that is seen in Boethius' passage 4.3; see next note.

147 The descriptive *commentaria* is extant in the manuscript tradition of the title of the work; see Brandt 1906: 3, apparatus criticus.

148 In the preamble to *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima* (see above), Boethius describes as *commentaria* Porphyry's *Introduction*. Fabius does, after all, include Boethius among the *expositores uel etiam commentatores* (4.15).

149 1.1–3: "Hiemantis anni tempore … noctibus … noctis placidam … exturbasset quietem"; 83.4: "in futuras noctis uigilias" (hypallage, see n. 51); 85.1: "cum alterius noctis consueta lucubratio uigiliae quae uenissent". The relationship between Boethius and Aulus Gellius at this point has already been noted (following R. Hirzel) by Brandt 1909: VIII n. 2.

150 *Noctes Atticae*, pr.pr.4: "Sed quoniam longinquis per hiemem noctibus … commentationes hasce ludere ac facere exorsi sumus". Compare pr.pr. 10: "tempore hibernarum uigiliarum"; pr.pr. 19: "uigilias uigilarunt … a noctibus his"; pr.pr.21: παννυχίδας τὰς ἡμετέρας.

151 The pair otium-negotium is found throughout Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae*, see pr.pr.1: "negotiorum data laxati", pr.pr.12: "vitae negotiis", pr.pr.23: "a tuenda re familiari procurandoque cultu liberorum meorum dabitur otium", 1,13: "qui id tibi negotium mandauit" *et al.*

152 E. g. *Noctes Atticae*, pr.5.4: "a uiris doctis multifariam in libris scriptum est"; 1.21.3: "sed doctis quibusdam etiam uiris complacitum"; 18.4.18: "ut ueterum doctissimi dixissent" *et al.*

istotle, are mentioned;[153] correspondingly, in Boethius's dialogue, Porphyry, the great teacher of the Aristotelians of Alexandria, is quoted with the imposing title *doctissimus uir.*[154] Boethius, therefore, knows of Gellius's work and is influenced by it.[155]

On the other hand Boethius is also well aware of (as was his adoptive father and father-in-law Symmachus[156]) and expressly quotes[157] the approximately 100 years older Neoplatonist Macrobius, who, as is well established, knowingly continued Gellius's tradition.[158] The *Saturnalia* take place in the heart of winter (during the time of the Cronia: 26 – 28 of December)[159] and also display a Ciceronian structure by days.[160] In the preamble to this dialogue,[161] which has as its recipient Macrobius' son Eustathius,[162] we detect the air of the teacher's paternal interest for his pupil's studies,[163] which dominates in the epilogue of Boethius' work. Also well known to Boethius[164] is the commentative Neoplatonic[165] work of Macrobius *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* (*Commentary on Scipio's dream*), which Symmachus had published in a critical edition.[166] It is worth noting, after all, that the commentary is structured, like the *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*, in two books. Macrobius' treatises were relevant in content with Boethius' interests: its primary concept is the ultimate purpose of philosophy,[167] a purpose which is depicted in an especially vivid manner particularly at the beginning of Boethius's dialogue.[168] This purpose is achieved by whoever combines the *otium* with the *negotium*.[169]

153 *Noctes Atticae*, 19.5.10.

154 See above, p. 8.

155 There are many points in Boethius' work where the influence of Gellius becomes evident; such is, for example, the case of the expression *primitias:* Boethius, *De institutione arithmetica, Epistula Symmacho*, 5.22 Friedlein ~ Gellius, *Noctes Atticae,* pr.pr.13. See Lerer 1985: 75 – 76.

156 We know that Symmachus studied and published Macrobius's work *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, see Chadwick 1981: 7 – 8, Obertello 1974: 453.

157 31.21 – 22 – 32.2: "si Macrobii Theodosii doctissimi uiri primum librum quem de Somnio Scipionis composuit in manibus sumpseris, plenius uberiusque cognosces".

158 See Tuerk 1965.

159 See Kaster 2011: xxiv.

160 Kaster 2011: il-liii.

161 *Saturnalia*, praefatio (mainly 2).

162 See Zintzen 1969: 357.

163 Compare von Albrecht ^{2}1994: 1180.

164 See above, n. 157.

165 Zintzen 1969 concerns himself with the Neoplatonic origins of Macrobius' *Commentary* and their relationship with Roman views.

166 See above, n. 156.

167 See *Saturnalia* 1.24.21: "His dictis et universo coetui complacitis, Praetextatus cum in se conversa omnium ora vidisset, 'philosophia', inquit, 'quod unicum est munus deorum et disciplina disciplinarum, honoranda est anteloquio, unde meminerit Eustathius primum sibi locum ad disserendum omni alia professione cedente concessum". Compare von Albrecht ^{2}1994: 1181: "Macrobius kommentiert das *Somnium Scipionis*, um seine Leser in die Philosophie einzuführen".

168 See the famous definition of Philosophy in 7.12 – 24 (see above, n. 87).

A final literary trait of Boethius' work, of limited extance due to the technical character of the dialogue, concerns is intertextual references, prose and poetic.[170] Among the first are of course Cicero, Gellius and Macrobius, while among the second are Horace, Petronius and Terence. A detailed examination of these cases is beyond the scope of the present publication. That which we would like to underline is Boethius' delicate sensibility and originality in the choice, especially of poetic influences. We previously saw the (unattested elsewhere) quote from Petronius,[171] whose image supports the epilogue's allegorical aspect. Of equal impressiveness are the quotes from Terence (the line "if you know of one of the two, you will know of both"[172]) and from Horace's *Ars Poetica* ("if a painter wishes to combine a human head with a horse's neck").[173] The quote from Terence is incorporated in Boethius' text without mention of the source and as such becomes a part of Boethius' line of reasoning; in a similar way, Boethius includes in his line of thought a characteristic half-line from Horace's *Epistles*.[174] In contrast, the citation from Horace's *Ars Poetica* is done with an explicit reference to the great Roman poet and acts as an *exemplum logicum*.[175] From a literary point of view, we notice Boethiuss ability to "embellish" (according to Neoplatonic commands) his text with the necessary, in each particular case, texts from classical Roman literature and enhance the quality of his own writing.

I wished to present above, in the most concise way the literary particularities of the dialogue *In Isagogen Porphyrii commenta, editio prima*. With this work Boethius, in the prime of his youth, begins to realize his authorial plan and his patriotic goals. In a time when the *urbs aeterna* has ceased to be the center of the World, he wishes to revive it with the fresh spring water of the Aristotelian Platonism of Alexandria. His two dialogues serve this purpose: his maiden commentary on Porphyry and his sublime allegorical Menippial satire, bound with his own blood. Boethius' considerable literary abilities, recognized in the *De consolatione Philosophiae*, can also be observed in his maiden Aristotelian dialogue which, true to the *praecepta* of the Neoplatonic school of Alexandria, contains literary embellishment. The "last of

169 For the function of the *otium-negotium* in Macrobius, see Zintzen 1969: 376. For Boethius see above, n. 137.

170 See Brandt 1906: 349–350 ("Loci scriptorum"); Nikitas 2013: 385 with n. 41.

171 See above, p. 125 with n. 138.

172 12.18–19: "Atqui, inquam, hic ordo ualde cum inscriptione coniunctus est. Si enim alterutrum noris, ambo noueris. ordo tamen est..." The passage "si enim alterutrum noris, ambo noueris" is a word for word quote from Terence, *Andria*, prol. 10.

173 25.13–18: "ut a corporalibus singulis uere atque integre ductam hominis speciem intellegamus, an certe quadam animi imaginatione fingatur, ut ille Horatii uersus est:

Humano capite ceruicem pictor equinam / iungere si uelit" (*Ars* 1–2).

174 10.1: "quod recta orationis ratione quid uerum quidue decens sit, nullo erroris flexu diuerticuloue fallatur". The phrase "quid uerum quidue decens sit" is a slightly changed quote from Horace, *Epistulae* 1.1.11 "quid uerum atque decens".

175 See Nikitas 2012.

the Romans" in this "scholastic" treatise achieves the connection of specialized contemplation with literature, beauty and sweetness of word with the depth and preciseness of thought. Alexandrian Neoplatonism here embraces the Roman language and literary tradition while at the same time the *Aristoteles Latinus*, who would decisively water the tree of European civilization, is formed.

Katerina Ierodiakonou and Nikos Agiotis

9 The title of Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*

Introduction

Voula Kotzia's Ph.D. thesis, "The purpose (σκοπός) of Aristotle's *Categories*",[1] has succeeded, among other things, in making abundantly clear that, in order to acquire a thorough understanding of Aristotle's doctrines, scholars should not limit themselves solely to the careful study of his philosophical treatises; for it often proves instructive, if not indispensable, to also engage in a painstaking and systematic investigation of his commentators' works. Following in her footsteps, we focus in this article on what the Aristotelian commentators have to say, this time not about the purpose of the *Categories*, but about the title (ἐπιγραφή) of another logical treatise in the *Organon*, namely the *Prior Analytics* (Ἀναλυτικὰ πρότερα). In particular, this article sets a twofold task: first, to present an overview of the explanations given by the ancient as well as Byzantine commentators regarding the title of the *Prior Analytics*; and second, to examine more closely some intriguing issues raised by the commentators' explanations.

1 The textual evidence

As W. D. Ross rightly points out in his edition of the *Prior and Posterior Analytics*, Aristotle "frequently refers in other works to τὰ ἀναλυτικά",[2] but "he did not … distinguish them as *Prior* and *Posterior*".[3] Similarly, in her recent translation of Book I of the *Prior Analytics*, Gisela Striker remarks that "the title *Analytica* is Aristotle's own", but she doubts that the four books of the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics* were initially planned by their author as a single work.[4] Indeed, we may safely infer that the title *Analytics* is authentic, even though sometimes Aristotle also refers to the *Prior Analytics*, in particular, with the title *On Syllogism* (τὰ περὶ συλλογισμοῦ).[5] But how did Aristotle understand the notion of analysis that he himself standardly used for his treatise on syllogisms?

Contemporary scholars interested in ancient logic have not, in general, commented on Aristotle's use of the term ἀνάλυσις in the title of the *Prior Analytics*. It

1 Kotzia 1992.

2 E. g. *Int.* 10, 19b31; *Top.* VIII 12, 162b32; *Soph. El.* 2, 165b9; *Metaph.* Γ 3, 1005b4; Z 12, 1037b8; *Eth. Nic.* VI 3, 1139b27; *Eth. Eud.* II 10, 1227a10; *Rhet.* I 2, 1357b24; II 25, 1403a5.

3 Ross 1949: 1.

4 Striker 2005: xi.

5 E. g. *An. Post.* I 3, 73a14; 11, 77a35.

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has been suggested, though, that what Aristotle most likely had in mind was the notion of analysis already introduced in Greek mathematics.[6] Roughly stated, mathematical analysis was the process of assuming that a problem had been solved, or a proof found, and then working backwards deductively to previously established results; a proof or solution could next be obtained by reversing the steps. Aristotle was certainly familiar with mathematical analysis and referred to it as the road up to the principles in contrast to synthesis, i.e. the road down from the principles to what is proved from them.[7] So, Aristotelian analysis should be understood as the process of determining the premises from which a given conclusion follows, i.e. of determining the syllogistic figure that may be used for deducing a certain conclusion. In fact, Aristotle used the term ἀνάλυσις in the *Prior Analytics* with the following two senses:

i. Analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures.[8]
ii. Analysis of imperfect to perfect syllogisms, i.e. analysis of second or third figure syllogisms to syllogisms of the first figure.[9]

It is not surprising, therefore, that many occurrences of ἀνάλυσις are to be found in the last part of Book I of the *Prior Analytics*, namely in chapters 32–46, in which Aristotle's aim was to instruct us how to transform any given deduction into a syllogism of one of the three figures; or, in other words, how to give an analysis of ordinary language arguments, so that their proper syllogistic formulation is detected.

Contrary to their contemporary counterparts, the ancient and Byzantine Aristotelian commentators puzzled over the title of the *Prior Analytics* and offered a variety of interpretations. More specifically, the extant, or partly extant, known ancient and Byzantine commentaries on the *Prior Analytics* that contain remarks on its title are those by Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ammonius of Hermias, and John Philoponus,[10] by an anonymous commentator of the 7th/8th century,[11] by Leo Magentenus,[12] by Sophonias[13] and by John Pediasimus.[14] Moreover, similar comments on the title of the *Prior Analytics* are to be found in Ammonius' and David's commentaries on Por-

6 See Smith 2009: 64–65.

7 *EN* III 3, 1112b20–24.

8 E.g. *An. Pr.* I 32, 47a4; 44, 50a30; 50b3 sqq.

9 E.g. *An. Pr.* I 45, 51a2–3; 18; 22 sqq.

10 Wallies 1883; Wallies 1899; Wallies 1905.

11 Transmitted in the codex *Parisinus graecus* 2061 and edited in Brandis 1836: 139a36–141a3, 144a25-b26, 146a9–18, 147b42–148a2, 148b23–28, 151a41-b4, 154b13–29 and 37–43, 155b8–19, 156b34–157b18. On this anonymous commentary, see Ebbesen 1996: 85–86.

12 All citations to this commentary refer to the folia of the codex *Vaticanus graecus* 244 (digital copy of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: <http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.244>); this codex is in all probability the oldest containing all the works of Magentenus.

13 Wallies 1884. Some manuscripts transmit this paraphrase under the name of the 4th century rhetorician Themistius, but it has plausibly been attributed to Sophonias; see Rose 1867.

14 De Falco 1926.

phyry's *Isagoge*,[15] as well as in Eustratius of Nicaea's and pseudo-Philoponus' commentaries on Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*.[16]

Let us start with ALEXANDER OF APHRODISIAS' comments on Book I of the *Prior Analytics*, written in the late 2nd and early 3rd century AD. In the prooemium to his commentary,[17] while discussing the title of the *Analytics*, Alexander defines analysis as the reduction of any compound to the things from which it is compounded, and compares the method of analysis to that of synthesis: synthesis is a route from the principles to what depends on them, whereas analysis is a return route from the end up to the principles. He mentions geometrical analysis as a typical case of such a method and, in what follows, lists some further senses of analysis:

i. Analysis of composite to simple bodies, and of simple bodies to their form and matter.
ii. Analysis of speech to its parts, and of each part of speech to its syllables and letters.
iii. Analysis of composite to simple syllogisms and of simple syllogisms to their propositions.
iv. Analysis of imperfect to perfect syllogisms.
v. Analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures.

Alexander explicitly states that it is mainly due to the last sense of analysis, i.e. the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures, that the treatise on syllogisms deserves the title "*Analytics*". For, at the end of Book I, Alexander adds, Aristotle outlined the way by means of which one could conduct such an analysis.

Moreover, Alexander undertakes to explain why the treatise on syllogisms is called "*Prior Analytics*", whereas the treatise on demonstrations "*Posterior Analytics*".[18] In fact, although the division of Aristotle's *Analytics* into two treatises with

15 Busse 1891; Busse 1904.

16 Hayduck 1907; Wallies 1909. It has convincingly been argued that the author of the commentary on Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*, wrongly attributed to Philoponus, is actually Leo Magentenus; cf. Ebbesen 2015.

17 Cf. Alexander, *In An. Pr.* 7.11–29: Ἀναλυτικὰ δέ, ὅτι ἡ παντὸς συνθέτου εἰς τά, ἐξ ὧν ἡ σύνθεσις αὐτῶν, ἀναγωγὴ ἀνάλυσις καλεῖται. ἀντεστραμμένως γὰρ ἡ ἀνάλυσις ἔχει τῇ συνθέσει· ἡ μὲν γὰρ σύνθεσις ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχῶν ὁδός ἐστιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχῶν, ἡ δὲ ἀνάλυσις ἐπάνοδός ἐστιν ἀπὸ τοῦ τέλους ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχάς· οἵ τε γὰρ γεωμέτραι ἀναλύειν λέγονται, ὅταν ἀπὸ τοῦ συμπεράσματος ἀρξάμενοι κατὰ τὴν τάξιν τῶν εἰς τὴν τοῦ συμπεράσματος δεῖξιν ληφθέντων ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὸ πρόβλημα ἀνίωσιν. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ τὰ σύνθετα σώματα ἀνάγων εἰς τὰ ἁπλᾶ σώματα ἀναλύσει χρῆται καὶ ὁ τῶν ἁπλῶν ἕκαστον εἰς τά, ἐξ ὧν αὐτοῖς τὸ εἶναι, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὕλη καὶ εἶδος, ἀναλύει. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ τὸν λόγον εἰς τὰ μέρη τοῦ λόγου διαιρῶν καὶ ὁ τὰ μέρη τοῦ λόγου εἰς τὰς συλλαβὰς καὶ ὁ ταύτας εἰς τὰ στοιχεῖα ἀναλύει. ἀναλύειν δὲ ἰδίως λέγονται καὶ οἱ τοὺς συνθέτους συλλογισμοὺς ἀναλύοντες εἰς τοὺς ἁπλοῦς. ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ τοὺς ἁπλοῦς εἰς τὰς προτάσεις, ἐξ ὧν αὐτοῖς τὸ εἶναι. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τοὺς ἀτελεῖς συλλογισμοὺς εἰς τοὺς τελείους ἀνάγειν ἀναλύειν καλεῖται. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν τῶν τιθεμένων συλλογισμῶν εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα σχήματα ἀναγωγὴν ἀνάλυσιν λέγουσι. καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ σημαινόμενον τῆς ἀναλύσεως μάλιστα Ἀναλυτικὰ καὶ ταῦτα ἐπιγέγραπται· ὑπογράφει γάρ τινα ἡμῖν μέθοδον ἐπὶ τέλει τοῦ πρώτου, δι' ἧς τοῦτο ποιεῖν δυνησόμεθα.

18 Alexander, *In An. Pr.* 6.32–7.11.

the titles "*Prior*" and "*Posterior*" seems to have been in use long before Alexander – perhaps since the end of the 3rd century BC –,[19] this is the first surviving source commenting on it. Briefly stated, Alexander claims that the treatise on syllogisms is justifiably entitled "*Prior Analytics*", in contrast to "*Posterior Analytics*", because syllogisms are the genus of demonstrations and, according to Aristotle's *Categories*, the genus is by nature prior to the species. This last statement greatly surprises us, not only because Aristotle did not defend in the *Categories* the view that the genus is by nature prior to the species, but also because such a view does not sound Aristotelian; but we suggest to postpone the detailed treatment of this issue for the second part of this article.

Turning next to the Neoplatonic commentator AMMONIUS OF HERMIAS in the late 5th and early 6th century, both in his commentary on the *Prior Analytics*[20] and

19 There are two lists registering the works of Aristotle from the 3rd and the 5th century CE, which both confirm the division of the *Analytics*. The first list is preserved by Diogenes Laertius, whereas the second one by Hesychius. Contemporary scholars used to be in favour of the opinion that the list of Diogenes rested on the authority of Hermippus of Smyrna, a Peripatetic philosopher and pupil of Callimachus around the middle of the 3rd century BCE. According to Paul Moraux, the two inventories must have had a common source, which seems to have derived from the Peripatetic School and cannot have been written later than the 2nd century BCE; a candidate for the authorship is Ariston of Ceos, who probably served as head of the School in Athens after the death of his predecessor Lycon around 225 BCE; see Moraux 1951: 221 sqq. and 312.

20 Cf. Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 5.10 – 6.11: καὶ λέγομεν ὅτι ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς συλλογισμοῖς σύνθεσις, ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἀνάλυσις, ὥσπερ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς γραμματικοῖς ἔστιν σύνθεσις καὶ ἀνάλυσις, σύνθεσις μὲν καθ' ἣν ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων ἢ τῶν συλλαβῶν συντιθέασιν ὀνόματα ἢ ῥήματα, ἀνάλυσις δὲ καθ' ἣν τὰ συντεθέντα ἀναλύουσιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἁπλᾶ ἐξ ὧν συνετέθη, εἰς τὰς συλλαβὰς καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς φυσιολόγοις σύνθεσις καὶ ἀνάλυσις, σύνθεσις μὲν ἡ γένεσις καθ' ἣν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁπλῶν ἐπὶ τὰ σύνθετα ἔρχονται, δεικνύντες ὅτι ἀπὸ τῶν δ στοιχείων οἱ δ χυμοὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἄνθρωποι, ἀνάλυσις δὲ καθ' ἣν ἀπὸ τῶν συνθέτων ἐπὶ τὰ ἁπλᾶ ἔρχονται, οἷον ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τῶν δ χυμῶν, οἱ δ χυμοὶ ἐκ τῶν δ στοιχείων. καὶ παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις δὲ ἔστιν σύνθεσις καὶ ἀνάλυσις, σύνθεσις μέν, ὅταν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁπλῶν εἰδῶν ἔλθωσιν ἐπὶ τὰ σύνθετα, οἷον ἀπὸ τοῦ καθ' αὐτὸ καλοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τῷ νῷ καλόν, ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν· ἀνάλυσις δέ ἐστιν, ὅταν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς εἰδῶν ἀναδράμωσιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἐρωτικὴ ἀνάλυσις, ᾗ κέχρηται ἐν τῷ Συμποσίῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς κάλλους ἀνατρέχων ἐπὶ τὸ νοητὸν κάλλος· ἔστιν δὲ καὶ γεωμετρικὴ ἀνάλυσις † ἡ πῶς τὸ δεύτερον τῶν Εὐκλείδου ἀναλύεται ὅλον. καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ἀνάλυσιν ὁ Γεμῖνος ὁριζόμενός φησιν "ἀνάλυσίς ἐστιν ἀποδείξεως εὕρεσις"· ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ συμπεράσματος ἔρχονται οἱ ἀναλύοντες· καὶ ἐὰν εὕρωσιν ἀναλῦσαι, εὐχερῶς ἃ ἀναλύοντες εὑρήκασιν συνθέντες ποιοῦνται τὴν ἀπόδειξιν· ὥστε καλῶς ὡρίσατο τὴν ἀνάλυσιν ἀποδείξεως εὕρεσιν εἶναι. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἀστρονόμοις σύνθεσις καὶ ἀνάλυσις. ἔστιν οὖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς συλλογισμοῖς. καὶ σύνθεσις μέν ἐστιν ἡ συναγωγὴ τῶν λημμάτων καὶ ἡ γένεσις αὐτοῦ τοῦ συλλογισμοῦ· οἷον θέλω ἀποδεῖξαι ὅτι ἡ ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν, καὶ συνάγω λήμματά τινα, ἐξ ὧν πλέκω συλλογισμὸν οὕτως· ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοκίνητον· πᾶν αὐτοκίνητον ἀεικίνητον· πᾶν ἀεικίνητον ἀθάνατον· ἡ ψυχὴ ἄρα ἀθάνατος. αὕτη σύνθεσίς ἐστιν. ἀνάλυσις δέ, ὅταν τὸν συλλογισμὸν εὑρόντες κείμενον παρά τινι τῶν παλαιῶν ζητῶμεν ὑπὸ ποῖον σχῆμα ἀνάγεται, καὶ οὕτως αὐτὸν ἀναλύωμεν εἰς τὰ λήμματα τὰ ἐξ ὧν συνετέθη· οἷον τοῦτον αὐτὸν τὸν εἰρημένον συλλογισμὸν ἐὰν βουληθῶ ἀναλῦσαι εὑρὼν παρὰ Πλάτωνι κείμενον, ἄρχομαι ἀπὸ τοῦ συμπεράσματος καὶ λέγω· ἡ ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν· πόθεν δὲ τοῦτο κατεσκευάσθη; ἐκ τοῦ 'πᾶν ἀεικίνητον ἀθάνατόν ἐστιν' καὶ 'πᾶν αὐτοκίνητον ἀεικίνητον'. καὶ οὕτως ἀναλύω τὸν συλλογισμὸν εἰς τὰ λήμματα ἐξ ὧν συνετέθη. καὶ

in his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*,[21] he lists most of Alexander's senses of analysis classified under the different disciplines that make use of it:

i. Analysis of the grammarians; i.e. analysis of speech to its parts, and of each part of speech to its syllables and letters.
ii. Analysis of the natural philosophers; i.e. analysis of composite to simple bodies. For instance, analysis of human bodies to the four humours, or to their parts, and of these to the four elements, and of the four elements to their form and matter.
iii. Analysis of the geometers. Ammonius cites, here, Geminus' definition of analysis as 'the discovery of a demonstration'.
iv. Analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures.

Interestingly enough, Ammonius borrows, in a true Neoplatonic vein, his example of the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures from Plato's *Phaedrus* (245c-e): if we start, Ammonius says, from Plato's conclusion 'The soul is immortal', we can determine the premises from which it follows; namely, 'Everything self-moved always moves' and 'Everything that always moves is immortal'.

Alexander's senses of analysis that are not included in Ammonius' list are those connected with certain logical uses; that is, the analysis of composite to simple syllogisms, and of simple syllogisms to their propositions, as well as the analysis of imperfect to perfect syllogisms. On the other hand, Ammonius adds two more senses of analysis:

v. Analysis of the astronomers, about which he gives no further information.
vi. Analysis of the philosophers, i.e. the ascent from the sensibles to the intelligibles.

To illustrate the ascent from the sensibles to the intelligibles, Ammonius borrows again an example from Plato, but this time from Plato's *Symposium* (210a sqq.); he refers to the ascent from the sensible beauty to the intelligible beauty, and labels it 'erotic analysis' (ἐρωτικὴ ἀνάλυσις).

Concerning the title of the *Prior Analytics*, Ammonius agrees with Alexander that this logical treatise is called "*Analytics*" due to the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures, which Aristotle presented in the third and last part of Book I, after having dealt in the first part with the formation of syllogisms (περὶ γενέσεως συλλογισμῶν), i.e. their composition or synthesis (περὶ συνθέσεως), and in the second part with the discovery of their premises (περὶ εὑρέσεως τῶν λημμάτων).[22] But Ammonius diverts from Alexander's account and adds that the *Prior Analytics* are not called "*On*

αὐτὰ δὲ τὰ λήμματα ἐὰν βουληθῶ ἀναλῦσαι, ἀναλύω αὐτὰ εἰς τοὺς ὅρους· πᾶν γὰρ λῆμμα ἔχει πάντως τὸν μὲν ὑποκείμενον τὸν δὲ κατηγορούμενον ὅρον.

21 Ammonius, *In Isagogen* 36.1–9.

22 Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 6.11–30; cf. Aristotle, *An. Pr.* I 32, 46b40–47a5: πῶς δ' ἀνάξομεν τοὺς συλλογισμοὺς εἰς τὰ προειρημένα σχήματα, λεκτέον ἂν εἴη μετὰ ταῦτα· λοιπὸν γὰρ ἔτι τοῦτο τῆς σκέψεως. εἰ γὰρ τήν τε γένεσιν τῶν συλλογισμῶν θεωροῖμεν καὶ τοῦ εὑρίσκειν ἔχοιμεν δύναμιν, ἔτι δὲ τοὺς γεγενημένους ἀναλύοιμεν εἰς τὰ προειρημένα σχήματα, τέλος ἂν ἔχοι ἡ ἐξ ἀρχῆς πρόθεσις.

Synthesis" (Συνθετικά) or "*On Discovery*" (Εὑρετικά), because the method of analysis is more valuable (τιμιωτέρα ... καὶ ἐπιστημονικωτέρα καὶ περιληπτικωτέρα καὶ τελειοτέρα) than the method of synthesis. For the one who knows how to analyse, Ammonius stresses, also knows how to compound or synthesize, but not the other way round; for instance, builders who know how to analyse houses to their basic materials are the ones who also know how to build houses.[23] But why does Ammonius claim, here, that analysis is more valuable than synthesis? This is the second puzzling issue that we discuss in the second part of this article.

Finally, in his concluding comments on the title of the *Prior Analytics*,[24] Ammonius points out that it was Aristotle who first discovered the three figures to which all arguments may be analysed, whereas Plato and the other philosophers simply used arguments, just like all laymen did in their everyday affairs. Aristotle was, therefore, rightly proud of his innovation and, as a result, used the title "*Analytics*" both for the *Prior Analytics* and for the *Posterior Analytics*. As to the difference between the titles of these two logical treatises, Ammonius argues that the *Prior Analytics* is thus called because it deals with syllogisms in general, whereas *Posterior Analytics* deals only with demonstrative syllogisms, and it is more appropriate to teach what is common to all syllogisms prior to what is characteristic only of some of them.[25] That is to say, Ammonius seems to agree with Alexander that syllogisms are the genus of demonstrations, but makes no general claim in this passage as to the natural priority of genera over species.

There is no doubt that Ammonius' account of the different senses of analysis as well as his explanation of the title of the *Prior Analytics* influenced two Christian Neoplatonic commentators; namely, his student JOHN PHILOPONUS and the late 6th century commentator David. More specifically, in the prooemium to his commentary on the *Prior Analytics*, Philoponus lists some of Ammonius' senses of analysis: geometrical analysis, analysis of natural bodies to the four elements and analysis of

23 Cf. Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 6.30–7.6: ἀλλ' εἴποι τις, οὗ καὶ περὶ συνθέσεως διδάσκει καὶ περὶ εὑρέσεως, τί δήποτε οὐ Συνθετικὰ ἐπέγραψεν οὐδὲ Εὑρετικὰ ἀλλὰ Ἀναλυτικά; τίς ἡ ἀποκλήρωσις; καὶ λέγομεν ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπιστημονικωτέρου καὶ τοῦ τιμιωτέρου· ὁ γὰρ εἰδὼς ἐπιστημονικῶς ἀναλῦσαι καὶ συνθεῖναι οἶδεν, οὐ πάντως δὲ ὁ εἰδὼς συνθεῖναι καὶ ἀναλῦσαι· οἷον ὁ οἰκοδόμος ὁ ἀναλῦσαι εἰδὼς ὥστε τὰς ὕλας ἀπαθεῖς φυλάξαι πάντως καὶ συνθεῖναι οἶδεν· <οἶδε> γὰρ τί πρῶτον, τί μέσον, τί τελευταῖον συνετέθη, καὶ οὕτως ἀναλύει. ἐπειδὴ οὖν ἡ ἀνάλυσις τιμιωτέρα ἐστὶν καὶ ἐπιστημονικωτέρα καὶ περιληπτικωτέρα καὶ τελειοτέρα (ὁ γὰρ ἀναλῦσαι εἰδώς, ὡς εἴρηται, πάντως καὶ συνθεῖναι οἶδεν), ἀπὸ τῆς ἀναλύσεως Ἀναλυτικὰ αὐτὰ ἐπέγραψεν ὁ φιλόσοφος. συντόμως δὲ ἠρκέσθη ἀπὸ τοῦ τελειοτέρου αὐτὰ ἐπιγράψαι, καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ τῶν δύο αὐτὰ ἐπέγραψεν.

24 Cf. Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 7.6–19.

25 Cf. Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 7.19–25: ἐπειδὴ δέ, ὡς εἴρηται, εὔτακτόν ἐστιν καὶ ἀκόλουθον πρότερον διδάξαι τὰ κοινῶς ὑπάρχοντα παντὶ συλλογισμῷ, εἶτα τὰ ἰδίως τῷδε καὶ τῷδε, διὰ τοῦτο ταῦτα μὲν τὰ δύο βιβλία, ἐν οἷς διδάσκει περὶ τοῦ κοινοῦ συλλογισμοῦ, Πρότερα ἀναλυτικὰ ἐπιγέγραπται, <τὰ> δὲ ἄλλα δύο, ἐν οἷς οὐκέτι ἁπλῶς περὶ καθόλου συλλογισμοῦ διαλαμβάνει, ἀλλὰ περὶ ἀποδεικτικοῦ συλλογισμοῦ διαλαμβάνει, Ἀναλυτικὰ ὕστερα ἐπιγέγραπται.

syllogisms to their appropriate figures.[26] And he, too, justifies the title of the *Prior Analytics*, by referring to the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures, which Aristotle discussed in the third part of Book I of the *Prior Analytics*, and which should be considered, according to Philoponus, as more valuable (κυριωτέρας καὶ τελειοτέρας) than the method of synthesis. That is to say, Philoponus claims, following Ammonius, that someone who knows how to analyse something, knows also how to compound or synthesize it, but not the other way round. His example, however, is different from Ammonius' example of builders: although laymen know, Philoponus says, how to compound nouns and verbs together in order to form propositions, for instance the proposition "Socrates walks", they do not know how to analyse it, i.e. they do not know which is the noun and which is the verb.[27]

In his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, DAVID, too, lists some of Ammonius' senses of analysis, when he divides what he refers to as the philosophers' analysis into natural (φυσική) analysis, i.e. the analysis of natural bodies to the four humours, then to the four elements, and finally to form and matter, and logical (λογική) analysis, i.e. the analysis of propositions to their terms and of syllogisms to their appropriate figures. David's example of the analysis of propositions to their terms is similar to that of Philoponus: the philosopher analyses the statement "Socrates philosophizes" to the noun "Socrates" and the verb "philosophizes".[28] On the other hand, his example of syllogistic analysis differs in an interesting way from Ammonius' analysis of Plato's conclusion "The soul is immortal". David also starts from the conclusion "The soul is immortal", but there is no mention of Plato, and the premises from which it follows, according to him, seem to have a Christian connotation: "If the soul is immortal, there are paybacks for bad and good actions", "If there are paybacks, there is justice", "If there is justice, there is a judge", "If there is a judge, there is providence", and everyone concedes that there is providence.[29] Con-

26 Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 5.15–21.

27 Cf. Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 5.21–6.1: ὅθεν ἄξιον ζητῆσαι, εἰ ὁ συλλογισμὸς σύνθεσίς ἐστι καὶ συναγωγὴ πλειόνων λόγων καὶ οὐκ ἀνάλυσις, διὰ τί τὴν περὶ συλλογισμῶν πραγματείαν Ἀναλυτικὰ ἐπέγραψεν· ἔδει γὰρ μᾶλλον Συνθετικὰ ἐπιγράψαι. ἵνα οὖν αὐτόθεν ἡμῖν ἀναφανῇ ἡ τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς αἰτία καὶ ἡ τοῦ βιβλίου διαίρεσις, εἴπωμεν οὕτως· διαιρεῖται τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον εἰς κεφάλαια τρία, καὶ διδάσκει ἡμᾶς τὸ μὲν πρῶτον μέρος τὴν γένεσιν τοῦ συλλογισμοῦ, τὸ δὲ δεύτερον τὴν εὐπορίαν τῶν προτάσεων, τὸ δὲ τρίτον τὴν εἰς τοὺς συλλογισμοὺς ἀνάλυσιν. ἐκ τούτου οὖν τοῦ τρίτου τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν ἐποιήσατο ἅτε κυριωτέρας καὶ τελειοτέρας οὔσης τῆς ἀναλύσεως· πᾶς γὰρ συλλογισμὸς ἐξ ἀναλύσεως εὑρίσκεται ἔχων τὸ οἰκεῖον σχῆμα. ἄλλως τε ὁ εἰδὼς τὴν ἀνάλυσιν οἶδε καὶ τὴν σύνθεσιν· ἃ γὰρ ἀνέλυσε, ταῦτα συνθεῖναι οὐ δυσχερές· οὐκέτι δὲ καὶ τοὐναντίον· καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἰδιώτης ἐπίσταται μὲν συνθέσεις ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων εἰς τὸν λόγον ἀποτελέσαι καὶ εἰπεῖν, οἷον 'Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ', ἀναλῦσαι δὲ αὐτὸν οὐκέτι οἶδε καὶ εἰπεῖν ποῖον μέν ἐστι τὸ ὄνομα, ποῖον δὲ τὸ ῥῆμα.

28 David, *In Isagogen* 103.23–104.23.

29 David, *In Isagogen* 103.34–104.7: ἐν δὲ συλλογισμοῖς, ὡς ὅταν λάβωμεν τὸ ζητούμενον ὡς ὁμολογούμενον (ὅταν κατὰ σύνθεσιν ἀγορεύηται τὸ προκείμενον) καὶ καταντήσωμεν εἴς τι ὁμολογούμενον, οἷον εἰ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή (τοῦτο τὸ ζητούμενον λαμβάνομεν ὡς ὁμολογούμενον, ἐπειδὴ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή), εἰσὶν ἀμοιβαὶ τῶν φαύλων καὶ ἀγαθῶν πράξεων, εἰ δὲ εἰσὶν ἀμοιβαί, εἰσὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆν δικαιωτήρια, εἰ δὲ εἰσὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆν δικαιωτήρια, ἔστι τὸ δικαζόμενον, εἰ δὲ ἔστι τὸ δικαζόμενον, ἔστιν

cerning the title of the *Prior Analytics*, David, too, agrees with Ammonius that it is due to the fact that syllogistic analysis is more valuable (τιμιωτέρας) than synthesis. In fact, David even makes the general claim that there is no art whatsoever without analysis and uses Ammonius' example of the builder.[30]

At the beginning of his scholia to the *Prior Analytics*,[31] the ANONYMOUS COMMENTATOR of the 7th/8th century also lists the logical senses of analysis distinguished by Alexander: analysis of composite to simple syllogisms, of simple syllogisms to their propositions, of imperfect to perfect syllogisms, of syllogisms to their appropriate figures. As to the title of the *Prior Analytics*, he has the same argument used by the previous commentators. That is to say, after presenting the division of the treatise into two books, he divides Book I into three parts, i. e. on the formation of syllogisms, on the discovery of premises and on the analysis of syllogisms, and claims that it is because of the third part of Book I that Aristotle called this treatise "*Analytics*", though he makes no evaluative claim of the kind we find in the Neoplatonic commentaries that this part is more valuable than the other two.

Moving on to the 12th century and the Byzantine commentator LEO MAGENTENUS, in the prooemium to his unedited commentary on Book I of the *Prior Analytics*,[32] he also distinguishes different senses of analysis: analysis of natural bodies to the four elements, analysis of simple syllogisms to their propositions, analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures. Also, Magentenus raises the issue of why the title of this logical treatise is "*Analytics*" and not "*On Synthesis*", and his reply reproduces the argument of the Neoplatonic commentators. In fact, Magentenus' example illustrating that analysis is more valuable than synthesis closely follows that of Philoponus; according to him, too, uneducated laymen do not know how to analyse the propositions they use to their constituent terms, and the terms to their syllables and letters. As to the reason why the treatise on syllogisms is called "*Prior Analytics*", in contrast to "*Posterior Analytics*", Magentenus argues in a way similar to that of Ammonius: since the *Prior Analytics* deals with all types of syllogisms, it proves useful to the study of Aristotle's theory of demonstration and, hence, it should be taught before the *Posterior Analytics*.[33]

The paraphrase of Book I of the *Prior Analytics* by the Byzantine scholar of the late 13th century SOPHONIAS is nothing but an adaptation of scholia deriving from earlier commentaries. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that, in presenting

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ἄρα καὶ ὁ δικάζων, εἰ δὲ ἔστι δικαστής, ἔστι καὶ προνοητὴς καὶ πρόνοια. καὶ ὅρα πῶς κατηντήσαμεν εἰς τὴν πρόνοιαν, ἥτις ὁμολογεῖται παρὰ πᾶσιν οὖσα.

30 David, *In Isagogen* 103.7–12: χωρὶς δὲ ταύτης οὐδεμία συνίσταται τέχνη· θὲς γὰρ οἶκον εἶναι τελείως ἔχοντα τὰ οἰκεῖα, τοῦτον δὲ ἀναλύεις ἀπὸ τῆς στέγης κατιὼν ἐπὶ τοὺς θεμελίους· εἰ δὲ κατὰ σαυτὸν ἐνθυμηθῇς ὅτι δεῖ σε ὀροφῶσαι οἶκον, διὰ τὴν στέγην καὶ τοὺς τοίχους ἐπινοεῖς καὶ διὰ τοὺς τοίχους τοὺς θεμελίους. ὥστε οὖν αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ συνιστῶσα τὴν τέχνην.

31 Brandis 1936, 140a14–45.

32 *Vat. gr.* 244, ff. 139v, l. 6–140r, l. 16. For the commentary on Book II, see Agiotis, forthcoming.

33 *Vat. gr.* 244, f. 140r, ll. 8–16.

the third part of Book I that deals with analysis,[34] Sophonias distinguishes some of its different senses: the analysis of speech to its parts, the analysis of syllogisms to their propositions, the analysis of composite to simple syllogisms and the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures. As to the title of the *Prior Analytics*, he also points out that it is due to the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures.

In his comments on the *Prior Analytics*, the late 13th century scholiast JOHN PEDIASIMUS mentions, too, geometrical analysis as well as the logical senses of analysis: analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures,[35] analysis of composite to simple syllogisms,[36] and analysis of speech to its parts.[37] He also tries to justify Aristotle's choice of the titles "*Prior*" and "*Posterior*" *Analytics*, instead of "*First*" and "*Second*" *Analytics*, by pointing out that the latter titles would make sense only if there were more treatises to follow, i.e. *Third Analytics*, *Fourth Analytics* etc.[38] Moreover, Pediasimus suggests, in contrast to his predecessors, that the term ἀναλυτικά does not refer to the analysis of syllogisms; had it been so, he remarks, Aristotle would have entitled his treatise "*Ἀναλύσεις*" and not "*Ἀναλυτικά*". To clarify the difference between these two titles, Pediasimus compares it to the difference between the terms ποίησις and ποιητικόν: the first signifies a result, while the second the means or the instrument (ὄργανον) to achieve the result.[39] So, according to Pediasimus, the title of Aristotle's logical treatises is "*Analytics*", because it refers to the method of analysis and not to actual examples of syllogistic analysis.

Finally, in his commentary on Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*, after having clarified that the purpose of this book is to discuss definition insofar as it contributes to demonstration, the 12th century commentator EUSTRATIUS, metropolitan of Nicaea, asks why such a book is included in a treatise entitled "*Analytics*".[40] Eustratius argues that, although *Prior Analytics* is rightly given the title "*Analytics*", since it deals with the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures, this obviously cannot be the reason why *Posterior Analytics* is thus called. Besides, Eustratius adds, it cannot be the case that *Posterior Analytics* assumes the title from *Prior Analytics* and is subordinate to it, since Aristotle explicitly said right at the beginning of the *Prior Analytics* that his ultimate aim was to give an account of demonstration. So, it is reasonable for Eustratius to try to find an explanation why the *Posterior Analytics* is called "*Analytics*".

To begin with, Eustratius defines analysis as an upward heuristic procedure from the effects that are posterior to the principles and causes that are prior. He also remarks that this is the metaphorical use of the term "*ἀνάλυσις*", which literally de-

34 Sophonias, *In An. Pr.* 118.32 sqq.
35 Pediasimus, *In An. Pr.* 3.17–18; 51.26–28.
36 Pediasimus, *In An. Pr.* 4.8–9.
37 Pediasimus, *In An. Pr.* 59.6 sqq.
38 Pediasimus, *In An. Pr.* 3.3–12.
39 Pediasimus, *In An. Pr.* 4.6–17.
40 Eustratius, *In An. Post.* 2.34–3.4.

notes the return to one's country.[41] Next,[42] Eustratius distinguishes and lists four different senses of analysis:

i. Analysis of composite bodies to their simple elements or constitutive principles.
ii. Analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures, as well as to their propositions and terms.
iii. Analysis from particulars to universals, i.e. from the individuals to their species, and subsequently to their genera.
iv. Analysis from what is known to us to what is known by nature, or from what is caused to its causes.

Eustratius claims, and in this he agrees with the previous Neoplatonic commentators, that the second sense of analysis is used in the title of the *Prior Analytics*, since the most valuable part of this treatise is devoted to the analysis of syllogisms to their appropriate figures.[43] The third sense of analysis is the one used in the title of Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*, since analysis aims there at discovering the middle term of a demonstration by the upward path or ascent from the individuals to their species and genera. The fourth sense of analysis is implied in the title of Book I of the *Posterior Analytics*, since the method of demonstration presupposes the analysis to the principles of demonstration; hence, Eustratius concludes, demonstration is in a way similar to analysis, and for this reason demonstrative syllogisms are called "analytical".

Leaving aside Eustratius' perplexing comments on the distinction between the different senses of analysis in the titles of the two books of the *Posterior Analytics*,[44] what is of particular importance here is the claim that Aristotle used different senses of analysis in the titles of the *Prior* and the *Posterior Analytics*. And interestingly enough, we find the same claim as well as the same elaborate account of the four different senses of analysis in PS.-PHILOPONUS' commentary on Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*. That is to say, according to this commentary,[45] too, Aristotle had different senses of analysis in mind when he gave to the *Prior* and the *Posterior Analytics* their respective titles; in the case of the *Prior Analytics*, he thought of analysis as the most valuable part of the treatise, while in the case of *Posterior Analytics*, he thought of analysis as the easiest and most certain way to discover the middle term of a demonstration.[46]

41 Eustratius, *In An. Post.* 3.4–10.

42 Eustratius, *In An. Post.* 3.10–4.20.

43 Cf. Eustratius, *In An. Post.* 70.24–27.

44 On this, see Ierodiakonou, forthcoming.

45 Ps-Philoponus, *In An. Post.* 334.20–335.26.

46 Sten Ebbesen's attribution of this commentary to Magentenus is convincing (see note 16), but it should be noted that Magentenus' prooemium to the unedited commentary on the *Prior Analytics* makes no mention of the different senses of analysis in the titles of the *Prior* and the *Posterior Analytics*; on the other hand, nothing that is said in Magentenus' prooemium directly contradicts the remarks made in the commentary on Book II of the *Posterior Analytics*.

2 Some intriguing issues

Having presented the ancient and Byzantine commentators' texts in which they venture to explain the title of Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, let us next examine three issues that have drawn our attention and seem rather intriguing.

2.1 The priority of genus over species

The first issue concerns the distinction between the titles "*Prior Analytics*" and "*Posterior Analytics*". As we have seen, Ammonius and Magentenus argue that Aristotle's treatise on syllogisms is prior to that on demonstrations, because it is useful to teach first what is common to all syllogisms and then what is characteristic only of some of them. This is a rather simple but plausible interpretation. On the other hand, it is more difficult to figure out Alexander's claim, according to which the *Prior Analytics* is called "*Prior*", in contrast to the *Posterior Analytics*, because syllogisms are the genus of demonstrations and, according to Aristotle's *Categories*, the genus is "by nature" (τῇ φύσει) prior to the species:

> Now the reason why he entitles the work on syllogisms *Prior Analytics* and the work on demonstration *Posterior Analytics* is that the syllogism is by nature prior to demonstration. We have learnt in the *Categories* that one thing is prior by nature to another if it follows when the other is posited but does not convert with it as to implication of existence. Genera are things of this sort: every genus is prior by nature to each of the species which fall under it; for if a species is posited, the genus must necessarily follow, whereas the species does not follow the genus. Similarly with species in relation to the things of which they are species: species are prior. And thus too is the syllogism related to demonstration. For if there is a demonstration, there must be a syllogism, since a demonstration is a sort of syllogism; but if there is a syllogism, there need not be a demonstration, because there are also dialectical and sophistical syllogisms. Thus since the syllogism is prior and demonstration posterior, it is reasonable that Aristotle entitled those books in which he discusses what is prior *Prior Analytics* and those in which he discusses what is posterior *Posterior Analytics*.[47] (Transl. Barnes *et al*. 1991)

47 Alexander, *In An. Pr.* 6.32–7.11: διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐπιγράφει Πρότερα μὲν ἀναλυτικὰ τὰ περὶ συλλογισμῶν, Ὕστερα δὲ τὰ περὶ ἀποδείξεως, ἐπειδὴ πρότερος ὁ συλλογισμὸς ἀποδείξεως τῇ φύσει· μεμαθήκαμεν γὰρ καὶ ἐν ταῖς Κατηγορίαις, ὅτι ἐστὶ πρότερα τῇ φύσει τὰ μὴ ἀντιστρέφοντα κατὰ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολουθίαν ἐκείνοις, οἷς τεθεῖσιν αὐτὰ ἕπεται. τοιαῦτα δέ ἐστι καὶ τὰ γένη· πᾶν γὰρ γένος ἑκάστου τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸ εἰδῶν πρότερον τῇ φύσει· τῷ μὲν γὰρ εἴδει τεθέντι πάντως ἀνάγκη τὸ γένος ἕπεσθαι, μηκέτι δὲ τῷ γένει τὸ εἶδος. ὁμοίως δὲ ἔχει καὶ τὰ εἴδη πρὸς τά, ὧν ἐστιν εἴδη· πρότερα γὰρ καὶ αὐτὰ ἐκείνων. οὕτω δὲ ἔχει καὶ ὁ συλλογισμὸς πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν· ἀποδείξεως μὲν γὰρ οὔσης πάντως ἔστι καὶ συλλογισμός· ἡ γὰρ ἀπόδειξις συλλογισμός τις· συλλογισμοῦ δὲ ὄντος οὐ πάντως ἔστιν ἀπόδειξις διὰ τὸ συλλογισμὸν εἶναι καὶ διαλεκτικόν τινα καὶ σοφιστικόν. ἐπεὶ τοίνυν πρότερον μὲν συλλογισμός, ὕστερον δὲ ἀπόδειξις, εἰκότως, ἐν οἷς μὲν βιβλίοις περὶ τοῦ προτέρου τὸν λόγον ποιεῖται, ταῦτα Πρότερα ἐπέγραψεν, ἐν οἷς δὲ περὶ τοῦ ὑστέρου, ταῦτα Ὕστερα.

Nowhere in the *Categories* did Aristotle defend the doctrine that the genus is by nature prior to the species; more importantly, such a doctrine does not sound Aristotelian. How are we supposed, then, to understand Alexander's claim?

Contemporary scholars have been puzzled over Alexander's views on genera and universals, which do not seem at first sight to be entirely coherent. For there are many passages in which Alexander treats universals as mind-dependent,[48] but there are also passages in which he treats them as enmattered forms or natures that have the accidental property to be actually shared by at least two particulars;[49] since the universals as forms or natures depend for their existence on the concrete particulars that fall under them, they have nothing to do with the mind. There is one passage, in particular, which proves difficult to square with Alexander's conception of universals as mental constructs; it is found in Alexander's *Quaestiones* and discusses Aristotle's remark from the *De anima* (I 1, 402b7) that "the universal animal is either nothing or posterior" (τὸ δὲ ζῷον τὸ καθόλου ἤτοι οὐθέν ἐστιν ἢ ὕστερον):

> But, being posterior to the thing to which it attaches, conversely [the genus] itself comes to be primary in relation to each of the things that are particular and [fall] under it; for being a genus consists in being predicated of many and differing things, while being a particular is being, along with many [other] things, under some one thing, either in genus or species. And for this reason, when one of the things that fall under what is common is done away with, what is common is not done away with along with it, since it is in several [individuals]; but if what is common were done away with, none of the things that fall under what is common would exist, since their being consists in possessing it in themselves.[50] (Transl. Sharples 1992)

Alexander's final statement is particularly puzzling: if the being of the particulars that fall under what is common consists in possessing it, then universals would be thought of as ontologically prior to particulars; but this contradicts what Alexander argues for, namely that universals are posterior to particulars. So, some scholars have proposed to consider this passage as inauthentic, claiming that it is unlikely that this claim is by Alexander himself.[51] Others, however, have tried to make it compatible with Alexander's account of universals as posterior to particulars, by stressing the ambiguity in Alexander's usage of the notion of universals: when Alexander attributes to the common thing priority over particulars, he is not referring to the uni-

48 E. g. *DA* 90.2 – 11; *Quaestiones* 1.3, 8.3 – 4; 17 – 22; 2.28, 78.18 – 20; 79.16 – 18. On Arabic paraphrases of lost works by Alexander that also present universals as mind-dependent, see Rashed 2004.

49 E. g. *In Top.* 355.18 – 24; *Quaestiones* 1.3, 8.12 – 17; 1.11, 23.25 – 31; 24.11 – 16.

50 Alexander, *Quaestio* 1.11, 24.16 – 22: ὕστερον δὲ ὂν τοῦ πράγματος ᾧ συμβέβηκε, πάλιν αὐτὸ πρῶτον ἑκάστου τῶν ἐν μέρει καὶ ὑπ' αὐτὸ γίνεται, διότι τὸ μὲν γένει εἶναί ἐστιν ἐν τῷ κατὰ πολλῶν καὶ διαφερόντων κατηγορεῖσθαι, τὸ δ' ἐν μέρει εἶναί ἐστι τὸ μετὰ πολλῶν εἶναι ὑφ' ἕν τι ἢ γένος ἢ εἶδος. διὸ ἀναιρουμένῳ μὲν ἑνὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τὸ κοινὸν οὐ συναναιρεῖται τὸ κοινόν, <διότι ἐστὶν ἐν πλείοσιν>, εἰ δ' ἀναιρεθείη τὸ κοινόν, οὐδ' ἂν τῶν ὑπὸ τὸ κοινὸν εἴη τι, οἷς τὸ εἶναι ἐν τῷ ἐκεῖνο ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.

51 Moraux 1942: 50 – 62; Lloyd 1981: 49 – 65; Sorabji 2006: 108 – 110.

versal, strictly speaking, that is to a mental construct, but to a nature that is common and seems to have a different, though unclear, ontological status than universals.[52]

The aim of this paper is not to argue in favour of one of the already proposed resolutions to this controversial issue, nor to suggest an alternative one. The question that we still need to raise, however, is whether the passage from Alexander's commentary on the *Prior Analytics*, in which the genus is said to be by nature prior to the species, actually constitutes another problematic passage defending the ontological priority of genera. Since the authenticity of Alexander's commentary on the *Prior Analytics* cannot be disputed the way the authorship of the *Quaestiones* has been doubted, we need to investigate whether there is another way to explain Alexander's surprising statement, at least if we do not want to saddle him with a blatant inconsistency.

Let us consider, then, the kind of priority Alexander has in mind. He explicitly refers to Aristotle's *Categories*, and seems to allude to the second of five types of priority distinguished in chapter 12:

> Secondly, what does not reciprocate as to implication of existence. For example, one is prior to two because if there are two it follows at once that there is one whereas if there is one there are not necessarily two, so that the implication of the other's existence does not hold reciprocally from one; and that from which the implication of existence does not hold reciprocally is thought to be prior.[53] (Transl. Ackrill in Barnes 1984)

Aristotle obviously did not state that this type of priority is natural priority. In chapter 13, on the other hand, he explicitly drew the distinction between things that are simultaneous without qualification (ἅμα ἁπλῶς), or in respect of time (ἅμα κατὰ τὸν χρόνον), and those that are simultaneous by nature (φύσει ἅμα): things that are simultaneous without qualification come into being at the same time, while those that are simultaneous by nature reciprocate as to implication of existence; for instance, co-ordinate species of the same genus, such as bird and fish, since they are both species of the genus animal and none of them is prior or posterior. In this context, Aristotle next added that, on the contrary, genera are prior to species, since they do not reciprocate as to implication of existence:

> Genera, however, are always prior to species since they do not reciprocate as to implication of existence; e.g. if there is a fish there is an animal, but if there is an animal there is not necessarily a fish. Thus we call simultaneous by nature those things which reciprocate as to implica-

52 Pines 1961; Tweedale 1984; Sharples 2005; Rashed 2007: 237–260; Sirkel 2011; Helmig 2012: 161-164.

53 Aristotle, *Cat*. 12, 14a29–35: Δεύτερον δὲ τὸ μὴ ἀντιστρέφον κατὰ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολούθησιν, οἷον τὸ ἓν τῶν δύο πρότερον· δυεῖν μὲν γὰρ ὄντων ἀκολουθεῖ εὐθὺς τὸ ἓν εἶναι, ἑνὸς δὲ ὄντος οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον δύο εἶναι, ὥστε οὐκ ἀντιστρέφει ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἡ ἀκολούθησις τοῦ εἶναι τὸ λοιπόν, πρότερον δὲ δοκεῖ τὸ τοιοῦτον εἶναι ἀφ' οὗ μὴ ἀντιστρέφει ἡ τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολούθησις.

> tion of existence provided that neither is in any way the cause of the other's existence; and also co-ordinate species of the same genus.[54] (Transl. Ackrill in Barnes 1984)

So, Aristotle juxtaposed genera and species to things that are simultaneous by nature; but he did not say that genera are prior by nature to species. Alexander, on the other hand, seems to think that those things which do not reciprocate as to implication of existence can be regarded as prior by nature, and thus genera can be said to be by nature prior to species. This should not imply, however, that Alexander understands this type of priority as ontological priority, for he does not claim that genera are ontologically prior to species.

In the prooemium to his *Prior Analytics* commentary, Alexander's point is simply that the genus should be regarded as by nature prior to each of the species that fall under it, in the sense that if the species exists then the genus exists, whereas it is not the case that if the genus exists then the species exists. Alexander, therefore, makes no claim to the effect that the genus exists even if all species and particulars that fall under it do not exist. In other words, the type of natural priority discussed, here, seems to amount to the genus being logically, rather than ontologically, prior to the species, just like in Aristotle's *Categories*. In other words, there is no reason to be alarmed by Alexander's claim that this is natural priority, and to consider this passage together with those presenting his views on the ontological status of universals and genera.

2.2 Analysis as one of the dialectical methods

The second issue concerns Ammonius' comment,[55] repeated by most of the commentators after him, that the treatise on syllogisms is called "*Analytics*" because the third part of Book I is devoted to the analysis of syllogisms, while the first and second parts are respectively devoted to the formation of syllogisms and the discovery of their premises. In this context, as we have seen, Ammonius and the other commentators make the general claim that the method of analysis is more valuable than the method of synthesis; for the one who knows how to analyse knows also how to synthesize, but not the other way round. Why would the Neoplatonic commentators make such a general claim and how do they justify it?

To answer this question, it is helpful to look more closely at Ammonius' account of analysis and, in particular, at his most important diversion from Alexander's relevant comments; for what is really novel and striking in Ammonius' commentary

54 Aristotle, *Cat*. 13, 15a4–11: τὰ δὲ γένη τῶν εἰδῶν ἀεὶ πρότερα· οὐ γὰρ ἀντιστρέφει κατὰ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολούθησιν· οἷον ἐνύδρου μὲν ὄντος ἔστι ζῷον, ζῴου δὲ ὄντος οὐκ ἀνάγκη ἔνυδρον εἶναι. – ἅμα οὖν τῇ φύσει λέγεται ὅσα ἀντιστρέφει μὲν κατὰ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολούθησιν, μηδαμῶς δὲ αἴτιον τὸ ἕτερον τῷ ἑτέρῳ τοῦ εἶναί ἐστιν, καὶ τὰ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ γένους ἀντιδιῃρημένα ἀλλήλοις.

55 Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 6.30–7.6.

is that he presents analysis as one of the four dialectical methods. More specifically, right after his discussion of the different senses of analysis and his explanation of the title of the *Prior Analytics*, Ammonius points out that, although analysis is one of the four dialectical methods – the other three being division, definition and demonstration –, it is contrary to all of them: division divides the genera into the species, whereas analysis reduces the species to the genera; definition constructs the whole from the parts, whereas analysis proceeds from the whole to the parts; demonstration proves what is caused from its causes, whereas analysis proceeds from what is caused to its causes. And interesting enough, Ammonius also adds that it was previously Plato who used the four dialectical methods many times; for he praised division and definition in the *Phaedrus*, analysis in the *Philebus*, and demonstration in other dialogues.[56]

Ammonius' Neoplatonic predilections become obvious here; for the conception of analysis as one of the four dialectical methods is found in the treatise *Didaskalikos* by the 2nd century Platonist Alcinous:

> Dialectic, according to Plato, has as its fundamental purpose first the examination of the essence of every thing whatsoever, and then of its accidents. It enquires into the nature of each thing either 'from above', by means of division and definition, or 'from below', by means of analysis. Accidental qualities which belong to essences it examines either from the standpoint of individuals, by induction, or from the standpoint of universals, by syllogistic. So, logically, dialectic comprises the procedures of division, definition, analysis, and in addition induction and syllogistic.[57] (Transl. Dillon 1993)

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56 Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 7.26 – 8.14: Τοσαῦτα μὲν περὶ τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς. ἆρα δὲ ἡ ἀνάλυσις μόνῃ τῇ συνθέσει ἀντίκειται ἢ καὶ ἄλλοις τισίν; λέγομεν ὅτι καὶ ἄλλοις τισίν· τῆς γὰρ διαλεκτικῆς δ εἰσὶν μέθοδοι δυνάμεις οὖσαι καὶ οἱονεὶ βλαστήματα αὐτῆς, διαιρετική, ὁριστική, ἀποδεικτική, ἀναλυτική· ταύταις ταῖς τρισὶ μεθόδοις ἀντίκειται ἡ ἀναλυτική. ἴδωμεν δὲ ἑκάστης τὴν δύναμιν, ἵνα μάθωμεν πῶς ἀντίκειται αὐταῖς. ἡ διαιρετικὴ τὸ ἓν εἰς πολλὰ διαιρεῖ· ἡ ὁριστικὴ τὰ πολλὰ τὰ ὑπάρχοντά τινι συναγαγοῦσα ἀποκλείει αὐτὸ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων· ἡ ἀποδεικτικὴ ἄλλῳ ἄλλο ὑπάρχον ἀποδείκνυσιν· ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ ἀπὸ τῶν συνθέτων ἐπὶ τὰ ἁπλᾶ ἀνατρέχει. καὶ ὅτι μὲν τέως τῇ διαιρετικῇ ἀντίκειται, πρόδηλον· ἡ μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἓν εἰς πολλὰ διαιρεῖ, ἡ δὲ τὰ πολλὰ εἰς ἓν συνάγει. ἀντίκειται δὲ καὶ τῇ ὁριστικῇ· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ πολλῶν ὑπαρχόντων, οἷον γένους καὶ διαφορῶν, σύνθετον ὅρον ἀποτελεῖ ἀποκλείουσα αὐτὰ τῶν ἄλλων, οἷον σύνθεσίς τις οὖσα· ἡ δὲ τὸ σύνθετον εἰς τὰ ἁπλᾶ ἀναλύει· ἐπισκοπεῖ γὰρ τὸ γένος καὶ τὰς διαφορὰς ἐξ ὧν συνετέθη. ἀντίκειται δὲ καὶ τῇ ἀποδεικτικῇ· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ἄλλῳ συνάπτει, οἷον τῇ ψυχῇ τὸ ἀθάνατον δείκνυσιν ὑπάρχον συλλογιστικῶς συντιθεῖσα συλλογισμόν· ἡ δὲ τὰ συναφθέντα διίστησιν. συντόμως δὲ εἰπεῖν ἡ μὲν διαιρετικὴ τὰ γένη εἰς τὰ εἴδη τέμνει, ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ τὰ εἴδη συνάγει εἰς τὰ γένη. πάλιν ἡ μὲν ὁριστικὴ ἐκ μερῶν ὅλον τι ποιεῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ ἀπὸ τῶν ὅλων εἰς τὰ μέρη μεταβαίνει ἐξ ὧν τὸ ὅλον γέγονεν. πάλιν ἡ μὲν ἀποδεικτικὴ ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτιῶν τὰ αἰτιατὰ δείκνυσιν, ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτιατῶν ἐπὶ τὰ αἴτια μεταβαίνει. πάσαις ἄρα ἀντίκειται. ταύταις δὲ πάσαις κέχρηται ταῖς μεθόδοις ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων πολλαχοῦ, καὶ ἀνυμνεῖ αὐτὰς ἐν διαφόροις, ὡς ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ τὴν διαιρετικὴν καὶ τὴν ὁριστικήν, ὡς ἐν τῷ Φιλήβῳ τὴν ἀναλυτικὴν καὶ ἄλλοθί που τὴν ἀποδεικτικήν. ταῦτα καὶ περὶ τῆς ἀναλυτικῆς, ὅτι ἀντίκειται καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις τρισὶ μεθόδοις τῆς διαλεκτικῆς.

57 Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* V,1: Τῆς διαλεκτικῆς δὲ στοιχειωδέστατον ἡγεῖται πρῶτον μὲν τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐπιβλέπειν παντὸς ὁτουοῦν, ἔπειτα περὶ τῶν συμβεβηκότων· ἐπισκοπεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ μὲν ὅ ἐστιν ἕκαστον ἢ ἄνωθεν διαιρετικῶς καὶ ὁριστικῶς ἢ κάτωθεν ἀναλυτικῶς, τὰ δὲ συμβεβηκότα καὶ ὑπάρχοντα

No doubt we here witness an attempt to claim Platonic ancestry for dialectic and its methods, although much of the terminology used is unequivocally Aristotelian in origin, especially in the case of the notions of analysis, induction and syllogistic.[58] Even though Ammonius talks of demonstration, rather than induction and syllogistic, his account of analysis bears important similarities to *Didaskalikos*, especially when it comes to Alcinous' distinction of three senses of analysis:[59]

i. Analysis as ascent from the sensibles to the intelligibles.
ii. Analysis as ascent from what can be demonstrated to indemonstrable propositions.
iii. Analysis as ascent from hypotheses to their non-hypothetical first principles.

Moreover, Ammonius even borrows Alcinous' example of his first sense of analysis, namely the ascent from the beauty of sensible things to the intelligible beauty, as well as the example of the analysis of the syllogism proving the immortality of the soul. Hence, there is no doubt that Ammonius aligns himself here with Alcinous, but also with Proclus as well as with other later Neoplatonic commentators,[60] who all talk about analysis as one of the four methods of Plato's dialectic, even though they are not all interested to the same degree in its logical usages.

But Alcinous does not present us with the hierarchy of the dialectical methods that we find in Ammonius. Both in his commentary on the *Prior Analytics* and in his commentary on the *Isagoge*,[61] Ammonius clearly ranks the four dialectical

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ταῖς οὐσίαις ἢ ἐκ τῶν περιεχομένων δι' ἐπαγωγῆς ἢ ἐκ τῶν περιεχόντων διὰ συλλογισμοῦ· ὡς κατὰ λόγον εἶναι τῆς διαλεκτικῆς τὸ μὲν διαιρετικόν, τὸ δὲ ὁριστικόν, τὸ δὲ ἀναλυτικόν, καὶ προσέτι ἐπαγωγικόν τε καὶ συλλογιστικόν.

58 On Alcinous' treatment of dialectic and its four methods, see Lloyd 1990: 8–11; Dillon 1993: 72–77; Schrenk 1994.

59 Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* V,4–5: Ἀναλύσεως δὲ εἴδη ἐστὶ τρία· ἡ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ ἄνοδος, ἡ δὲ διὰ τῶν δεικνυμένων καὶ ὑποδεικνυμένων ἄνοδος ἐπὶ τὰς ἀναποδείκτους καὶ ἀμέσους προτάσεις, ἡ δὲ ἐξ ὑποθέσεως ἀνιοῦσα ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνυποθέτους ἀρχάς. Ἡ μὲν δὴ πρώτη τοιάδε τίς ἐστιν, οἷον ἂν ἀπὸ τοῦ περὶ τὰ σώματα καλοῦ μετίωμεν ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς καλόν, ἀπὸ δὲ τούτου ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασιν, εἶτα ἀπὸ τούτου ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τοῖς νόμοις, εἶτ' ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ, ἵνα οὕτω μετιόντες εὕρωμεν λοιπὸν τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦτο καλόν. Τὸ δὲ δεύτερον εἶδος τῆς ἀναλύσεως τοιοῦτόν τί ἐστιν· ὑποτίθεσθαι δεῖ τὸ ζητούμενον, καὶ θεωρεῖν τίνα ἐστὶ πρότερα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα ἀποδεικνύειν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑστέρων ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα ἀνιόντα ἕως ἂν ἔλθωμεν ἐπὶ τὸ πρῶτον καὶ ὁμολογούμενον, ἀπὸ τούτου δὲ ἀρξάμενοι ἐπὶ τὸ ζητούμενον κατελευσόμεθα συνθετικῷ τρόπῳ· οἷον ζητῶν εἰ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή, ὑποθέμενος αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ζητῶ εἰ ἀεικίνητος, καὶ τοῦτο ἀποδείξας ζητῶ εἰ τὸ ἀεικίνητον αὐτοκίνητον, καὶ πάλιν τοῦτο ἀποδείξας σκοπῶ εἰ τὸ αὐτοκίνητον ἀρχὴ κινήσεως· εἶτα εἰ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἀγένητος, ὅπερ τίθενται ὡς ὁμολογούμενον, τοῦ ἀγενήτου καὶ ἀφθάρτου ὄντος· ἀφ' οὗ ἀρξάμενος ἐναργοῦς ὄντος συνθήσω τοιαύτην ἀπόδειξιν· ἡ ἀρχὴ ἀγένητον, καὶ ἄφθαρτον, ἀρχὴ κινήσεως, τὸ αὐτοκίνητον, τὸ αὐτοκίνητον δὲ ψυχή, ἄφθαρτος ἄρα καὶ ἀγένητος καὶ ἀθάνατος ἡ ψυχή.

60 E.g. Proclus, *In Euclidem* 42.12–43.1, *In Cratylum* 3.1–8; Damascius, *In Platonis Philebum* 52–53; Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Gorgiam* 3.1.10–26; Elias, *In Isagogen* 37.9–38.5; David, *In Isagogen* 90.4–22.

61 Ammonius, *In Isagogen* 36.9–37.5: Πρώτη οὖν πασῶν ἡ διαιρετική, δευτέρα ἡ ὁριστική, τρίτη ἡ ἀποδεικτική, τετάρτη ἡ ἀναλυτική... ἄλλως τε διὰ τὸ τὰς τρεῖς ἀλλήλων δεῖσθαι· τῆς μὲν γὰρ διαιρε-

methods as follows: division, definition, demonstration and analysis. As to the rational behind this ranking, Ammonius claims, following in this Proclus' similar reasoning,[62] that definition depends on division, demonstration depends on definition, while analysis is contrary to all of them and requires no other. So, in the specific context of the Platonic dialectical methods, it is perhaps not surprising that Ammonius treats the method of analysis as more valuable than synthesis, i.e. demonstration, which depends on definition and division while analysis does not depend on any of them.

2.3 Prior Analytics or On the Three Figures

The third and final issue that we want to examine concerns the title "*On the Three Figures*", which the Byzantine commentators sometimes use in order to refer to Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*. What explains this deviation from the standard title of Aristotle's logical treatise?

The first part of Book I of the *Prior Analytics* (chs. 1–26) is said by Aristotle to be a study on the formation of syllogisms.[63] In Philoponus' commentary, however, this part is divided into two: (a) *On the three figures* (chs. 1–7: Περὶ τῶν τριῶν σχημάτων), and (b) *Mixtures* (chs. 8–26: Μίξεις).[64] In fact, it seems that Philoponus' fourpartite division of Book I of the *Prior Analytics*, i.e. Περὶ τῶν τριῶν σχημάτων, Μίξεις, Περὶ

τικῆς χρῄζει ἡ ὁριστική, ἡ δὲ ἀποδεικτικὴ ἀμφοτέρων, εἴ γε ὁ ἀποδεικνύων τοὺς ὁρισμοὺς τῶν πραγμάτων λαμβάνει διὰ τὸ γνῶναι τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ πράγματος, ἡ δὲ ὁριστικὴ χρῄζει τῆς διαιρετικῆς. ἡ δὲ ἀναλυκτικὴ οὐδεμιᾶς χρῄζει· τῇ μὲν γὰρ διαιρετικῇ ἐναντιοῦται, καθὸ ἐκείνη μὲν ἓν λαμβάνουσα πολλὰ ποιεῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ εἰς ἓν τελευτᾷ· λαμβάνουσα γὰρ καὶ ἀναλύουσα τὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιεῖ εἰς μόρια, καὶ ταῦτα εἰς χυμούς, καὶ τοὺς χυμοὺς εἰς στοιχεῖα, καὶ ταῦτα εἰς ὕλην καὶ εἶδος· τὰ γὰρ στοιχεῖα ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἴδους σύγκειται. ἄλλως τε ὅτι ἡ μὲν διαιρετικὴ πρόεισιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁπλῶν ἐπὶ τὰ σύνθετα, ἡ δὲ ἀναλυτικὴ ἀπὸ τῶν συνθέτων ἐπὶ τὰ ἁπλούστερα. τῷ δὲ ὁριστικῷ, καθὸ οὗτος μὲν συναπτικός ἐστι τῆς οὐσίας, ἐκείνη δὲ διαλυτική. ἄλλως τε εἰ τῷ διαιρετικῷ ἐναντιοῦται, οὗτινος ὁ ὁριστικὸς χωρὶς οὐ δύναται ὁρίσαι, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τῷ ὁριστικῷ. ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τῷ ἀποδεικτικῷ· εἰ γὰρ ἡ ἀπόδειξις χρῄζει τῆς ὁριστικῆς καὶ διαιρετικῆς, ταύταις δ' ἐναντιοῦται ἡ ἀναλυτική, καὶ τῇ ἀποδεικτικῇ ἄρα ἐναντιοῦται ἡ ἀναλυτική.

62 Cf. Proclus *In Platonis Parmenidem* 982.8–30 Cousin: Πολλῷ δὴ οὖν πρότερον τῆς τε ὁριστικῆς καὶ τῆς ἀποδεικτικῆς αὐτὴ παντελῶς ἂν εἴη μάταιος, εἰ μὴ ἔξουσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ τοὺς οὐσιώδεις λόγους· σεμνότερον γὰρ τῆς ἀποδείξεως ὁ ὁρισμὸς καὶ ἀρχικώτερον, καὶ τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ πάλιν ἡ διαίρεσις· δίδωσι γὰρ ἡ διαιρετικὴ τῇ ὁριστικῇ τὰς ἀρχὰς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔμπαλιν· καὶ οὐ δήπου τῆς ἀποδείξεως ἐν τοῖς ὑστερογενέσιν ἀθυρεῖν οὐκ ἀνασχομένης, ὁ ὁρισμὸς καὶ ἡ διαίρεσις περὶ ταῦτα καὶ τὰ τούτων εὐτελέστερα ποιήσεται τὴν πραγματείαν. Πᾶσαν ἄρα τὴν διαλεκτικὴν ἀναιρήσομεν εἰ μὴ προσησόμεθα τοὺς οὐσιώδεις λόγους τῶν ψυχῶν· ἡ γὰρ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι δύναμις τῶν κατὰ ταὐτὸν ταύταις χρῆται ταῖς μεθόδοις, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὴν ἀναλυτικὴν ἀνάγκη συναιρεῖσθαι ταύταις· ἀντίκειται γὰρ τῇ μὲν ἀποδεικτικῇ, ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτιατῶν ἀναλύουσα εἰς τὰ αἴτια· τῇ δὲ ὁριστικῇ, ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν συνθέτων εἰς τὰ ἁπλούστερα· τῇ δὲ διαιρετικῇ, ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν μερικωτέρων ἐπὶ τὰ καθολικώτερα· τοσαυταχῶς γὰρ ἡ ἀνάλυσις, ὥστε ἐκείνων διαφθειρομένων πάσχοι ἂν καὶ αὐτὴ ταὐτόν.

63 Cf. Aristotle, *An. Pr.* I 32, 47a2–3: τήν τε γένεσιν τῶν συλλογισμῶν θεωροῦμεν.

64 Cf. Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 119.1–5.

εὐπορίας προτάσεων, Περὶ ἀναλύσεως συλλογισμῶν, became the canon for later commentators. For instance, in concluding his *quaestio On syllogisms* (νε′. Περὶ συλλογισμῶν), John Italos, perhaps the most famous of Psellos' students, states that his examination of the three figures has come to an end and his next topic would be *On mixtures*.[65] Also, a 13th century catalogue of the works of Aristotelian commentators quotes all four parts of Philoponus' division, when referring to Book I of the *Prior Analytics*.[66]

In some occasions, though, the title of the section *On the three figures* is employed in order to refer to the *Prior Analytics* as a whole. This is the case, for instance, of another 13th/14th century catalogue of Aristotelian treatises and their commentators, in which the *Prior Analytics* is mentioned as Εἰς τὰ τρία σχήματα.[67] Moreover, the 13th century manuscript *Hierosol. Sancti Sep*. 106, which is perhaps the oldest witness for the unedited paraphrase of Book I of the *Prior Analytics* by the 11th century scholar Michael Psellos, bears the title "*Paraphrase on the Three Figures*" (Παράφρασις εἰς τὰ τρία σχήματα).[68] And there are many *Synopseis* and individual scholia in the manuscript tradition of the *Prior Analytics*, which are said to be summaries of, or comments on, the three figures.[69] However, in the case of Magentenus' commentary on the *Prior Analytics*, it is not entirely clear whether its title "*Brief Explanation on the Three Figures of Aristotle*" (Ἐξήγησις σύντομος εἰς τὰ τρία σχήματα τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους) refers to the whole of the *Prior Analytics* or just to the first part of Book I.[70] Furthermore, it is worth noting that in a later version of the Aristotelian canon the *Prior Analytics* and the treatise *On the Three Figures* are two different works.[71]

To adequately account for the different titles referring to the *Prior Analytics*, a thorough study of the manuscript tradition of all explanatory texts on this Aristote-

65 Ioannes Italos, *Quaestiones quodlibetales (Ἀπορίαι καὶ λύσεις)*, p. 78: Καὶ ταῦτα περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς Ἀναλυτικοῖς τριῶν λεγομένων σχημάτων ἱκανὰ ἔστω· περὶ δὲ μίξεως τῶν αὐτῶν τρόπων ἐν τοῖς ἑπομένοις ῥηθήσεται.

66 Transmitted in the codex *Hierosolymitanus Sancti Sepulcri* 106; cf. Wendland 1901: xviii.

67 Transmitted in the codex *Marcianus graecus* 203 and edited in Usener 1914: 5.

68 For the manuscript tradition of this work see Moore 2005: 246–247.

69 This is, for example, the case of an anonymous *Synopsis* attributed in some manuscripts either to Michael Psellos or to George Choiroboskos (cf. Moore 2005: 248), as well as the *Synopsis of the Three Figures* probably written by the 14th scholar Nikolaos Chamaetos Kabasilas (see Trapp 1976–1995, n. 30539) and transmitted in several codices, sometimes under the name of his uncle Neilos Kabasilas (see Trapp 1976–1995, n. 10102).

70 Cf. *Vat. gr.* 244, f. 140r ll. 4–17: πρότερα μὲν ἀναλυτικὰ ταύτας τὰς τρεῖς πραγματείας ὠνόμασεν, ἤγουν τὰ τρία σχήματα, τὸ περὶ εὐπορίας προτάσεων καὶ τὸ περὶ ἀναλύσεως συλλογισμῶν [...] εἰκότως τὰ μὲν τρία σχήματα πρῶτα εἴρηκεν ὡς περὶ τοῦ γένους διδάσκοντα, ἤγουν τοῦ καθόλου συλλογισμοῦ, τὸν δὲ ἀποδεικτικόν, καὶ τὸν διαλεκτικόν, καὶ τὸν σοφιστικὸν ὕστερα ἀναλυτικά (sic).

71 Transmitted in *Vat. gr.* 241 and *Angelicus* 42; both manuscripts are dated to the 14th century. The text was edited from the Vatican manuscript in Hayduck 1885: τίνες εἰσὶν ἐξηγηταὶ τῶν ἀριστοτελικῶν βιβλίων: [...] εἰς τὰ γ′ σχήματα ὁ ψελλὸς καὶ ὁ φιλόπονος: εἰς τὰ πρότερα ἀναλυτικὰ μαγεντηνὸς φιλόπονος καὶ ψελλός.

lian treatise would be desirable. But we might not be far from the truth, if we were to suggest that the focus of the Byzantine educational curriculum on the first part of Book I of the *Prior Analytics* as well as the circulation of numerous *Synopseis* and scholia, which were meant to aid students in their study of Aristotelian logic, and especially in their comprehension of the three forms of deduction, led to the coinage and frequent usage of a title that mentioned the three figures, and hence it was considered preferable to the standard title of Aristotle's logical treatise.

Conclusion

To conclude: The detailed, often repetitive, remarks of the Aristotelian commentators on the title of Aristotle's *Analytics*, and in particular on the title of the *Prior Analytics*, may at first seem a marginal and pedantic topic for scholarly investigation. Nevertheless, their close and systematic study seems to offer us an insight into the views and philosophical preferences of the ancient and Byzantine commentators, and thus a side window to some little explored developments in the history of the reception of Aristotle's logic.

Ioannis Papachristou

10 Ammonius Hermeiou on the appearances of ghosts

Introduction

The *De anima* commentary edited by Philoponus is the only surviving commentary on this Aristotelian work deriving from the late Platonic school of Alexandria. The commentary reflects, as the manuscript tradition indicates, the oral teachings of Ammonius Hermeiou, the pioneering figure of the school. Ammonius most likely gave these lectures around the second decade of the 6th century AD. The commentary itself has attracted scholarly attention mainly in respect of the disputed authorship of its third book.[1] Some views expressed in the course of what are clearly Philoponus' own exegetical contributions to the commentary, as for instance on the propagation of light and on the concept of *phantasia*, are also discussed in the secondary literature. For the rest, scholars dealing with the commentary proceed on the assumption that it is an exposition of Philoponus' thoughts rather than a representation of Ammonius' own doctrines on the soul.[2] However, such a supposition goes against the nature of the work of pupils editing the ἀπὸ φωνῆς commentaries of their masters, and in what follows I shall treat the commentary as for the most part conveying the teaching of Ammonius.

The commentary begins with a preface that may be termed exceptional in relation to the prefaces of other commentaries edited or written by Philoponus. My characterization reflects the fact that this preface contains numerous non-typical features.[3] Ammonius attempts from the very beginning of his lectures on Aristotle's *De anima* to initiate students, with no attempt at concealment, into the late Platonic doctrines on the soul.[4] As a result, this preface is not a standard introduction to Ar-

1 Lautner 1992; Golitsis 2016a.

2 See Christensen de Groot 1983; Aujoulat 1998; Eijk 2005: 1; Verrycken 2015.

3 I treat Ammonius' epitome of theories of the soul in antiquity (see next note) as an exemplary work of history of philosophy in late antiquity. The ordinary structure of a preface to a philosophical commentary discusses six preliminary questions introducing a specific treatise to students: (1) the aim (purpose) of the treatise, (2) the utility of the treatise, (3) the order of reading this treatise within the Aristotelian *corpus*, (4) the reason for the title of the treatise, (5) the authenticity of the treatise and (6) the division of the treatise into chapters (books). Ammonius explicitly discusses the preliminary question regarding the division of the *De anima* into books (*In DA* 20.23–21.7) and indirectly refers to the order of reading the treatise: the *De anima* belongs to the natural treatises of the Aristotelian corpus and is to be read immediately after the *De partibus animalium* (*In DA* 10.11–12).

4 The division of the preface and the content of each part clearly shows Ammonius' aim. The first part deals with the powers of the soul and their division (*In DA* 1.9–9.2); the second offers an overview of older theories of the soul and encapsulates the whole philosophical tradition up to the early

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istotle's *De anima* in a strict sense. Among many significant and complicated issues raised in the preface that one could select to comment on, I will draw attention to a rather peculiar one, namely Ammonius' views concerning the appearance of ghosts around graves, which he introduces as part of the proof that the higher part of the soul is separable from body but the lower parts of the soul are inseparable from it.[5]

Behind the paradoxical phenomenon of ghosts lies a complicated theory of the soul that one needs to uncover in its details. The aim of the present paper is to trace Ammonius' philosophical assumptions and show how he seeks to explain the appearances of ghosts, especially on the basis of the partition of the soul and its relation to the body. The paper concentrates in particular on the dispute that arose within late Platonism on the nature of ghosts, namely of the pneumatic vehicle of the soul, showing to what degree Ammonius' view diverged from that of his teacher Proclus.

1 The partition of the soul

Comprehension of what Ammonius has to say on the appearance of ghosts around graves presupposes an understanding of three issues: the partition of the soul, the connexion between soul and body in terms of separation or inseparability of soul from the body, and the theory of the vehicle of the soul. The preface of the *De anima* commentary begins with a sophisticated presentation of the powers of the soul and a detailed analysis of the nature of each power and their interrelations providing to the audience the correct conception of soul's essence and powers.

The division of the powers of the soul runs as follows. First, they are divided into rational and irrational. Rational and irrational powers are each further divided into two: the cognitive powers and the vital-appetitive powers. The rational cognitive powers of the soul are three: opinion (δόξα), discursive thinking (διάνοια) and intellect (νοῦς). No rational vital-appetitive powers are named, but it will be asserted in due course that there are two rational practical powers of the soul, namely wish (βούλησις) and choice (προαίρεσις). These five together, then, comprise the rational powers of the soul.[6] The irrational powers are similarly divided into cognitive and vital-appetitive powers. The irrational cognitive powers are *phantasia* (φαντασία) and sense-perception (αἴσθησις). The irrational vital-appetitive powers of the soul

6th century (*In DA* 9.3 – 12.9); the third contains a systematic criticism, running to considerable length, of philosophers who maintain the bodily nature of the soul, and establishes the true theory of the soul (*In DA* 12.10 – 20.22); and, finally, the fourth part presents the division of the *De anima* into books according to its contents (*In DA* 20.23 – 21.7).

5 Philoponus, *In DA* 16.26 – 20.22. Against the widespread *a priori* view of the secondary literature that Philoponus has a theory of the vehicles of the soul (see Kissling 1922: 319, 322; Aujoulat 1998; Eijk 2005: 1; Verrycken 2015: 510 – 511), I read this passage as reflecting the doctrine of Ammonius.

6 Philoponus, *In DA* 1.9 – 5.33.

are passion (θυμός) and desire (ἐπιθυμία). Finally, Ammonius adds to the rational and irrational powers the vegetative powers of the soul, namely those promoting nourishing (θρεπτική), growth (αὐξητική) and generation (γεννητική).[7]

I will skip over Ammonius' detailed examination of the powers of the soul and will also leave aside some obvious problems in his analysis, as for instance the inconsistency between his initial claim that the rational powers divide into cognitive and vital-appetitive powers, to the latter of which he never reverts,[8] and his later introduction without due explanation of another category of rational powers, namely the practical powers consisting of wish and choice, to which he seems to attribute a role intermediate between the operations of the rational and the irrational soul.[9]

Ammonius' schema according to which each progressively more general aspect of human nature corresponds to a different group of powers of the soul is of particular interest for our understanding of his views on the partition of the soul. We are humans, animals and ensouled beings (ἔμψυχα).[10] As humans we possess the rational powers, as animals the irrational powers, as ensouled beings the vegetative powers.[11] The argument implies the final causality that the inferior exists for the sake of the higher. Such being the case, Ammonius claims that the higher life necessarily possesses the inferior but not vice versa. The rational powers of the soul that make us humans already possess the irrational powers that make us animals and also the vegetative powers that make us ensouled bodies. From the perspective of *epistrophē*, that is reversion of the lower to the higher, the body cannot possess the irrational powers if it does not already possess the vegetative powers, and the body cannot possess the rational powers without already possessing the other two. To be the complete entity 'human' we need to possess all three groups of powers of the soul.

7 Philoponus, *In DA* 5.34–6.30.

8 Philoponus, *In DA* 1.11–13.

9 Philoponus, *In DA* 5.24–33.

10 At a first glance, the term ἔμψυχος employed in the text (Philoponus, *In DA* 6.32–36) seems odd. If humans, animals and plants are endowed with soul, then why does the term appear as corresponding only to the vegetative powers of the soul? One can find an interesting distinction between 'living being' and 'being endowed with a soul' in Proclus. According to Proclus, the expression 'living being' is a species (part, *meros*) and 'being endowed with soul' is the genus. Proclus also notes that Iamblichus seems to have a different view applying the 'living being' to everything that possesses life and 'endowed with soul' to individual participation in soul; cf. Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum* 411.1–412.17). I take it that Ammonius is in agreement with Iamblichus' use of the term who holds that 'endowed with soul' refers to the participation of plants and humans in soul and 'living being' for everything that possesses life. On the term ἐμψυχία in Porphyry see Karamanolis 2007.

11 The schema follows an ontological hierarchy sketched in Plato's *Timaeus* and further elaborated by Proclus, who must be the source of Ammonius' statement. See Plato, *Timaeus* 30b4–5; Proclus, *In Timaeum* 316.20–23, 401.25–32, 402.19–29.

Ammonius' schema thus suggests a tripartite soul comprised of a rational, an irrational and a vegetative component.[12] Always according to Ammonius, however, soul appears to us as being one when it is unified with body, even though in truth (κατὰ ἀλήθειαν), soul is not one. The explanation for the appearance of the soul as being one rests on the connexion between the vegetative and the irrational parts of the soul and the predominance of the rational part over them both; rational soul uses both the irrational and the vegetative parts as instruments. The irrational part of the soul is closer to the rational one, for it is by nature capable of obeying the rational soul. The vegetative part has a distant relationship with the rational soul but is more closely related to the irrational part. This kind of sympathetic affection between the three parts of the soul and especially the connexion of both the irrational and vegetative souls with corresponding bodily entities will turn out to be important elements of the theory of the soul in Ammonius. As for the predominance of the soul's rational part, this is the fundamental result of the soul's having a higher part that is separate from body and lower parts that are inseparable from body.

2 The separable and inseparable soul

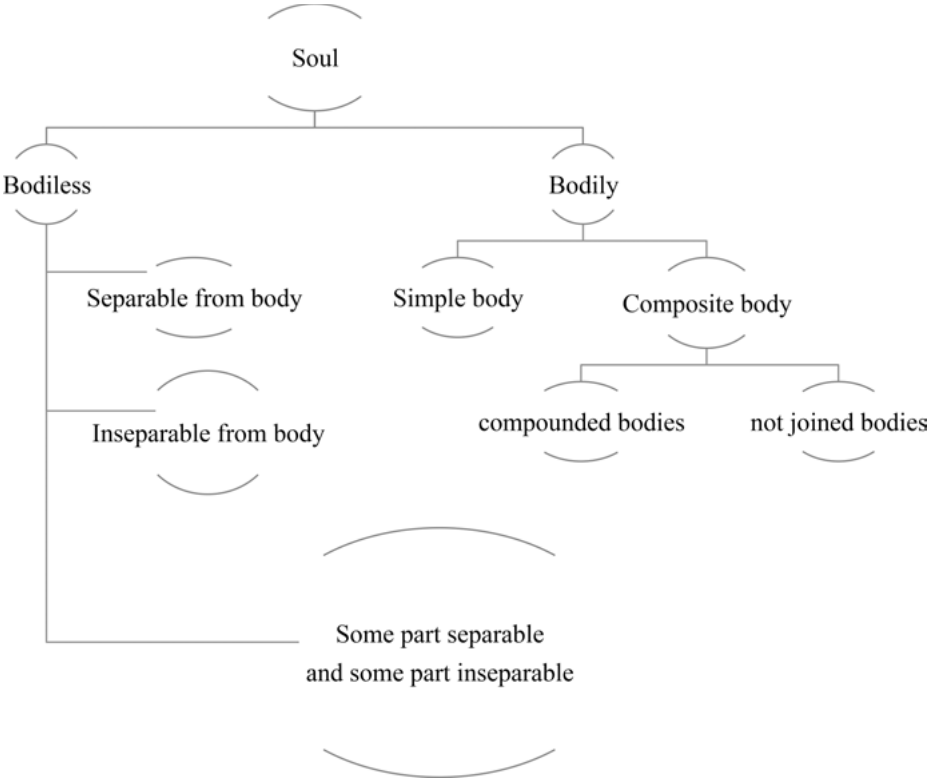
The question of what if any parts of the soul are separable or inseparable from the body leads Ammonius to present a list of theories of the soul from Thales to Alexander of Aphrodisias.[13] There are two major categories of philosophers: those who claim that the soul is bodiless and those who conceive of soul as a body. Of those who assume that soul is a body, some believe that it is a simple body: for example, Heraclides Ponticus claims that soul is aether, Heraclitus that it is fire, Anaximenes and some Stoics claim that soul is air; finally, Thales and Hippo the atheist believe that soul is water. Others suggest that soul is a composite body, made up either of discrete elements such as atoms, as Leucippus and Democritus assert, or of compounded bodies such as blood, as Critias claims.

Ammonius distinguishes two groups of philosophers maintaining that soul is bodiless: those who claim that soul is separable from body and those who claim that it is inseparable from body. The latter group is further divided into three categories: (a) those who say that soul derives from the ratio of the mixture (κράσις) of the elements; (b) those who say that soul is the mixture itself; (c) and those who say that soul is actuality (ἐντελέχεια).

12 Platonists had various views on the partition of the soul. See Opsomer 2012: 328 – 330; Schiefsky 2012: 333 – 336.

13 See Philoponus, *In DA* 9.3 – 10.9. A less elaborate list appears in Themistius' paraphrase of the *De anima* (13.8 – 14.3). Themistius' list, which is most likely the source of Ammonius', could be based on a similar list in Alexander of Aphrodisias' lost commentary on the *De anima*. The primary source of the list with respect to the philosophers before Aristotle must be Aristotle himself (*DA* I 2, 405a2-b12).

Of those who admit that soul is separated from bodies, some hold that every part of the soul is separable from body, as for instance Numenius; others claim that every part of the soul is inseparable from body and therefore mortal, as Alexander of Aphrodisias does. Finally, Plato and Aristotle, according to Ammonius, state that one part of the soul is separable from body and another part is inseparable. Ammonius' division of the theories of the soul can be presented as follows:



The true opinion (ἡ ἀληθής δόξα) concerning the nature of the soul that Ammonius supports, following a long Platonic tradition, claims that soul is bodiless. More precisely Ammonius' theory falls under the branch (see the diagram above) that some part of the soul is separable from body and some other part is inseparable from body. This view is attributed to both Plato and Aristotle in accordance with Ammonius' broader philosophical standpoint of seeking to reconcile Plato's and Aristotle's views.[14] Let us see in more detail the theory endorsed by Ammonius, a theory definitely grafted onto late Platonic doctrine.

14 Ammonius cites a number of texts from Aristotle's works to prove that he is in agreement with the Platonic doctrine (Philoponus, *In DA* 10.9–12.9). See Verrycken 2015: 508–510.

Ammonius undertakes to prove three main tenets of the theory. First, that soul cannot be a body. Second, that the rational soul is separable from body and therefore immortal and eternal. Third, that irrational soul (including vegetative soul) is inseparable from body. Here, I am only interested in the second and third tenets that are closely related to views on the partition of the soul and associated eschatological assumptions endorsed by Ammonius.

According to the theory, the rational soul is conceived of as separate from body: separate in the sense that it can act without the contribution of the body. Ammonius points out three activities (ἐνέργειαι) of rational soul that are separate from body, namely the contemplation of the intelligibles, the examination of the conceptions about god, and soul's self-knowledge. The idea is that a separate activity of a substance implies that the substance itself is separable. Ammonius accepts as a rule Aristotle's argument that if there is a function (ἔργον) or an affection of the soul peculiar to it, then soul is separate from body.[15] However, Ammonius' elaboration of this argument goes further: if the rational soul were not separate in substance from body, then the effect (i. e. the activity) would be more excellent than the cause (i. e. the substance), which would be absurd. The cause needs to be better than the effect, for it always comes before the effect; a view that reflects the axiom 'always what precedes in nature is better'. Hence, a separate activity should derive from a separable substance.

The rational soul, being separate from body, is eternal, for whatever is separate from body does not undergo generation and corruption. Rational soul does not undergo generation and corruption, because if it did it would be material, and hence at some point it would be potential and at another point actual. The rational soul is immaterial and bodiless, it is always in actuality, and it cannot perish either as do bodily substances or as do bodiless entities that exist in an underlying body.

The inseparable irrational and vegetative souls are treated in a similar way. Both are inseparable in the sense that their activities all involve bodily entities. What Ammonius has in mind here is Aristotle's view that the affections of the soul are not separated from body because body is always involved.[16] Ammonius accepts as another rule of Aristotle's that if all the activities of an entity are inseparable from body, it is necessary that the substance of the entity is inseparable too. He argues this by asserting that if the substance were separate from body its activity would be in vain, for there would be nothing for it to act upon. Yet god and nature create everything for a purpose. So, the irrational and vegetative souls must be inseparable from body, since their activities are all in or concerned with a body.

In contrast to the rational soul, irrational and vegetative soul are mortal. The vegetative soul perishes along with the sensible body. The irrational soul, which is superior to the vegetative, perishes too but, as we shall see, at a different stage of its jour-

15 Aristotle, *DA* I 1, 403a8–11.

16 Aristotle, *DA* I 1, 403a11–19.

ney after the sensible world, it has as a vehicle not the sensible body anymore but the pneumatic body. Ammonius did not explicitly comment on either the eternity or temporality of the irrational and vegetative soul. Nevertheless, we must think that the temporality of the two lower parts of the soul is implied by their association with bodily substance. The temporality of the lower parts of the soul may also be inferred from the description of the powers of the soul, wherein Ammonius clearly attributes eternity to the higher powers of the rational soul with respect to its ability to be always in activity; whereas the lower powers of the soul (irrational and vegetative) must presumably cease eventually to be active as their corresponding bodily substrates perish.

Up to this point, we have looked at the partition of the soul and seen the exact way in which Ammonius conceives of the separability and inseparability of its various parts from the body. Next, I focus on Ammonius' treatment of the irrational soul, which is based on the theory of the vehicles of the soul and some eschatological assumptions concerning the soul's separation from body and its afterlife.

3 Eschatology and the vehicles of the soul

The afterlife of soul is one of the major subjects with which both pagan and Christian philosophers of late antiquity concerned themselves. Late Platonic eschatology provides some remarkable descriptions of soul's afterlife. In this section, I examine, first, how Ammonius incorporates his views on the tripartition of the soul with some eschatological assumptions concerning the separation of the soul from the body. Second, I attempt to extract from his discussion of the vehicles of the soul the relevant theory that Ammonius himself holds.

The Platonists held the view that the soul ascends to the intelligible world after its separation from the sensible body. The ascension of the soul raised a number of difficulties and disagreements among the Platonists, some of which are pointed out by Ammonius. Plato left us three elegant descriptions of soul's afterlife in Hades before its ascent to the intelligible realm, namely the one in the *Gorgias*, that in the *Phaedo*, and the myth of Er in the *Republic*.[17] Late Platonists refer to Plato's three mythical compositions regarding soul's afterlife as *nekuiai* and hold that they differ from any other myth introduced by Plato because of their subject.[18]

When one reads Ammonius' description of soul's afterlife, he or she finds elements of all three Platonic myths blended with each other. Ammonius begins his own brief narration by saying: "it is agreed (ὁμολογεῖται), or rather proved (ἀποδεί-

17 See Plato's *Gorgias* 523a1–527e7, *Phaedo* 110b-115a, and *Republic* X, 614b2–621b7.

18 Olympiodorus offers a perhaps unique analysis of philosophical myths, their role, and their differences from poetic myths in his introductory comments to the myth in the *Gorgias*; cf. Olympiodorus, *In Gorgiam* 46.

κνυται), that our soul arrives in Hades after abandoning the body".[19] Ammonius' version of the eschatological myth says that after the arrival of the soul in Hades, the soul receives punishment for all the bad things it has done in its sensible life. Since providence takes care not only of our existence, but also of our well-being, the soul is not left to fall upon the slippery path of evil, without being subject to continued vigilance. When the pursuit of pleasure has led it to wrongful action, it needs to undergo pain, the opposite of pleasure, in order to be purified. Accordingly (divine) providence guarantees soul's painful purification by means of retribution (διὰ κολάσεως) for every unjust act in the house of justice (δικαιωτήριον) under earth.[20]

The description alludes to Plato's moral lesson, in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedo*, that the way we live our life is important for the fate of our soul after its separation from our sensible body. As Socrates remarks in the *Gorgias*, it is true even of the body that "however a man treated [sc. it] while he was alive, all the marks of that treatment, or most of them, are evident *for some time* even after he is dead."[21] The same stands for the soul: after death it continues to bear evidence of all its proper and improper actions, in this case until its final judgment. A soul that tried to live in justice and goodness, and whose faults are remediable, is judged and after enduring appropriate pain will finally receive its reward, for there is no other way to be discharged of the injustice; a soul that lived a bad and unjust life, and whose faults are incurable, will undergo the most fearful sufferings and will be strung up in the prisons of Hades as an example and lesson to every unjust soul. This vision of the afterlife presented by Ammonius clearly follows along the lines of Plato.

Ammonius goes beyond Plato by relating the eschatological myth to the notion that after death the soul becomes attached to a pneumatic body, which is different from the sensible body that carries the soul during life. The theory of the vehicles of the soul has a long history starting from Plato's idea that each soul boards on its own vehicle for the journey to the underworld.[22] Scholars nowadays consider the development of the complex theory of the vehicles of the soul and its incorporation into the psychological speculations of the late Platonists, with their disputations over how many vehicles soul has or what is the exact nature of each vehicle, as an especially thorny puzzle. Here, I will not go so far as to reconstruct the history of the

19 Philoponus, *In DA* 17.21–23. This claim strongly suggests that Ammonius does not read Plato's myth as a mythical description but rather as a true account presented allegorically. The narration concerning the soul's separation from the body is not just a plausible myth but a true fact about soul. I assume that the text directly refers to Socrates' introduction to the myth in the *Gorgias* 523a1–7, where the myth is introduced as a truthful account and not as a mythical story.

20 Philoponus, *In DA* 17.26–18.1.

21 Plato, *Gorgias* 524d1–3 (my translation and italics).

22 See Plato, *Phaedo* 113d4-e1.

concept of the pneumatic vehicle of the soul, but I will focus on the theory Ammonius presents and his own deviations from it.[23]

The Platonic theory of the vehicles is of course based on the assumption that soul has a previous life and an afterlife. Soul needs a kind of body to use as a vehicle in order to continue the journey down to Hades, once the sensible body perishes. Ammonius holds that soul comes to possess two successive vehicles: the pneumatic and the heavenly body. To prove that the pneumatic body exists he invokes the evidence of the sufferings of the soul in Hades. How, though, is it possible to say that the soul suffers or that it is punished, since in itself it is bodiless? There must be a body attached to the soul, which makes the soul feel pain by sympathetic affection (διὰ συμπαθείας), as was happening during the natural tie between soul and sensible body. So, when the latter perishes, the soul resides in the pneumatic body.[24]

As Plato said in the *Gorgias*, the just and unjust acts of soul throughout its sensible life are also manifest in afterlife for some time. Ammonius claims that passion (θυμός) and desire (ἐπιθυμία) are included among the things that remain after the separation of the soul from the sensible body. Passion and desire exist in the pneumatic body as in a substrate and are inseparable from it. This had already been suggested by Ammonius during his earlier discussion on the partition of the soul, when he stated that the irrational powers of the soul are also inseparable from body, as are the vegetative powers.[25] But now he needs to further explain that the irrational powers are inseparable from the sensible body during sensible life, but also from the pneumatic body in afterlife, whereas the vegetative powers are inseparable only from the sensible body and perish together with it.[26]

The reason for the attachment of passion and desire to the pneumatic body after death lies in the need of the soul to undergo a process of purification. If the soul were deprived of passion and desire immediately after the decay of the sensible body, it would already have become pure. In other words, as Ammonius explains, the soul

23 For a substantial introduction to the history of the pneumatic vehicle, see Toulouse 2001; Lloyd 2007; and Dodds 1963: 313–321. Also note the following important testimony of Iamblichus (*De anima* 38, transl. by Finamore, Dillon 2002: 67): "In the same way there are very different views concerning the substances intermediate between body and soul. For some join the soul itself immediately to the organic body, as do the majority of Platonists. Others [say] that between the incorporeal soul and the earthly [body] ethereal, heavenly, and pneumatic wrappings surrounding the intellectual life-principle are brought forth for its protection, serve it as vehicles, and also bring it together in due proportion with the solid body, joining it thereto by means of certain intermediate common bonds". Proclus too depicts various views held by Platonists; see Proclus, *In Timaeum* III, 234.15–235.13.

24 Philoponus, *In DA* 18.1–33. Ammonius' argument reflects Proclus' doctrine of the afterlife of the irrational soul; see Proclus, *In Timaeum* III, 236.18–237.9.

25 A view that is constantly repeated whenever Ammonius discusses the irrational powers of the soul; see Philoponus, *In DA* 222.14–17 and 268.23–31.

26 More precisely, Ammonius notes that hair, nails and organisms continue to be generated, to grow or to move in dead bodies. These examples show that the vegetative soul remains for a while until the complete dissolution of the sensible body (Philoponus, *In DA* 12.16–18). On abiogenesis and spontaneous generation see Wilberding 2012.

could immediately ascend to its heavenly place without passing from the house of justice in the underworld. The soul is self-moved and readily fell from the Good; having become burdened with earthly concerns, it needs to be purified of these before re-ascending to the Good. The house of justice under earth serves to constrain the soul to consciously seek a way to return by itself to the intelligible. One of the most important parts of this theory is that the soul succeeds in this by attaining self-knowledge, freeing itself thereby from all the sensible accoutrements it acquired during its fall.

After the soul has been judged and purified, it can only complete its ascension by abandoning its pneumatic vehicle. The self-knowledge of the soul corresponds to its ascent towards its true nature. This goal is reached at the moment when soul, pure and cleansed of passion and desire, exercises its highest rational power, namely intelligence (νοῦς), an image of its transcendent paradigm, Intelligence. At the same time soul takes its place in heaven among the cosmic entities that assure the governance of the world. In order to reach this level and accomplish its cosmic role, soul, being eternal and eternally active and in motion, requires a body to eternally endow with life. This body is the heavenly vehicle (τὸ οὐράνιον ὄχημα) to which it will henceforth remain eternally attached.[27]

The concept of the vehicle of the soul is not one of Ammonius' contributions to the Platonic tradition. Porphyry, Iamblichus and Hierocles of Alexandria all asserted that the soul has a single vehicle (either pneumatic or aethereal, luminous), though they disagreed among themselves as to the nature of the vehicle.[28] Syrianus seems to be the first who assumed the existence of two vehicles of the soul, one pneumatic and one luminous or starlike. Proclus and Damascius in turn explicitly distinguished between a vehicle of the higher soul and a vehicle of the lower soul.[29] In brief, the doctrine that Ammonius presents is that of his teacher Proclus, who maintained that soul uses two vehicles at two distinct levels of its afterlife. The question, in what follows, is how Ammonius involves the appearances of ghosts in his account of the soul and what is his point of disagreement with Proclus on the nature of the pneumatic body.

4 Ghost appearances

Delving into a particularly obscure region of reality, where rationality and superstition meet, late Platonism attempted to provide an explanation for the appearances

27 Philoponus, *In DA* 18.22–28.

28 Porphyry, *Ad Gaurum* 11, 3.45–50; Iamblichus, *In Timaeum*, fr. 81 and 84. For Hierocles' conception of the vehicle of the soul see Hadot 2004: 36–42. On Porphyry's and Iamblichus' views see Simmons 2014: 134–158 and 169–173.

29 See Proclus, *In Timaeum* III, 236.31–238.26 and 286.20–287.11; Damascius, *In Platonis Phaedonem* II, 542. See also Trouillard 1957: 104–105.

of ghosts and demons.[30] However much the subject itself may sound to us nowadays as a pure figment of superstition, Ammonius adduces it as offering an alternative proof for the existence of the pneumatic body, a proof that he understands as an argument deriving from the *enargeia* of things.[31]

How is it possible that we see ghosts? There are those who say, according to Ammonius, that after death the soul wanders around for some time along with its pneumatic body, which is what we actually see hovering shadow-like around graves. We perceive it because it consists of the four elements, with air prevailing over the other three.[32] The pneumatic body possesses a characteristic of vegetative life, for it is somehow nourished by vapours in the same way that sponges absorb vapours. The pneumatic body is nourished by one kind of vapour, but may also be purged by another kind. An unsuitable diet leads to the thickening of the pneumatic body. In that case, we are able to perceive it by vision because it contains an increased amount of steam. In some cases the pneumatic body takes on the appearance of an image or ghost of a man as the result of a bad regimen which causes the pneumatic body to thicken and become compressed even while it is still surrounded by the sensible body. The same people also say, according to Ammonius, that during our earthly existence we need to practice good living (εὐζωία). It is in order to avoid the thickening of their pneumatic body that the good (οἱ σπουδαῖοι) observe a light and dry diet and perform purgative rituals. Hence their ghost is never seen around graves.[33]

Perhaps the most fascinating part of Ammonius' explanation of the appearance of ghosts emerges in response to the question whether the pneumatic body (and hence a ghost) possesses sense organs or not.[34] Ammonius mentions that there

30 The discussion about the shadowy ghosts (σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα) is alluding to Plato's *Phaedo* 81c11-d4: "περὶ τὰ μνήματά τε καὶ τοὺς τάφους κυλινδουμένη, περὶ ἃ δὴ καὶ ὤφθη ἄττα ψυχῶν σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα, οἷα παρέχονται αἱ τοιαῦται ψυχαὶ εἴδωλα, αἱ μὴ καθαρῶς ἀπολυθεῖσαι ἀλλὰ τοῦ ὁρατοῦ μετέχουσαι, διὸ καὶ ὁρῶνται". Late Platonism treated the appearance of ghosts and the nature of benevolent or maleficent demons as related subjects; see Timotin 2012.

31 The main body of the proof asserts that soul suffers punishments in the underworld and therefore must have a kind of body that suffers, as we saw.

32 This reflects Proclus' theory of the pneumatic vehicle; see Proclus, *In Timaeum* III, 297.26 – 298.1.

33 Philoponus, *In DA* 19.22 – 31. The whole passage reflects an established Platonic theory that one can find in Porphyry (see, Porphyry *Sententiae*, 29; *De abstinentia* II, 39.1; *De antro nympharum* 11.6 – 11). The most interesting parallel found in Ammonius is the following passage from his commentary on the *Categories* (Ammonius, *In Cat*. 78.20 – 29): "[...] if one claimed and proposed to show that the soul is immortal, he might reason that if it were not truly immortal but dispersed after its withdrawal from the body, good persons would not differ from bad. But in truth we all know that there is a divine providence that assigns compensation to each soul for its deeds. Because of this, some of those who conducted their lives well hasten to acquire virtues and thereby make their souls more at home with providence." Translation by Cohen and Matthews 1991.

34 Philoponus, *In DA* 19.31 – 20.22. The tone of the text conveys echoes of the lively discussion that must have taken place in the school of Alexandria the day Ammonius presented the subject. I think

are those, presumably Platonists, who maintain that the pneumatic body does not possess differentiated sense-organs. Instead the pneumatic body is active as a whole and throughout itself in respect of the senses and in this way perceives sensible objects, namely as a unified sense and organ. Aristotle appears to endorse this view in a passage[35] in which he points out that properly speaking there is one sense and a single sense-organ. This is taken by some Platonists as an indirect reference of Aristotle's to the pneumatic body.

The view that the pneumatic body has a single, unified sense derives from Proclus, who explicitly distinguishes three levels of sense-perception. The single and impassive sense-perception, created by the demiurge of the cosmic soul, generates the single and passive sense-perception of the pneumatic vehicle, which in turn generates the multiple and passive sense-perception of the sensible body. Proclus attributes sense-organs only to the sensible body and denies that the body of the cosmos, endowed with the cosmic soul, possesses sense-organs. Further, he does not attribute sense-organs to the pneumatic body. Rather it is the pneuma as a whole and throughout itself that acts as a single sense-organ that perceives in a unified way. Finally, and to reinforce the claim that the theory which Ammonius is here setting forth is that of Proclus, we find in the latter's writings the assertion that Aristotle also accepts the pneuma as a single sense-organ acting as a whole and throughout itself to assure a unified sense-perception.[36]

The preface of the commentary alone does not allow us to reconstruct Ammonius' own view on the subject. But there is a striking passage later in the commentary that sheds light on his position.[37] Ammonius begins there by describing the view of some unnamed persons as follows: "The pneuma is not organised, but just as water or anything else like that when thickened in a pot becomes shaped along with the container, so also the pneuma".[38] So, according to these people, the pneumatic body does not itself possess sense-organs; rather, it merely takes the shape of the sensible body. This is unacceptable for Ammonius, who points out two serious complications resulting from this view.[39]

First, if the pneumatic body does not possess sense-organs, the soul to which it attaches will not fall under the Aristotelian definition of the soul as actuality of an

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that the passage 19.36 – 20.22 reflects especially Philoponus' editing, for the text is articulated in successive questions and answers.

35 The text says "ἐν τοῖς μετὰ τὰ φυσικά" (Philoponus, *In DA* 19.33 – 34). Hayduck decided to capitalize the third word, thus construing the phrase as denoting the work *Metaphysics*, though in the apparatus he gives a reference to Aristotle's work *De somno et vigilia* 2, 455a20 – 21. Therefore, either Philoponus is mistaken or he employs the expression 'ἐν τοῖς μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ' in a very broad sense meaning 'one of the treatises written after the *Physics*'.

36 See Proclus, *In Timaeum* II, 84.5 – 85.20; III, 236.31 – 238.26. It seems that [pseudo-]Simplicius attributes a similar, if not the same, view to Iamblichus; cf. Simplicius, *In DA* 187.36 – 188.3.

37 Philoponus, *In DA* 239.2 – 38.

38 Philoponus, *In DA* 239.6 – 8. Translation by Charlton 2005.

39 Philoponus, *In DA* 239.15 – 38.

organic body. In this case, only the rational and the vegetative soul will fall under the Aristotelian definition, but the irrational soul which is located in the pneumatic body will not. Second, if the irrational soul in the pneumatic body is to fall under the Aristotelian account, then the pneumatic body must necessarily possess sense-organs. But in this case one will not be able to justify how each of the senses, e. g. sight, can act as a whole throughout the pneumatic body without a proper sense-organ, e. g. the eye, being attached to it. The implication here is that each sense always corresponds to a proper sense-organ, which seems to entail that the irrational soul will be divided according to its various sensory powers into as many parts as there are organs of the pneumatic body. In order to avoid the division of the irrational soul into parts it is not enough to claim, as Proclus does, that all senses are co-present in one part, for this is fanciful and impossible to prove.

The solution to the latter problem, according to Ammonius, must be that soul lives as a citizen (πολιτευομένη) in the pneumatic body and the irrational powers act in concert through the whole body much as the souls of the heavenly bodies act on these, with the difference that heavenly bodies are not in possession of organs and consequently their souls do not fall within the Aristotelian account of soul. Ammonius' disagreement with Proclus is that in his view the irrational soul resides in the pneumatic body and exercises its powers upon it as it did upon the sensible body, whereas Proclus held that we have a single sense acting throughout the pneuma as a single organ. Ammonius does not reduce the five senses to one, but holds that every power of the irrational soul inhabits and acts upon the pneuma as a whole.

At this point, I need to pause for two remarks.

First, the solution draws on Ammonius' exegesis of the Aristotelian definition of the soul. He describes some disagreements of philosophers on whether the Aristotelian definition of the soul concerns every part of the soul (rational, irrational, and vegetative) or not.[40] His own answer is that actuality (ἐντελέχεια) is said of both what is separable and inseparable from body. The rational soul is separable from body and makes perfect the animal by virtue of its own activity. The irrational and the vegetative soul are inseparable from body and are not able to act separately from the substrate in which they reside; thus, they make perfect the body by virtue of their substance. The rational soul acts upon the body and uses the irrational soul as an instrument.[41] So, every part of the soul, according to Ammonius, is in different ways the actuality of a bodily substance. I believe, as far as the pneumatic body is concerned, that Ammonius admits that the irrational soul endows the pneuma with a kind of life and exercises its powers on it as was happening when the soul dwelled in the sensible body. Therefore the pneumatic body must in a way possess organs, otherwise the irrational powers of the soul would be in vain. In other

40 Philoponus, *In DA* 203.11–207.15.

41 Philoponus, *In DA* 206–18–28; 210.2–6.

words, the irrational soul would perish along with the sensible organic body, and the pneumatic body would be unnecessary.

Second, Ammonius' solution tries, on the one hand, to establish that Aristotle believes that the powers of the soul are not divided into parts but act upon the body in concert, and, on the other hand, to prove that the pneumatic body exists and the irrational soul has its being in it. Ammonius suggests that the irrational soul lives as a citizen in the pneumatic body as the actuality of it. In this sense, he attempts to philosophically justify the appearance of ghosts through the Aristotelian definition of the soul as actuality of an organic body. Simplicius, who was also a pupil of Ammonius, reports an argument concerning the pneumatic vehicle of the soul that expresses the same idea: that the soul dwells as a citizen in the pneumatic body. The soul inhabits the different parts of the cosmos as a citizen and has its proper vehicle in each part of the cosmos; this is how every part of the cosmos is animated by soul. When the soul, Simplicius says, becomes a citizen inhabiting the air, the air becomes the pneumatic vehicle attached to soul, just as the sensible vehicle attaches to the soul during sensible life.[42]

The most plausible way to explain the citizenship of the soul in the pneumatic vehicle is that the soul exercises its irrational powers in the vehicle. This interpretation implies that both Ammonius and Simplicius conceive of the relationship between irrational soul and pneumatic body as analogous to the relationship of the irrational soul and the sensible body, recognizing the same kind of sympathetic affection in each pair. Simplicius provides some evidence which seems to be in accordance with Ammonius' view. Since the pneumatic body is made of one of the four elements, namely air, in a way it can already exist in the aerial portion of the sensible body, as a thinner entity than the body.[43] This implies that the pneumatic vehicle is formed together with the sensible body; therefore, in a way, the sense-organs are also formed together and appear in the pneumatic body of the ghost, as Ammonius is inclined to accept.[44]

Conclusion

The paper suggests that the theory of the soul found in the preface of Philoponus' commentary on the *De anima* reflects Ammonius' doctrines and teachings in the school of Alexandria. The whole discussion about the pneumatic vehicle of the soul in the preface is presented as setting forth the view of unnamed third persons.[45] One might wish to see in this a hesitation on the part of Ammonius to refer to specific

42 Simplicius, *In Phys.* 965.21–966.14.

43 Simplicius, *In Phys.* 966.8–9.

44 Philoponus, *In DA* 20.3–4: συνδιατυπωθὲν τῷ περιέχοντι σώματι, ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ κρυστάλλου συμβαίνει.

45 Philoponus, *In DA* 18.26–20.22. Throughout the passage we read the verb φασί.

Platonists by name, or an editorial intervention on the part of Philoponus, or merely a rhetorical device. I believe, however, that there is no evidence to support the view that Philoponus had his own disagreements with respect to the theory he reports on the nature of the pneumatic body or that he even had an account of his own. The final solution, as described above, emerges in the context of a disagreement among Platonists. In addition, the solution proposed fits within the exegetical framework of Ammonius, who presents Aristotle and the definition of the soul as being in agreement with Platonism. It seems to me that Philoponus had little to offer towards this interpretative line as an assigned editor of the lectures of his teacher.

Of course, Ammonius does not offer a satisfactory answer concerning the nature of ghosts – at least not in the eyes of modern scholarship. His argument that there exists a pneumatic vehicle of the irrational soul and that this must be conceived of as in a sense organic is not well elaborated and could in the end be reduced to an argument similar to that of his teacher Proclus. Yet, it would be unfair to dismiss the discussion about ghost appearances around graves either because today we can hardly believe in them or because we consider the subject to be an obsolete product of outdated superstition. The historian of the philosophy of late antiquity has much to learn by dealing with this subject with care and through the eyes of the era that posed it.

Pantelis Golitsis

11 μετά τινων ἰδίων ἐπιστάσεων: John Philoponus as an editor of Ammonius' lectures

Introduction

The Alexandrian philosopher John Philoponus (ca. 490 – 570) has received due scholarly attention over the past thirty years. Suffice it to recall the collective volume *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*, published by Richard Sorabji in 1987,[1] translated into Modern Greek by Chloe Balla in 2006, from which the by now well-established view of Philoponus as a novel and independent thinker has emerged. Still, there are important gaps in our assessment of Philoponus as an Aristotelian commentator. Philoponus' commentaries are in many and complicated ways related to the teachings of his master Ammonius, son of Hermeias. Not clarifying this relation can lead to misunderstandings and generate inconsistencies. Ammonius, for instance, born around 440, is believed by some to have been lecturing, and therefore to have still been alive, on May 10th of the year 517,[2] a date that we find in Philoponus' commentary on the *Physics*.[3] This belief depends on the unproven assumption that all that Philoponus did in his commentary on the *Physics* was to record the voice of his master. Could it not be that he himself was lecturing on the *Physics* on that day?

The issue, of course, is not simply about the biography of the two commentators. Correctly interpreting the nature of Philoponus' editorial work on Ammonius is tantamount to rightly attributing views and ideas to two different philosophers. To name a prominent example, all the medical interest in the anatomy of the brain and in other physiological issues that we find in the commentary on the first book of Aristotle's *On the Soul*,[4] should be transferred from Philoponus to Ammonius, if it is true,

I wish to thank Stephen Menn for helpful comments on a first draft of this paper.

1 Sorabji 1987; 2nd edition, Sorabji 2010.

2 See Saffrey 1989; Perkams 2009. I place Ammonius' death around 515 or, at any rate, before 517; see Golitsis 2008: 23 – 24.

3 Cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 703.16 – 17: "For we say that a year and a month and a day are present now – the year is the 233rd of Diocletian, the month is Pachon, the day is the 10th" (φαμὲν γὰρ ἐνεστηκέναι νῦν καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἡμέραν, ἐνιαυτὸν Διοκλητιανοῦ ἔτος σλγ', μῆνα παχών, ἡμέραν δεκάτην). Translation by Broadie 2011. Broadie, following Adrian Gatwick, renders the date as 5 April 517.

4 Philoponus, *In DA* 18.34 – 20.22; 50.16 – 52.25; 155.4 – 157.22; 200.34 – 201.32.

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as I have tried to show elsewhere,[5] that this particular commentary is essentially an edition of Ammonius' lectures. The issue also concerns Philoponus' development as a commentator. In an article published in 1990, which remained largely influential for several years, Koenraad Verrycken split Philoponus into two personalities, the orthodox 'Philoponus 1', who was faithful to Ammonius' Neoplatonism, and the dissident 'Philoponus 2', who after becoming a conscious Christian thinker revised, but only in part, his earlier writings.[6] Verrycken's assessment of the commentaries to which he generally refers as Philoponus' commentaries depends on what he wrongly took to be self-contradictions within them. Evidently, such contradictions vanish, if we identify 'Philoponus 1' with Philoponus' teacher Ammonius, whose lectures Philoponus published, and 'Philoponus 2' with Philoponus *tout court*, a philosopher expressing his own views, either by adding bits of text to Ammonius' explications of Aristotle or by writing his own commentaries.

My own teacher Paraskevi Kotzia was well aware of these difficulties and, from the very beginning of my studies on Philoponus, put before me the following question: to what extent are Philoponus' commentaries on Aristotle the work of Ammonius and to what extent are they his own work? I tackled the problem in my dissertation offering an account that is based on the titles of the commentaries ascribed to Philoponus.[7] Titles may be partly corrupt but they are part of the transmission of a text and can tell us a lot about what we are going to read in the text that is under them, especially when they are descriptive. Philoponus is named in the surviving manuscripts as the writer of commentaries on seven of Aristotle's treatises: the *Categories*, the *Prior Analytics*, the *Posterior Analytics*, the *Physics*, the *Meteorology*, the *On Generation and Corruption* and the *On the Soul*. Four of these commentaries are precisely described in their titles as Ἰωάννου τοῦ Φιλοπόνου (or Ἀλεξανδρέως) σχολικαὶ ἀποσημειώσεις ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ Ἑρμείου, that is, literally, "John Philoponus' notes taken after the manner of schools[8] from the seminars of Ammonius, son of Hermeias"; such are the commentaries on the *An. Pr.*, the *An. Post.*, the *DA* and the *GC*. Three of these four commentaries, that is, except for the commentary on the *An. Pr.*, also contain, according to their titles, ἐπιστάσεις by Philoponus himself: Ἰωάννου τοῦ Φιλοπόνου (or Ἀλεξανδρέως) σχολικαὶ ἀποσημειώσεις ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ Ἑρμείου μετά τινων ἰδίων ἐπιστάσεων. In this paper, I would like to examine more closely the content of these titles, so as to shed new

5 See Golitsis 2016a.

6 See Verrycken 1990. Verrycken 2010 still holds this view, without addressing the objections leveled against his reconstruction.

7 See Golitsis 2008: 22–37.

8 Meaning that what one is going to read is presented according to the way Aristotle is taught in class, that is, through commenting on the meaning and expression of successive passages of Aristotle's text, which is divided into lemmas.

light on Philoponus' development as a commentator and the dating of his commentaries.[9]

1 Philoponus as an editor of Ammonius' lectures

I shall begin with the rather enigmatic term *epistasis*, which is what the titles tell us that Philoponus has added to his master's teachings. It is usually translated as 'observation', 'réflexion', 'Bemerkung', but I believe that it is an *expression d'école*, a term that in late commentarial contexts may have a narrower content and properly mean 'critical observation' or 'criticism'. I do not make the strong claim that *epistasis* always means, in all commentarial contexts, 'criticism'; it is also the noun cognate to ἐφίστημι (or ἐφιστάνω) with the wider meaning of 'calling attention to/stopping to point out an interpretive difficulty in the text', without being directly critical of those who did not notice it, as in the standardized expression ἐπιστάσεως (or ἐπιστῆσαι) ἄξιον. I make the weaker claim that, when Philoponus wrote the titles of the commentaries that he published, he meant to indicate to his readers that Ammonius' exegesis would be occasionally interrupted by Philoponus' reservations and divergent interpretations, in other words by "his own critical observations".

Within a philosophical context, *epistasis* is first found in Aristotle, who says: "whether this is true or not, it deserves to arrest our attention (ἄξιον ἐπιστάσεως), and something might well be said about it";[10] Aristotle wishes to underline the inherent difficulty in his predecessors' claim that animals and plants are constituted by nature or by *nous* but the heaven and stars are ordered by chance.[11] Attention is here called for because of an objection that is about to be expressed. Indeed, the related verb ἐφίστημι *cum accusativo*, and its later form ἐφιστάνω *cum dativo personae seu rei* or *cum genitivo rei*, have in Neoplatonic authors, according to Liddell-Scott-Jones, the meaning 'object' or 'attack':

> However, someone might raise an objection (ἐπιστήσειε) in regard of these too, and especially the 'fate of Priam' that people [i.e. the Peripatetics] are always talking about.[12]

9 I here develop, and partly modify, my previous account of the relative chronology of Philoponus' commentaries.

10 Aristotle, *Phys.* II 4, 196a35–b1: καίτοι εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ἄξιον ἐπιστάσεως, καὶ καλῶς ἔχει λεχθῆναί τι περὶ αὐτοῦ. Cf. also *Metaph.* N 2, 1089b24–25: ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἄλλων κατηγοριῶν ἔχει τινὰ καὶ ἄλλην ἐπίστασιν πῶς πολλά ("In the case of the other categories there is, if any, a difficulty in discovering how they are many"). Whereas in the former case ἐπίστασις signifies the act of paying attention to something, in the latter case it signifies the object, i.e. the thing, to which attention is paid.

11 Cf. Aristotle, *Phys.* II 4, 196a28-b5.

12 Plotinus, *Enneads* I 4.5.5–7: καίτοι καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα ἄν τις ἀποβλέψας ἐπιστήσειε καὶ πρὸς τὰς πολυθρυλλήτους αὖ μάλιστα Πριαμικὰς τύχας. Translation by Armstrong 1966.

This is what Plotinus says objecting to Peripatetic ethics, which make the absence of pain and misfortunes essential to good life. Plotinus himself was later criticized by Damascius in metaphysical matters, as Simplicius reports:

> Damascius objects/points out as a criticism (ἐφιστάνει) to Plotinus that, instead of eternity, he has delivered a doctrine about the eternal intellect.[13]

Damascius is elsewhere presented as having been critical also of the doctrines of Proclus:

> Damascius, through his love of labour and his sympathy with Iamblichus, did not hesitate to attack/to criticise (ἐφιστάνειν) many of Proclus' doctrines.[14]

Although with some hesitancy, Simplicius himself criticizes some points in Iamblichus' intellective theory of the category of having:

> We should dare to make some criticisms (ἐφιστάνειν) of what has been said, since it is also dear to [Iamblichus] not to accept thoughtlessly any explanation.[15]

It is clear that, in those contexts, ἐφιστάνω can only mean 'object' or 'criticize'. It is used in the same sense by Simplicius' contemporary Philoponus:

> It should be pointed out as a criticism to him (ἐκείνῳ ἐπιστατέον, i.e. Aristotle) that, on the basis of these considerations as well [*Phys.* IV 4, 212a24–28], it is shown that place is not the limit of the container [contrary to what he believes].[16]
>
> To begin with, we should point out as a criticism to him (ἐκείνῳ [*sc.* τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει] ... ἐπιστῆσαι χρή) that he himself, through the arguments through which he constructs this [i.e. that if there is void, everything moving in it will move with equal velocity], refutes his own theses.[17]

Thus, ἐφιστάνω properly means here 'to criticize', and its cognate noun ἐπίστασις cannot mean but 'criticism'. We may see this clearly in the statement that Simplicius makes in his prolegomena to the *Categories*, when dealing with "how the good commentator should be":

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13 Simplicius, *In Phys.* 791.32–3: ἐφιστάνει δὲ αὐτῷ (*sc.* τῷ Πλωτίνῳ) ὁ Δαμάσκιος ὡς ἀντὶ αἰῶνος τὸν αἰώνιον νοῦν παραδεδωκότι.

14 Simplicius, *In Phys.* 795.15–17: ὁ δὲ Δαμάσκιος διὰ φιλοπονίαν καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὰ Ἰαμβλίχου συμπάθειαν πολλοῖς οὐκ ὤκνει τῶν Πρόκλου δογμάτων ἐφιστάνειν.

15 Simplicius, *In Cat.* 376.13–14: τολμητέον δὲ ἐφιστάνειν τοῖς εἰρημένοις, ἐπειδὴ καὶ αὐτῷ φίλον μὴ ἀπερισκέπτως ἐκδέχεσθαι τὰ λεγόμενα.

16 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 592.16–17: ἐκείνῳ [*sc.* τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει] δὲ ἐπιστατέον, ὅτι καὶ ἐντεῦθεν δείκνυται ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι τὸ πέρας τοῦ περιέχοντος ὁ τόπος.

17 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 677.12–13: ἐκείνῳ [*sc.* τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει] δὲ τέως ἐπιστῆσαι χρή, ὅτι δι' ὧν τοῦτο κατασκευάζει, αὐτὸς τὰς ἑαυτοῦ θέσεις ἀναιρεῖ.

> The commentator's judgment must be impartial, so that he may neither mischievously seek to prove something well said to be unsatisfactory, nor, if some point should require criticism (εἴ τι δέοιτο ἐπιστάσεως), should he be so obstinate as to try to demonstrate that Aristotle is always and everywhere infallible, as if he had enrolled himself in the Philosopher's school.[18]

To say, in accordance with the wider meaning of *epistasis*, that, "if there is some point to which attention has to be called, the commentator should not try to prove that Aristotle is infallible" would not only weaken Simplicius' point about the impartiality of the commentator (a commentator demonstrates his impartiality when he expresses justified criticisms) but it would also make little sense; for the commentators often call attention to interpretive difficulties in Aristotle's text, which do not involve Aristotle's being (or not being) infallible.[19] Therefore, the narrower and stronger sense of *epistasis* as 'criticism' is required in this particular context. In another passage, Simplicius uses *epistasis* as practically a synonym for *enstasis* ('objection'):

> Having elucidated the text, let us now turn to the objections (ἐνστάσεις) and their resolutions. The fact that [Aristotle] named the first as a species and called the second a genus has already been objected (ἐπιστάσεως) and resolved,[20] since it is not absurd to call what is intermediate and neither specific nor generic both genera and species.[21]

In the following passage, to quote a last example,[22] Simplicius asks his critical reader to forgive his method of quoting too much from Philoponus:

> Let he who reads me with critical attititude (μετ' ἐπιστάσεως) forgive me,[23] if I choose to quote so much of [Philoponus'] sayings in his very words. I am doing this out of fear that sometimes people may not believe that he who has such [deficient] understanding dares refute Aristotle.[24]

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18 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 7.26–29: Δεῖ δὲ (*sc*. τὸν ἐξηγητὴν) καὶ κρίσιν ἀδέκαστον ἔχειν, ὡς μηδὲ τὰ καλῶς λεγόμενα κακοσχόλως ἐκδεχόμενον ἀδόκιμα δεικνύναι μηδὲ εἴ τι δέοιτο ἐπιστάσεως, πάντῃ πάντως ἄπταιστον φιλονεικεῖν ἀποδεῖξαι, ὡς εἰς τὴν αἵρεσιν ἑαυτὸν ἐγγράψαντα τοῦ φιλοσόφου. Translation by Chase 2003, modified.

19 Cf., e.g. Ammonius, *In Int*. 22.3–9: "So much, then, can we write about the overall sense of what Aristotle says [in this passage]. Starting over from further back, following what is said in this passage [1, 16a3–9] and attending to the things which are worth our attention (ἐφιστάνοντες τοῖς ἐπιστάσεως ἀξίοις), we say first that Aristotle began the teaching of these matters not from the things or the concepts, but from the utterances, since his task in this course is to examine the predicative utterances at the level of the assertoric sentence. Next [we say] that…". Translation by Blank 1996, slightly modified.

20 Cf. Simplicius, *In Cat*. 229.6–11. It is worth noting that this passage is not introduced with the expression "ἄξιον ἐπιστάσεως" but with an interrogative πῶς.

21 Simplicius, *In Cat*. 243.21–25: Μετὰ δὲ τὴν τῆς λέξεως σαφήνειαν ἐπὶ τὰς ἐνστάσεις καὶ τῶν ἐνστάσεων τὰς λύσεις μετίωμεν. καὶ τὸ μὲν "εἶδος" εἰπόντα τὸ πρότερον τὸ δεύτερον "γένος" καλέσαι καὶ ἐπιστάσεως ἤδη καὶ διαλύσεως ἔτυχεν, ὡς οὐδὲν ἄτοπον τὰ μέσα καὶ μήτε εἰδικώτατα μήτε γενικώτατα καὶ γένη καὶ εἴδη καλεῖν (transl. Fleet 2002, modified).

22 See further Simplicius, *In Cat*. 256.36; *In Cael*. 368.15–16; *In Cael*. 379.32–33.

23 It would make little sense to say 'he who reads me with attention'; anyone is supposed to read with due attention. Nor could Simplicius here refer to the reader whose attention would be captured

That the stronger meaning of *epistasis*, well attested in Simplicius, pertains also to the titles of Philoponus' commentaries is confirmed by the fact that the textual units, which can be identified, through a strong use of the first person singular, as Philoponus' additions to Ammonius' lectures, always contain a criticism.

We should however be careful to distinguish Philoponus' *extensive* criticisms of Aristotle's theories on place and void, which are found in Philoponus' commentary on the *Physics*, and on the fifth element, which is found in his commentary on the *Meteorology* – both commentaries do not mention neither Ammonius nor *epistaseis* in their titles – from the *few* (τινές) criticisms that Philoponus is said to have added to Ammonius' lectures on Aristotle's *On the Soul*, *Posterior Analytics* and *On Generation and Corruption*. In 529, when he was composing the autonomous treatise *On the eternity of the world against Proclus*, Philoponus was proclaiming the independence of philosophy from any authority.[25] In the same work, Philoponus also criticizes heavily the attempts of the 'recent commentators' to rescue Plato from Aristotle's criticisms on the assumption that these criticisms are not addressed to Plato himself but to those who misunderstand the Platonic doctrines:

> From these passages we can most certainly see that Aristotle's refutations of Plato are not directed at people who have wrongly understood Plato, which is a fiction created by some more recent commentators out of embarrassment at the disagreement between the [two] philosophers, but rather constitute a rebuttal of the notions of Plato himself. For, if Aristotle had not been attacking Plato's own doctrine on the Forms but, as these commentators claim, that of people who have misunderstood him, he would have specified precisely this at the outset and not have refuted the doctrine of the Forms generally and without qualification.[26]

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by the very fact that he quotes so much from Philoponus; μετ' ἐπιστάσεως refers to a way of reading and not to a consequence of reading, just like the person who philosophises μετ' ἀκριβείας (or δι' ἀκριβείας) does not not become ἀκριβής because he philosophises, but his minuteness pertains to his way of philosophising.

24 Simplicius, *In Cael.* 48.22–25: συγγινωσκέτω δὲ πᾶς ὁ μετ' ἐπιστάσεως ἐντυγχάνων, εἰ τηλικαύτας αὐτοῦ ῥήσεις καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῆς αἱροῦμαι παραγράφειν τῆς λέξεως· εὐλαβείᾳ γὰρ τοῦτο ποιῶ τοῦ μηδὲ πιστευθῆναι ἐνίοτε τὸ τὰ τοιαῦτα τοῦτον ἐννοοῦντα τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει τολμᾶν ἀντιγράφειν.

25 His independent spirit is there confidently expressed through a statement that he makes about the existence of formless matter; Philoponus, *Contra Proclum* 445.7–13: "So the hypothesis regarding an incorporeal and formless matter has been shown [by us] to be a baseless fiction and unproven assumption, even if ten thousand Platos and the rest of the roll-call of the ancients had advanced this view regarding it. Indeed, we shall decline to believe anything that lacks rational proof [cf. Plato, *Alcibiades* I, 114e7–9]" (ὥστε μῦθος ψευδὴς καὶ αἴτημα ἀν απόδεικτον ἡ περὶ τῆς ἀσωμάτου τε καὶ ἀνειδέου ὕλης ὑπόθεσις ἀποδέδεικται, κἂν μυρίοι Πλάτωνες καὶ ὁ λοιπὸς τῶν ἀρχαίων κατάλογος τὴν περὶ αὐτῆς εἰσηγήσαντο δόξαν· οὐδενὶ γὰρ πιστεύειν ἀξιώσομεν μὴ ὑπὸ λόγου τὴν ἀπόδειξιν ἔχοντι). Translation by Share 2010. See Wildberg 1999 for Philoponus' hermeneutics. On Philoponus' stance toward the authority of Aristotle see Golitsis 2016b: 431–436.

26 Philoponus, *Contra Proclum* 29.2–13: ἐξ ὧν ἔστιν μάλιστα συνιδεῖν, ὡς οἱ κατὰ Πλάτωνος Ἀριστοτέλους ἔλεγχοι οὐ πρὸς τοὺς κακῶς τὰ Πλάτωνος ἐξειληφότας ἐνίστανται, ὥς τινες τῶν νεωτέρων ἐμυθολόγησαν τὴν τῶν φιλοσόφων διαφωνίαν αἰδεσθέντες, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὰς Πλάτωνος αὐτοῦ ὑπονοίας τὴν ἀντιλογίαν πεποίηνται· εἰ γὰρ μὴ πρὸς αὐτὸ διεμάχετο τὸ περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν Πλάτωνος Ἀρι-

Now, this line of defence is also denied, albeit in somewhat more moderate terms, in Philoponus' commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*. It is put forward, however, thus giving the impression of a self-contradiction, in Philoponus' commentary on *On the Soul*.[27] We need not posit, of course, a volte-face of Philoponus in order to account for this contradiction. Whereas what we read in the commentary on *On the Soul* is what Ammonius said in his lectures published by Philoponus, what we have in the commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* is a 'criticism' added by Philoponus to Ammonius' lecture, as it is made clear by the introductory phrase "I, however, think that such a defence [i. e. as put forward by Ammonius] is thoroughly unconvincing".[28] Finally, we hear in the *contra Proclum* the teaching of Philoponus himself. This development incites us to think of Philoponus as coming progressively to realize, most probably through his objections to Ammonius' explications of Aristotle, the flaws in Aristotle's philosophy itself.

As their titles announce it, Philoponus' commentary on *On the Soul* contains a long *epistasis* against the theory of vision expounded by Ammonius,[29] and Inna Kupreeva has revealed an *epistasis* against the concept of conditional necessity endorsed by Ammonius in the commentary on the *On Generation and Corruption*.[30] For now, I wish to point out that also the commentary on the *Prior Analytics*, whose title *does not* alert us accordingly, contains (at least) a very short and a long *epistasis* on Ammonius' lectures. Here is the short one, put immediately after the explication of the general meaning (νοῦς) of a passage:

> As far as *I* am able to know, this passage does not appear to be sound; let us, however, examine its phrasing (λέξις).[31]

Philoponus, speaking here in his own voice, appears to moderately discredit Ammonius' attempt to make sense of a textually problematic passage. It is reasonable to assume that in a commentary in which the name of the editor is put first the first person singular refers to the editor himself. When need there is, the master whose teaching is recorded is named ὁ φιλόσοφος or ὁ διδάσκαλος:

στοτέλης δόγμα, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοὺς κακῶς τῶν Πλάτωνος, ὥς φασιν, παρακούσαντας, πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο προσδιορίζεσθαι ἤμελλεν καὶ οὐχ ἁπλῶς καὶ ἀδιορίστως τὴν περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν ἀπελέγχειν δόξαν. Translation by Share 2005, slightly modified).

27 Compare Philoponus, *In An. Post.* 242.26 – 243.21 with Philoponus, *In DA* 37.18 – 32. I discuss both passages in Golitsis 2016a: 402 – 403.

28 Philoponus, *In An. Post.* 243.13: ἐμοὶ δὲ πάνυ δοκεῖ ἀπίθανος ἡ τοιαύτη ἀπολογία.

29 Philoponus, *In DA* 332.7 – 341.9.

30 *In GC* 309.20 – 31; see Kupreeva 2010: 224 – 227.

31 Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 350.15 – 16: ὅσον οὖν ἐμὲ εἰδέναι οὐ φαίνεται ὑγιῶς ἔχειν τὸ προκείμενον χωρίον· τὴν λέξιν δὲ ὅμως ἐπισκεψώμεθα.

> It seems that, when applied to universal terms, [the article], as our teacher also said in his commentary on the *On Interpretation*, signifies the very nature and form of man, or of anything else.[32]

The "teacher", i.e. Ammonius, must have said in his lecture "ὡς καὶ ἐν τοῖς εἰς τὸ Περὶ ἑρμηνείας εἶπον". However, reproducing this phrase *telle quelle* could lead the reader of the published commentary to the false inference that that was something said by Philoponus himself in *his own* commentary on the *On interpretation* (Philoponus is not known to have written such a commentary). There are several parallels of this sort in Asclepius' commentary on the *Metaphysics*, which according to its title consists in Σχόλια εἰς τὸ ... τῆς Μετὰ τα φυσικὰ Ἀριστοτέλους γενόμενα ὑπὸ Ἀσκληπιοῦ ἀπὸ φωνῆς Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ Ἑρμείου ('Comments on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* made by Asclepius from the voice of Ammonius son of Hermeias'). Here are some examples:

> This is what Aristotle says; our philosopher Ammonius explains that the Pythagoreans said all these in a symbolic way.[33]

> This is what Aristotle says; our Philosopher [i.e. Ammonius], who was devoted to this doctrine, or, better, to the father of this doctrine [i.e. Plato], used to say that there are [only] ideas of natural things and of species, of course not of particulars, for ideas would be in this way infinite; and we say that there are no ideas of artifacts but reasons in the soul of those who produce them.[34]

> This is what Alexander [of Aphrodisias] said; our philosopher Ammonius explains that 'in this way' is significative and is contrastive with power.[35]

> As our own teacher [i.e. Ammonius] explains, [Aristotle] says here the same things making his reasoning even clearer; and he [i.e. Aristotle] explains that...[36]

Both Asclepius and Philoponus were pupils of Ammonius. They must have frequently attended Ammonius' public seminars, i.e. the συνουσίαι mentioned in the titles of

32 Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 21.9–11: ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν καθόλου ὅρων ἔοικεν, ὡς καὶ ἐν τοῖς εἰς τὸ Περὶ ἑρμηνείας ὁ ἡμέτερος εἶπε διδάσκαλος, αὐτὴν τὴν φύσιν καὶ τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δηλοῦν ἢ οὑτινοσοῦν.

33 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 64.38–39: καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης. ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος φιλόσοφος Ἀμμώνιος συμβολικῶς, φησί, πάντα ταῦτα οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι ἔλεγον.

34 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 91.19–23: καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης· ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος φιλόσοφος προσέχων τῷ δόγματι, μᾶλλον δὲ τῷ πατρὶ τοῦ δόγματος ἔλεγεν ὅτι τῶν φύσει ὑπάρχουσιν αἱ ἰδέαι, καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν· οὐ γὰρ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα, ἐπεὶ οὕτως ἄπειροί εἰσιν αἱ ἰδέαι· τῶν δὲ τεχνητῶν οὔ φαμεν εἶναι ἰδέας ἀλλὰ λόγους ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τῶν ποιούντων.

35 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 121.4–5: καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος· ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος φιλόσοφος Ἀμμώνιός φησιν ὅτι τὸ "τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον" δηλωτικόν ἐστι καὶ ἀντιδιασταλτικὸν τῆς δυνάμεως.

36 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 416.22–23: Ὡς φησιν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος ὅτι ἐνταῦθα τὰ αὐτὰ λέγει ἔτι σαφέστερον ποιῶν τὸν λόγον. καί φησιν (*sc.* ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης) ὅτι...

Philoponus' commentaries,[37] taking complete notes over several years, that is, σχόλια or ἀποσημειώσεις, of their master's teachings. Ammonius would see in the persons of Asclepius and Philoponus the counter-example of the bad ὑπογραφεῖς who are mentioned in Hermias' commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus:*

> There are some [scribes] who write so badly and slowly that they are able to take some notes for themselves (ἀποσημειώσεις ποιεῖσθαι) but unable to be used by anyone as [official] scribes (ὑπογραφεῦσι).[38]

Philoponus published his ἀποσημειώσεις ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν Ἀμμωνίου and Asclepius published his σχόλια ἀπὸ φωνῆς Ἀμμωνίου. The two expressions practically mean the same thing and correspond to what is described as σύνταξις βιβλίου in the following passage of Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus:*

> [Amelius] made notes (σχόλια) from the seminars (ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν) of Plotinus and edited about a hundred volumes of these notes.[39]

Both Asclepius and Philoponus, therefore, were ὑπογραφεῖς of Ammonius. But their work, of course, did not consist in a mere publication of their transcriptions. They

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37 Note that συνουσία does not refer to a private instruction, which is more properly described as συνανάγνωσις (cf. Marinus, *Vita Procli*, ch. 13, 318 – 320: "In less than two whole years, Proclus read with [Syrianus] the complete works of Aristotle, logical, ethical, political, natural and the science of theology which transcends these" [ἐν ἔτεσι γοῦν οὔτε δύο ὅλοις πάσας αὐτῷ τὰς Ἀριστοτέλους συνανέγνω πραγματείας, λογικάς, ἠθικάς, πολιτικάς, φυσικάς, καὶ τὴν ὑπὲρ ταύτας θεολογικὴν ἐπιστήμην]) but to an open seminar. Porphyry says that Plotinus' συνουσίαι were open to anyone (cf. *Vita Plotini* 1.13 – 14), whereas he describes more restricted hearings as ἀκροάσεις (cf. *Vita Plotini* 3.24 – 28).

38 Hermias, *In Phaedrum* 70.18 – 21: εἰσί τινες οἳ οὕτως βραδέως καὶ κακῶς γράφουσιν ὥστε ἑαυτοῖς μὲν δύνασθαί τινας ἀποσημειώσεις ποιεῖσθαι, μὴ μέντοι τινὰ ἂν αὐτοῖς ὑπογραφεῦσι χρήσασθαι. I thank Carlos Steel for drawing my attention to this passage. The verb corresponding to ἀποσημειώσεις is ἀπογράφεσθαι; cf. Marinus, *Vita Procli*, ch. 12, 295 – 300: "Proclus read with Plutarch Aristotle's *On the Soul* and Plato's *Phaedo*. The great man also exhorted him to write down what was said, making an instrument of his zeal, and saying that, if he completed the comments, there would be a commentary by Proclus on the *Phaedo*" (ἀναγινώσκει οὖν παρὰ τούτῳ Ἀριστοτέλους μὲν τὰ περὶ ψυχῆς, Πλάτωνος δὲ τὸν Φαίδωνα. προὔτρεπε δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ μέγας καὶ ἀπογράφεσθαι τὰ λεγόμενα, τῇ φιλοτιμίᾳ τοῦ νέου ὀργάνῳ χρώμενος καὶ φάσκων ὅτι, συμπληρωθέντων αὐτῷ τῶν σχολίων, ἔσται καὶ Πρόκλου ὑπομνήματα φερόμενα εἰς τὸν Φαίδωνα); ch. 13, 326 – 331: "Working day and night with tireless discipline and care, and writing down what was said in a comprehensive yet judgeful manner, Proclus made such progress in a short time that, when he was still in his twenty-eighth year, he wrote a great many commentaries, which were elegant and teeming with knowledge, especially the one on *Timaeus*" (ὁ δὲ ἀγρύπνῳ τε τῇ ἀσκήσει καὶ ἐπιμελείᾳ χρώμενος νύκτωρ τε καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα συνοπτικῶς καὶ μετ' ἐπικρίσεως ἀπογραφόμενος, τοσοῦτον ἐν οὐ πολλῷ χρόνῳ ἐπεδίδου, ὥστε ὄγδοον καὶ εἰκοστὸν ἔτος ἄγων ἄλλα τε πολλὰ συνέγραψε καὶ τὰ εἰς Τίμαιον, γλαφυρὰ ὄντως καὶ ἐπιστήμης γέμοντα ὑπομνήματα). Translation by Edwards 2000, slightly modified.

39 Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 3.46 – 47: σχόλια δὲ ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν ποιούμενος (*sc.* ὁ Ἀμέλιος) ἑκατόν που βιβλία συνέταξε τῶν σχολίων.

would also do proper editing to produce a correct and coherent style, to check, for instance, quotations of Aristotle and, of course, as is shown by the examples above, to turn into the third-person propositions that Ammonius uttered in the first person singular, so as to avoid making sound Ammonius' explications and references as theirs. They would also make harmless additions such as Asclepius' underscoring of Ammonius' Platonism in the passage quoted above (it is difficult to imagine Ammonius saying "ἐγὼ δὲ προσέχων τῷ δόγματι, μᾶλλον δὲ τῷ πατρὶ τοῦ δόγματος, λέγω…"; he must have merely said: "ἡμεῖς δὲ λέγομεν…"). However, what, unlike Asclepius, Philoponus *substantially* added to his master's teachings was his criticisms. We can easily recognize, for instance, Philoponus the grammarian behind the content of the long *epistasis* present in the commentary on the *Prior Analytics*, which I mentioned before.[40] The fact that this long *epistasis* is not announced in the title of the commentary is not necessarily a sign of corrupt textual transmission. It may also be a sign of a change in Philoponus' self-confidence as an editor of Ammonius' lectures. While going through his editorial project, Philoponus would make up his mind to announce from the very title of the commentaries the criticisms that he would occasionally make on his teacher's lectures. This now brings before us an intriguing question: why Ammonius, the famous holder of the public chair of philosophy in Alexandria, son of the philosopher Hermeias and a reverent

40 Philoponus, *In An. Pr.* 329.16 – 331.15: "Against these points, the Philosopher [i.e. Ammonius] put forward the following defence, namely that [Aristotle] has shown in the *On interpretation* that participles are equivalent to verbs; saying, for instance, 'Socrates walks' is equivalent to 'Socrates is walking', and this is true in every case. If then this is true, it is clear that, if I take the participle 'suffering', it will be equivalent to the verb 'to suffer' […]. To this we may reply that the participle is not equivalent to the verb in all cases but only in the case of the indicative verbs, from which it derives, and not at all in the case of infinitives […]. Therefore, [infinitives] are not equivalent to participles; for 'to hit' and 'he is hitting' is not the same thing. Therefore, it is not possible to take infinitives for participles […]. He [i.e. Ammonius] added to the question under discussion the following point as well, namely that, when I say that 'to be sane' may be true or may not be true of a person who is suffering […], I mean that sanity may be true or may not be true of him insofar as this person is suffering […]. However, it is perhaps not true to say that, when I say that 'to be sane' may be true or may not be true of a person who is suffering, I predicate 'to be sane' of him insofar as this person is suffering […]. That much with regard to these; we will consider this problem again" (πρὸς ταῦτα ἀπολογούμενος ὁ φιλόσοφος ἔλεγεν, ὡς δεδειγμένον εἴη ἐν τῷ Περὶ ἑρμηνείας, ὡς ὅτι αἱ μετοχαὶ ἰσοδυναμοῦσι τοῖς ῥήμασι· τὸ γὰρ εἰπεῖν "Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ" ἴσον ἐστὶ τῷ εἰπεῖν "Σωκράτης περιπατῶν ἐστι", καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων τὸ αὐτό. εἰ οὖν τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχει, δῆλον ὅτι, κἂν λαμβάνω ἐν τῷ μέσῳ τὸ νοσοῦν μετοχὴν ὄν, ἰσοδυναμήσει τοῦτο τῷ νοσεῖν ῥήματι […]. πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι οὐ παντὶ ῥήματι ἰσοδυναμεῖ ἡ μετοχὴ ἀλλὰ μόνοις τοῖς ὁριστικοῖς, ἐξ ὧν καὶ τὴν γένεσιν ἔχει, ἥκιστα δὲ τοῖς ἀπαρεμφάτοις […]. ὥστε οὐδὲ ἰσοδυναμοῦσι ταῖς μετοχαῖς· οὐ γὰρ ταὐτὸν δύναται τὸ τύπτειν τῷ "τύπτων ἐστίν". ὥστε οὐ δυνατὸν ἀντὶ τῶν μετοχῶν παραλαμβάνειν τὰ ἀπαρέμφατα […]. ἔλεγε δὲ εἰς τὸ προκείμενον κἀκεῖνο, ὅτι ὅταν εἴπω ὅτι τὸ ὑγιαίνειν τῷ νοσοῦντι ὑπάρξαι ἐνδέχεται ἢ ἐνδεχομένως οὐχ ὑπάρχει […], ταύτῃ φημὶ αὐτῷ ἐνδέχεσθαι τὴν ὑγίειαν ὑπάρξαι ἢ μὴ ὑπάρξαι, ἀλλ᾽ ᾗ νοσεῖ […]. μήποτε δὲ οὐκ ἀληθές ἐστι τὸ λέγειν ὅτι, ὅταν εἴπω τὸ ὑγιαίνειν ἐνδέχεσθαι τῷ νοσοῦντι ὑπάρξαι ἢ μὴ ὑπάρξαι, καθὸ νοσεῖ κατηγορῶ αὐτοῦ τὸ ὑγιαίνειν […]. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον. ἐπισκεψόμεθα δὲ περὶ τούτου καὶ αὖθις).

pupil of Proclus, would allow, not to say entitle, his own pupil Philoponus to publish commentaries that were in places overtly critical of him? We can quote as a counter-example to Philoponus' attitude the anonymously published commentary of Ammonius on the *Prior Analytics*, where Ammonius is referred to as "the great philosopher" in contradistinction to Alexander of Aphrodisias.[41]

Asclepius can provide an answer to our query. While editing a comment by Ammonius on the Pythagoreans, he writes:

> The hero Ammonius, who was the pupil of Proclus and the teacher of me Asclepius, used to say that the Pythagoreans called the ideas numbers in a symbolic way.[42]

Ammonius is called by Asclepius ἥρως, a word that praisingly qualifies a dead person. For a "hero", according to the Pagan pantheon, is a divinized intelligible soul, which is no longer bound to a human body.[43] This implies that Ammonius was dead when Asclepius published his master's lectures on the *Metaphysics* and this must be equally true for Philoponus, as it is also suggested by the constant use of past tense. Asclepius and Philoponus, therefore, were not prompted by Ammonius himself to publish his lectures, nor could Ammonius verify the content of their publications. In all probability, Asclepius' and Philoponus' editorial projects were commissioned, perhaps by local authorities or through some kind of endowment.[44]

This reconstruction may provide us with an answer to a further query. Asclepius' and Philoponus' commentaries are the only Alexandrian commentaries that record the name of the recorder. There are several σχόλια "from the voice of the master", for instance, of Olympiodorus, Stephanus, David or Elias, which are all published anonymously. Why are the names of Asclepius and Philoponus recorded, rather than left anonymous as is done in so many cases? A probable answer is the following: granted that Ammonius was dead, reverence towards the master required that the name of the editor should be provided, so as to liberate Ammonius from possible misunderstandings on the part of the editor; given, however, that Asclepius and Philoponus were commonly recognized as accredited pupils of Ammonius, *their* publications of their dead master's teachings were meant to be more or less authoritative.

41 Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 23.8–9: "This is Alexander's explication; the great philosopher, who explicates the passage in a deeper and more precise way, says that…" (οὕτως ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος. ὁ δὲ μέγας φιλόσοφος βαθύτερον καὶ ἀκριβέστερον ἐξηγούμενος λέγει ὅτι…). Note that this commentary is different as to its phrasing from the commentary published by Philoponus.

42 Asclepius, *In Metaph.* 92.29–31: ὁ δὲ ἥρως Ἀμμώνιος ὁ Πρόκλου μὲν γεγονὼς ἀκροατὴς ἐμοῦ δὲ Ἀσκληπιοῦ διδάσκαλος ἔλεγεν ὅτι συμβολικῶς ἐκεῖνοι ἔλεγον τὰς ἰδέας ἀριθμούς.

43 On the rank of 'hero' within the pagan pantheon see Brisson 2000.

44 Stephen Menn suggests to me that that the reason behind these publications could equally have been individual pietas towards one's deceased teacher. Whereas I am happy to accept this possibility for Asclepius' publication, I find difficult to accept it for Philoponus, whose criticisms against Ammonius were at times harsh. Menn also suggests that Philoponus' editorial project could equally be tantamount to staking a claim to be Ammonius' inheritor, which I think is an interesting possibility.

Philoponus' commentary on the *Prior Analytics* is the only commentary in which he qualifies Ammonius, rather positively, as ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος.[45] This fact, taken together with the moderate tone of his *epistaseis* to his master's teaching, suggests that this publication is earlyish, possibly the first that Philoponus made. In this commentary, as well as in the commentary on *On Generation and Corruption*, Philoponus still labels himself a grammarian (ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ ἀλεξανδρέως ... ἀποσημειώσεις), which may also be a sign that these are indeed the earliest commentaries. This is no more the case for the commentaries on the *On the Soul* and the *Posterior Analytics*, in which Philoponus is simply called Ἀλεξανδρεύς. Philoponus' phase as a grammarian rather than a philosopher-commentator would most easily fit in at the beginning of his career. Given Philoponus' evolution and his gradual liberation from the Neoplatonic authorities, which found its peak in the publication of his autonomous treatises against Proclus and against Aristotle, published around 529 and 532 respectively, the number and content of his criticisms may serve as a criterion for dating his commentaries.

2 The dating of Philoponus' editorial work and of his own commentaries

Philoponus' commentary on the *Physics*, dated by a reference to 10 May 517,[46] includes heavy and extensive objections to Aristotle. It is presented by the editor Giro-

45 Compare with Asclepius and Simplicius, who constantly refer to Ammonius, reverently, as ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος or ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών. Note that Ammonius is explicitly named by Philoponus only once, i.e. in his commentary on the *Meteorology* (Philoponus, *In Mete.* 106.9–10: καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος Ἀμμώνιος Ἑρμείου οὕτως ἐξείληφε), which is *not* presented as a set of notes from Ammonius' seminars. This commentary has been most probably composed by Philoponus several years after Ammonius' death (see below).

46 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 703.16–17 (commenting on *Phys.* IV 10, 217b29): "We say that now are present the year, the month and the day: the year 233 of Diocletian, the month Pachon, the tenth day" (φαμὲν γὰρ ἐνεστηκέναι νῦν καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἡμέραν, ἐνιαυτὸν Διοκλητιανοῦ ἔτος σλγ΄, μῆνα παχών, ἡμέραν δεκάτην). This means, more precisely, that Philoponus was either teaching or writing this bit of his commentary on that day. In private correspondance, Marwan Rashed was once considering the interesting possibilitiy to emend 233 (ΣΛΓ΄) – which appears as 333 (ΤΛΓ΄) in one branch of the Greek manuscript tradition – to 243 (ΣΜΓ΄), which yields the date 527, correcting a testimony by the Arabic scholar al-Nadim (10th cent.), who cites the date mentioned by Philoponus as "343". Even if one accepted this manipulation, two years, i.e. from 527 to 529, is a rather short period (without considering the possibility that there may have been further teachings by Philoponus, which have not been recorded or survived) for situating the publication of the commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, the commentary on the third book of *On the Soul* and the commentary on the *Meteorologica*, which follow the commentary on *Phys.* III-IV and precede the *On the eternity of the world against Proclus* (see below). Moreover, such an emendation would enable us to situate the birth of Philoponus around 498. But this, I think, is contradicted by the fact that, in a letter responding to an invitation by the emperor Justinian (see Furlani 1919–1920), Philoponus blames his "old age"

lamo Vitelli as having no direct connection to Ammonius' seminars. Indeed, it is impossible that Philoponus' criticisms of Ammonius and Aristotle in the commentary on book IV are *epistaseis* in the technical meaning, that is, separate textual unities that make a critical point against a precise explication of Ammonius. Philoponus' rejection of Aristotle's doctrine of place is discreetly present in all first five chapters of the book, until it is separated off into the so-called Corollary on place (*In Phys.* 557.8 – 585.4). Philoponus alerts the reader within the commentary proper that he will expound later what can be said against Aristotle by the proponents of the view that place is extension (which corresponds to his own doctrine).[47] Philoponus deliberately and explicitly postponed expounding his disagreement because he wants first, as a good commentator, *to comment* on Aristotle.[48] He himself recommends this method in his commentary on the *Categories*, while discussing how the good commentator should be,[49] and, we may surmise, for a good reason: his criticisms will gain in strength and persuasion when they are presented together with a dispassionate explication of Aristotle's arguments. He follows the same procedure with regard to the so-called Corollary on void (*In Phys.* 675.12 – 695.8), announcing that he will pres-

for his inability to travel to Constantinople. Justinian was born in 482 and it would surely not be very tactful for Philoponus to utter such an excuse if he was sixteen years younger. For my part, I think that a date as early as 485 is plausible for Philoponus' birth. The year 574, which is often quoted as date of composition of Philoponus' short treatise *On resurrection*, constitutes in reality an arbitrary guess, which depends on the fact that Paul Patriarch of Antioch condemns tritheism (without naming either Philoponus or his treatise) in a letter addressed to Theodore Patriarch of Alexandria in 575; Philoponus' treatise, however, may have been written quite earlier. The latest date known to be true for Philoponus is the year 567, when Philoponus composed his βιβλιδιάριον (as the Patriarch Photius calls it) on the Trinity; see Martin 1962. Simplicius, who says that he is not aware of having ever met Philoponus in Alexandria (see Simplicius, *In Cael.* 26.18 – 19), must have been born around 480 (and died around 540).

47 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 552.10 – 13: "These are the attempts culled from the exegetical tradition devoted to the Aristotelian text that are intended to establish that place is not an extension. The external arguments which the commentators have added, and whatever the proponents of the view that place is an extension could say, we will expound after having gone through the text" (αἱ μὲν οὖν ἀνασκευαὶ τοῦ μὴ εἶναι διάστημα τὸν τόπον, αἱ ἐκ τῶν ἐξηγήσεων τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν ῥητῶν ἀναφανεῖσαι, αὗταί εἰσιν, ὅσας δὲ ἔξωθεν προστεθείκασιν οἱ ἐξηγηταί, καὶ ὅσα εἴποιεν ἂν οἱ προϊστάμενοι τοῦ διάστημα εἶναι τὸν τόπον, μετὰ τὸ ἐπεξελθεῖν τὸ ῥητὸν ἐροῦμεν). Translation by Algra and van Ophuijsen 2012.

48 On this method see Golitsis 2008: 196 – 200.

49 Philoponus, *In Cat.* 6.30 – 35: "The commentator should neither, on account of good will, try to make sense of what is badly said as though receiving it from a tripod, nor should he, on account of hatred, take in a bad sense what is said rightly. He should rather try to be a dispassionate judge of what is said and he should *first* explain the meaning of the ancient text and interpret the doctrines of Aristotle, and *then* go on to express his own judgment [on how things are]" (ὁ δὲ τοῦτον ἐξηγούμενος ὀφείλει μήτε κατ' εὔνοιαν ἐπιχειρεῖν τὰ κακῶς λεγόμενα συνιστᾶν καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ τρίποδος ταῦτα δέχεσθαι μήτε τὰ καλὰ κακοτρόπως δέχεσθαι κατὰ ἀπέχθειαν, ἀλλὰ κριτὴς ἀπαθὴς τῶν λεγομένων ὑπάρχειν, καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ ἀρχαίου σαφηνίζειν καὶ ἑρμηνεύειν τὰ αὐτῷ δοκοῦντα, ἔπειτα τὴν παρ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιφέρειν κρίσιν).

ent his objections to Aristote at a later stage.[50] An experiment with *klepsudrai* mentioned within the commentary proper refers back to the Corollary on place.[51] The Corollary on void presupposes the Corollary on place, which Philoponus calls οἱ περὶ τοῦ τόπου λόγοι, as well as the in-between commentary: in the beginning of the Corollary, Philoponus clarifies that he will skip things which he dealt with in 632.4 sqq. and 639.3 sqq.[52] Moreover, the entire commentary on book IV is characterized by well thought execution and coherence: 619.10 – 13 refers back to the Corollary on place and announces the Corollary on void.[53] There are many instances of Philoponan style and several cross-references all along the book.[54] Philoponus refers to it in

50 Cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 651.1 – 4: "It is better perhaps first to go through the whole argument about the void, and then take up each of the arguments from the beginning and enquire what truth or falsity is in it, not fearing anything, and not putting the reputation of this man before the truth" (κάλλιον δὲ ἴσως πρῶτον τὸν πάντα διελθεῖν περὶ τοῦ κενοῦ λόγον, εἶτα οὕτως ἀναλαβόντας ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἕκαστον ἐπισκέψασθαι τῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων, ὅπῃ ἀληθείας ἔχει ἢ ψεύδους, μηδὲν αἰδεσθέντας, μηδὲ τῆς ἀληθείας τὸ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὑπειλημμένον ἐπίπροσθεν θέντας). Translation by Huby 2012, modified.

51 Cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 612.15 – 18: "He names 'clepsydras' either the things found by inventive people, by which they produce the pipes and other kinds of sounds, or, what is more plausible, he calls 'clepsydras', as I have already said, the vessel which many people call the snatcher" ('κλεψύδρας' λέγει ἤτοι τὰ παρὰ τοῖς μηχανικοῖς δι' ὧν τοὺς συριγμοὺς ἀποτελοῦσι καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ποιὰς φωνάς, ἤ, ὅπερ καὶ μᾶλλον, 'κλεψύδρας' φησίν, ὅπερ ἤδη εἶπον, τὸ ἀγγεῖον ὃ καλοῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ἁρπάγιον). Translation by Huby, modified. It refers to 569.20 – 22: "What about clepsydras – I mean the things popularly called 'snatchers' here among our people?" (τί γὰρ δή ποτε ἐν ταῖς κλεψύδραις, λέγω δὴ ἐν τοῖς καλουμένοις παρ' ἡμῖν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ἁρπαγίοις;). Translation by Furley 1991.

52 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 675.12 – 17: "This is where Aristotle's discourse on the void stops; we must go back and examine each one of his arguments. But we shall begin not from the beginning of his own discussion of the void (for we have already stated our own opposition to some of the arguments in their own place), but from where he began to argue that if there is a void there can be no motion through it [...]" (μέχρι μὲν οὖν τῶν ἐνταῦθα πέρας ἔχουσι τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει οἱ περὶ τοῦ κενοῦ λόγοι, δεῖ δὲ ἡμᾶς ἄνωθεν ἀναλαβόντας τὸν λόγον ἕκαστον τῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων ἐπισκέψασθαι. ποιησόμεθα δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν οὐκ ἐξ οὗ τὸν περὶ κενοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς ἤρξατο ποιεῖσθαι λόγον – πρὸς τινὰ γὰρ ἔφθημεν ἤδη τῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων ἐν τῷ ἑκάστου τόπῳ ὑπαντήσαντες –, ἀλλ' ὅθεν ἤρξατο ἐπιχειρεῖν ὡς οὐ δυνατὸν κενοῦ ὄντος δι' αὐτοῦ γενέσθαι κίνησιν [...]).

53 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 619.10 – 13: "We too, then, with the arguments with which we refuted the arguments destroying [the view that] place is extension, with these we will also refute those that destroy [the view that] void exists in this way [i.e. as extension], insofar as it is considered in its own definition" (οὐκοῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' ὧν ἠλέγξαμεν τοὺς λόγους τοὺς ἀναιροῦντας διάστημα εἶναι τὸν τόπον, διὰ τούτων καὶ τοὺς ἀναιροῦντας τὸ οὕτω κενόν, ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ ἰδίῳ λόγῳ, ἐλέγξομεν ["fortasse" Vitelli : ἠλέγξαμεν codd.]).

54 Cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 540.6 – 7: τοῦτο μὲν ὁ Θεμίστιος ... ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ, to be compared with *In Phys.* 639.3 – 5: ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ... ἐμοὶ δὲ οὐδὲν ἀναγκαῖον ἔχειν δοκεῖ, which introduces the digression on the impetus (*In Phys.* 639.3 – 642.26); *In Phys.* 548.16 – 18: "the meaning of [Aristotle's] words is very unclear, and if he had not explained himself in his account of void, his meaning would have remained inexplicable. Different commentators try to grasp the meaning of this passage in different ways" (ἀσαφὴς δὲ πάνυ ὁ τῶν λέξεων νοῦς, καὶ εἰ μὴ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς τοῦ κενοῦ λόγοις ἡρμήνευσεν ἑαυτόν, ἔμεινεν ἂν ἀνερμήνευτος· ἄλλοι δὲ ἄλλως τῇ τοῦ ῥητοῦ ἐπιβάλλουσιν ἐννοίᾳ); *In Phys.* 552.13: μετὰ τὸ ἐπεξελθεῖν τὸ ῥητόν; *In Phys.* 592.16: ἐκείνῳ (*sc.* τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει)

his commentary on the *Meteorology* as "our own writings after the manner of schools on the fourth book of the *Physics*" (τὰ εἰς τὸ τέταρτον τῆς Φυσικῆς ἀκροάσεως σχολικὰ ἡμῶν συγγράμματα).[55] σχολικὰ ἡμῶν συγγράμματα cannot refer to his ἀποσημειώσεις from the seminars of Ammonius but to Philoponus' own written commentary. The section on time (*In Phys.* IV, 10–14), although less critical than those on place (*In Phys.* IV, 1–5) and on void (*In Phys.* IV, 6–9), is also typical of Philoponus.[56] In *Phys.* IV 10, Philoponus refers back to his commentary on the *Categories*.[57] He criticizes Aristotle for making time depend on the actual existence of souls on the ground that time is countable, as if countability required the opportunity to be counted.[58] He

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ἐπιστατέον; *In Phys.* 612.17–18: ὅπερ ἤδη εἶπον; *In Phys.* 632.6: ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν δέδεικται; *In Phys.* 687.15–16: εἰ δέδεικται ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ τόπου λόγοις; *In Phys.* 698.5–7: "This seems to me to involve a big problem: for I cannot understand by what reasoning a push condenses (τοῦτο δὲ πολλὴν ἀπορίαν ἔχοιν μοι φαίνεται· τίνι γὰρ λόγῳ ὤθησις πυκνοῖ, συνιδεῖν οὐκ ἔχω); *In Phys.* 762.2–3: "But this would not be allowed by someone who does not consent that time is everlasting" (ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἂν συγχωρήσειέ τις μὴ βουλόμενος τὸν χρόνον ἀίδιον εἶναι).

55 Philoponus, *In Mete.* 35.18–19, referring to the so-called *Corollarium de loco*.

56 For a different assesment see Sorabji 2016: 373–376, who takes the bit of commentary on IV 10–14 to belong to an early stage in Philoponus' career, when he was still working out his own position on some issues. But it is hard to explain why he would choose to comment only on a bit of a book within the *Physics*. Besides, there are critical comments in it.

57 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 705.20–24: "[Aristotle] says 'exoteric discourses' in order to contrast the demonstrative discourses presented to academic audiences with ones based on received opinions and plausible considerations. It has also been stated in [our commentary on] the *Categories* that those discourses are exoteric that are not demonstrative, and are addressed not to a real [philosophic] audience but to ordinary people, and are based on [merely] plausible considerations" ("ἐξωτερικοὺς λόγους" φησὶ πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολὴν τῶν ἀκροαματικῶν καὶ ἀποδεικτικῶν τοὺς ἐξ ἐνδόξων καὶ πιθανῶν ὡρμημένους. εἴρηται δὲ καὶ ἐν Κατηγορίαις, ὅτι ἐξωτερικοί εἰσι λόγοι οἱ μὴ ἀποδεικτικοὶ μηδὲ πρὸς τοὺς γνησίους τῶν ἀκροατῶν εἰρημένοι, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ ἐκ πιθανῶν ὡρμημένοι). Translation by Broadie 2011, modified. It refers to Philoponus, *In Cat.* 4.15–22: ἅπερ καὶ ἐξωτερικὰ ἐκάλουν διὰ τὸ πρὸς τὴν τῶν πολλῶν γεγράφθαι ὠφέλειαν, ᾗ καὶ διαφέρει γε πλεῖστον τὰ διαλογικὰ τῶν αὐτοπροσώπων· ἐν μὲν γὰρ τοῖς αὐτοπροσώποις ἅτε πρὸς γνησίους ἀκροατὰς τὸν λόγον ποιούμενος τὰ δοκοῦντά τε αὐτῷ λέγει καὶ δι' ἐπιχειρημάτων ἀκριβεστάτων καὶ οἷς οὐχ οἷοί τέ εἰσιν οἱ πολλοὶ παρακολουθῆσαι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς διαλογικοῖς ἅτε πρὸς κοινὴν καὶ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν ὠφέλειαν γεγραμμένοις κἀκεῖ μὲν τὰ δοκοῦντα αὐτῷ λέγει, ἀλλ' οὐ δι' ἀποδεικτικῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων, ἀλλὰ δι' ἁπλουστέρων καὶ οἷς οἷοί τέ εἰσιν οἱ πολλοὶ παρακολουθεῖν.

58 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 770.15–21: "But in response to this someone will say: if saying 'numerable' and [saying] 'number' were the same, it would indeed be absolutely necessary that if the soul were removed, the numerable would be removed, and that if the latter were removed, time too [would be removed]; but as things are, saying 'number' and 'numerable' is not the same. So what rules it out that although time as numerable is removed if soul is removed, still [time] as number is not removed? What, then, impedes us to say that time is eliminated as countable, when soul is eliminated, but that it is not eliminated as number? (ἀλλὰ πρὸς ταῦτα ἐρεῖ τις, ὅτι εἰ μὲν ταὐτὸν ἦν ἀριθμητὸν εἰπεῖν καὶ ἀριθμόν, ἀνάγκη ἦν πᾶσα τῷ ὄντι ψυχῆς ἀναιρεθείσης ἀνῃρῆσθαι τὸ ἀριθμητόν, καὶ τούτου ἀναιρεθέντος ἀνῃρῆσθαι καὶ τὸν ἀριθμόν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὸν χρόνον, νῦν δὲ οὐ ταὐτόν ἐστιν εἰπεῖν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἀριθμητόν. τί οὖν κωλύει τὸν χρόνον ὡς μὲν ἀριθμητὸν ἀναιρεῖσθαι τῆς ψυχῆς ἀναιρεθείσης, ὡς μέντοι ἀριθμὸν μὴ ἀναιρεῖσθαι;). Translation by Broadie 2011. On this subject, see Sorabji 2003, ch. 11. Any one who is familiar with Philoponus' style can see that *In Phys.* 778.6: "the theory *he* has ex-

points there to his not expounding his disagreement with Aristotle on (the eternity of) time, because he had already done that in his (now lost) commentary on book VIII.[59] Not only does the commentary on book IV presents internal coherence but, as we have seen, it is also linked through cross references with the commentary on the *Categories*, which precedes it, and to the commentary on the *Meteorologica*, which follows it. Philoponus' own commentary on the third book of *On the Soul* refers back to his commentaries on the *Categories* and on the *Physics*,[60] which are precisely *not* described as being from the seminars of Ammonius but as exegeses by himself (ἰωάννου τοῦ φιλοπόνου ἐξηγήσεις).

Thus, one might believe, as I previously did,[61] that the Ammonian material published by Philoponus together with a few criticisms by himself is earlier than Philoponus' *own* commentaries, which are related to his own teaching and subversive exegetical activity.[62] Nevertheless, a closer look at his commentary on the *Physics* now obliges us to accept a more sophisticated picture.

We have just seen that Philoponus' commentary on book IV of the *Physics* refers back to his earlier commentary on book VIII. This invites us to think that Philoponus commented not necessarily on entire treatises of Aristotle but selectively on books, or on sets of books.[63] Philoponus picked out book VIII as the first book from the *Physics*

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pounded about time" (ἡ παρ' αὐτοῦ εἰρημένη θεωρία), states implicitly that Philoponus does not endorse Aristotle's theory.

59 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 762.2 – 9: "However, someone who does not regard time as everlasting would not concede that every now is subject to the two descriptions 'beginning' and 'end', but would say that there will be a now that will be an end and not also a beginning. So Aristotle establishes that time will not give out on the basis of movement. If there is always movement, he says, necessarily there is always time [cf. *Phys.* IV 13, 222a29 – 30]. That there is always movement he tries to show in the eight book of this treatise; but he [actually] shows anything but this, as we have demonstrated in our lectures on that book" (ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἂν συγχωρήσειέ τις μὴ βουλόμενος τὸν χρόνον ἀίδιον εἶναι, ὅτι πᾶν νῦν τοὺς δύο λόγους ἀναδέχεται, τὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ τὸν τοῦ τέλους, ἀλλ' ἔσται τι νῦν ὃ τέλος μὲν ἔσται, οὐκέτι δὲ ἀρχή. κατασκευάζει οὖν τὸ μὴ ὑπολείψειν τὸν χρόνον ἐκ τῆς κινήσεως· εἰ γὰρ ἀεὶ ἔστι κίνησις, φησίν, ἀνάγκη καὶ χρόνον ἀεὶ εἶναι. ὅτι δὲ ἡ κίνησις ἀεὶ ἔστιν, ἐν τῷ ὀγδόῳ ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας πειρᾶται μὲν δεικνύναι, πᾶν δὲ μᾶλλον δείκνυσιν ἢ τοῦτο, ὡς ἐν ταῖς σχολαῖς ἐκείνου τοῦ βιβλίου ἀπεδείξαμεν). Translation by Broadie 2011. A comment from Philoponus' lost commentary on book VIII (on 1, 251b10 – 28), different from the scattered comments preserved in Greek, has survived in Arabic; see Lettinck 1994: 17 and 135.

60 Cf. Philoponus, *In DA* 528.34 – 529.4 reffering to Philoponus, *In Phys.* 414.20 – 27 and to Philoponus, *In Cat.* 23.8 – 13. On the paternity of the commentary on book III of *On the Soul*, which has been wrongly attributed to Stephanus, see Golitsis 2016a.

61 See Golitsis 2008: 26 – 27.

62 Philoponus, of course, as any other philosopher who studied with Ammonius, would continue to use his notes and publications from Ammonius' seminars, as well as other texts, as *sources* for his own teaching and exegetical activity. His using Ammonius as a source can be aptly illustrated through a comparison of his commentary on the *Categories* with the respective commentary of Ammonius, published anonymously (*CAG* IV.4).

63 This is, of course, unsurprising. Syrianus commented selectively, and not necessarily in the normal order, on books B, Γ, M, N of the *Metaphysics*. It is interesting to quote how he describes his

to comment on presumably because he wished to attack first Aristotle's arguments on the eternity of motion and time. His commentary on book IV seems to have been preceded by the commentary on the entire book III; the latter contains two digressions (*In Phys.* 401.1–403.31 and 456.17–458.31) that need justification and thus presuppose the context of the proper commentary.[64] The second digression shows some unity with the commentary on book VIII, since it is concerned with the eternity of time. Two arguments against the eternity of the world are equally presented at *In Phys.* 428.23–429.20 and treat the answers given by some unnamed philosopher as nonsense.[65] The passage seems to recount a real incident and it may be that the unnamed philosopher was one of Ammonius' pagan fellows. *In Phys.* 430.9–10 announces a thorough reply to the counter-arguments put forward by pagans against the eternity of the world;[66] this reply is given at 467.1–468.7. So, just like the commentary on book IV, the commentary on book III exhibits coherence and internal unity. As it happens twice in the commentary on book IV,[67] the commentary on book III re-

method before commenting on book Γ; Syrianus, *In Metaph.* 54.11–15: "We will attempt to convey these matters in this book, which, given the adequate explanations provided by the most industrious Alexander, we will not interpret in its entirety. But we will try to examine the part where we feel Aristotle says something which causes difficulty and merits explanation, paraphrasing all the rest so as to respect the continuity of the treatise" (ταῦτα πειράσεται μὲν ἐν ταύτῃ παραδοῦναι τῇ βίβλῳ, ἣν ἡμεῖς ἱκανῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ φιλοπονωτάτου σαφηνισθεῖσαν Ἀλεξάνδρου πᾶσαν μὲν οὐκ ἐξηγησόμεθα· εἰ δέ που ἡμῖν δοκοίη λέγειν τι πραγματειῶδες <καὶ ἄξιον> ἐξετάσεως πειρασόμεθα κατ' ἐκεῖνο βασανίζειν τὸ μέρος, τὰ ἄλλα πάντα τοῦ συνεχοῦς ἕνεκα τῆς πραγματείας παραφράζοντες). Translation by O'Meara and Dillon 2008, slightly modified. This could be also said for Philoponus' method.

64 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 403.32–33: "So then, in saying this we have exceeded the bounds of the present subject, and let us therefore return to the continuation of it" (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν πέρα τοῦ μέτρου τῶν προκειμένων ἐξέβημεν, διόπερ ἐπανέλθωμεν εἰς τὴν συνέχειαν τῶν προκειμένων); *In Phys.* 458.15–16: "It was, indeed, possible to expose the fatuity of such arguments at greater length, but even these remarks are sufficient for a digression" (δυνατὸν μὲν οὖν ἦν ἐπὶ πλεῖον τὸ ἀνόητον τῶν τοιούτων λόγων ἐλέγξαι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν παρεκβάσει ἱκανὰ καὶ ταῦτα); *In Phys.* 459.1: "But we must return to the point from which we set out" (ἀλλ' ἐπανιτέον ὅθεν ἐξέβημεν). All translations by Edwards 1994.

65 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 429.21–25: "But against this someone has raised the most thoughtless objection that nothing prevents their being unlimited on each side; he failed to see that one cannot speak of unlimitedness on each side in relation to number, but we propose this only of the continuous [magnitude] as geometrical method. For the unlimited in the case of number is nothing other than the unlimitedness of the monads" (πρὸς ταῦτα δὲ πάνυ ἀνοήτως τις ἁπάντων ἔλεγεν, ὡς οὐδὲν κωλύει τὸ ἐπὶ θάτερα εἶναι ἄπειρον, ἐκεῖνο μὴ συνεωρακὼς ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπὶ ἀριθμοῦ λέγειν τὸ ἐπὶ θάτερα ἄπειρον, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μόνου τοῦ συνεχοῦς τοῦτο ὑποτιθέμεθα ἐν ταῖς γεωμετρικαῖς μεθόδοις· τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ ἄπειρον οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ μονάδων ἀπειρία). Translation by Edwards 1994. Note that the Greeks had no conception of negative numbers.

66 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 430.9–10: "But we will consider specifically the more complete argument concerning these matters" (τὸν δὲ περὶ τούτων ἐντελέστερον λόγον ἰδίᾳ ἐπισκεψόμεθα [Trincavelli : ἐπισκεψώμεθα codd.]).

67 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 639.7–12: "And I have made a few remarks on this proposition in my commentary on the eighth book of the present treatise, where Aristotle primarily started an argument about these matters, how things moving unnaturally move. But also now, none the worse, let us re-

fers once to the (lost) commentary on book VIII,[68] which is homogeneously described, in all three occurrences, as σχολαί.[69] Philoponus' commentary on Nicomachus' *Introduction to Arithmetic* refers back to *In Phys.* III.[70]

We may thus deduce that Philoponus' commentary on book VIII was followed by Philoponus' commentary on books III-IV. These two commentaries are issued from Philoponus' *own* exegetical activity. On the contrary, I shall now argue, Philoponus' commentary on the first two books of the *Physics* must stem from his editorial activity concerning the exegesis of Ammonius.

We come across undoubtedly genuine Ammonian content quite frequently in the first two books of the commentary. The following two passages, for instance, respectively from the commentary on books I and II, distinguish between theological physics and physical theology; this is a distinction originating in Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus*, which has been developed towards a concordist interpretation by Proclus' pupil Ammonius:

> It is possible to speak about nature from a theological perspective, as Plato does in the *Timaeus* when he discusses the transcendent causes of natural things, and to study the divine things from

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call shortly the unpersuasive things connected with his argument" (καὶ εἴρηται μέν μοι πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ θεώρημα μέτρια ἐν ταῖς σχολαῖς τοῦ ὀγδόου ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας, ἔνθα τὸν περὶ τούτων προηγουμένως ἐκίνησε λόγον ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, πῶς τὰ παρὰ φύσιν κινούμενα κινεῖται, οὐδὲν δὲ χεῖρον καὶ νῦν διὰ βραχέων ὑπομνῆσαι τὰ ὑποπίπτοντα πρὸς τὸν λόγον τοῦτον ἀπίθανα). See also Philoponus, *In Phys.* 762.7–9.

68 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 458.30–31: "That motion has not been shown to be necessarily eternal I have shown sufficiently in my commentary on the eight book of the present treatise" (ὅτι δὲ οὐ δέδεικται ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀίδιος οὖσα ἡ κίνησις, ἱκανῶς ἐν ταῖς σχολαῖς τοῦ ὀγδόου τῆσδε τῆς πραγματείας ἐδείξαμεν).

69 Note the use of the term σχολαί, which describes in all probability one's *own* commenting. In his commentary on Nicomachus' *Introduction to Arithmetic* Philoponus equally refers to his commentary on the *Meteorology* using the same term (*In Introd. Arithm.* I 16.4–5: ὅτι δὲ καὶ τὰ οὐράνια ἀλλοιοῦται κατὰ ποιότητα, ἐν ταῖς εἰς τὰ μετέωρα σχολαῖς ἐδείξαμεν). σχολαί does not have the same meaning as σχόλια, which refer to commentaries taken from the voice of one's teacher; see Lamberz 1987. As we saw before, Asclepius describes as σχόλια his publication of Ammonius' comments on the *Metaphysics* and Porphyry records that Amelius published in numerous books the σχόλια he had taken at the seminars of Plotinus. Proclus, too, wrote σχόλια recording the seminars of Plutarch of Athens on *Phaedo*. Finally, as σχόλια are also described Hermeias' comments on *Phaedrus* from the seminars of Syrianus.

70 Philoponus, *In Introd. Arithm.* II 7.19–20: "There is another method [for generating] squares, which is called method by duplication; we have talked about this in [our commentary on] the physics too" (ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἄλλη μέθοδος τετραγώνων, ἥτις ὀνομάζεται δίαυλος, εἴρηται δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς φυσικοῖς περὶ αὐτοῦ), referring to Philoponus, *In Phys.* 393.15–18: "And they also hand down another means of generating squares – even if we now digress a little from the present topic – which is called the method by duplication, and reveals to us, not only the generation of square numbers, but also the side on which each is constructed" (καὶ ἄλλην δὲ γένεσιν τῶν τετραγώνων παραδιδόασιν, εἰ καὶ τοῦ προκειμένου μικρὸν παρεκβαίνομεν, τὴν λεγομένην κατὰ δίαυλον, οὐ μόνον τὴν γένεσιν τὴν τῶν τετραγώνων ἀριθμῶν ἡμᾶς διδάσκουσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν ἀφ' ἧς ἕκαστος ἀναγράφεται). Translation by Edwards 1994.

> the perspective of nature, as Aristotle precisely does in his *Metaphysics* when starting from the natural things he delivers his teaching on the divine things.[71]
>
> Plato, speaking as a theologian, calls the Demiurge the efficient cause, and says that nature is an instrumental cause. Aristotle, however, speaking as a physicist, justifiably calls nature an efficient cause, but has no analogue to the instrumental cause.[72]

Moreover, Aristotle is consistently presented as a supporter of Platonic Forms in the commentary on the first two books, although what he is chiefly interested in in his *Physics* – justifiably, as he speaks as a physicist – is the immanent natural form:

> [Aristotle] says "concerning the formal principle" [*Phys.* I 9, 192a34] referring to the separate form that is the source of being for the forms down here, not to the forms in the many. For it is the physicist's task to deal with the latter. But "it is a task for first philosophy to define" [192a35–36] whether this is one or more than one, and, if one, what exactly it is, and if more than one, what they are and how many; so he refers discussion of this matter to those [books]. He discusses these matters in book *Lambda* of the *Metaphysics:* whether this is one or many, and, if many, how many these things are, and how the many relate to the one, because it is thence that all things depend. "For a proliferation of rulers is not a good thing", he says [Λ 10, 1076a4; Homer B 204]. So Aristotle too, in accordance with Plato, knew the forms that are separate and transcendent and causes of the [immanent forms] here.[73] So, it was not in vain that we said earlier that when he used the phrase "the principles need to be stable for ever (ἀεὶ μένειν)" [*Phys.* I 6, 189a19–20] he was <not> referring to these [separate] forms [i.e. because these are not treated in the *Physics* but in book *Lambda* of the *Metaphysics*]. For in the next book [i.e. *Phys.* II] and in all the other physical treatises he will discuss the natural form, which is generated and perishable.[74]

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71 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 5.21–25: Ἔστι γὰρ καὶ φυσιολογεῖν θεολογικῶς, ὡς ὁ Πλάτων ἐν τῷ Τιμαίῳ περὶ τῶν ἐξῃρημένων αἰτίων τῶν φυσικῶν πραγμάτων διαλεγόμενος, καὶ θεολογεῖν φυσικῶς, ὥσπερ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τῇ Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ἐκ τῶν φυσικῶν πραγμάτων τὴν διδασκαλίαν τῶν θείων ποιούμενος.

72 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 241.27–30: Ὁ μὲν οὖν Πλάτων θεολογῶν ποιητικὸν μὲν αἴτιον τὸν δημιουργὸν λέγων, ὀργανικὸν εἶναι τὴν φύσιν (cum M^2 : ὕλην ed.) φησίν, ὁ μέντοι Ἀριστοτέλης φυσιολογῶν εἰκότως ταύτην μὲν ποιητικόν φησιν εἶναι αἴτιον, ὀργανικῷ (Lacey : ὀργανικὸν codd.) δὲ ἀνάλογον οὐκ ἔχει.

73 Note the similar vocabulary in Philoponus, *In DA* 37.25–28: "Consequently, he also knows the transcendent formal principles of things. Again, in the present treatise he says: 'The active intellect is the things' [cf. *DA*, III 5, 430a14–15], and 'those who say that the soul is the place of forms speak rightly' [*DA*, III 4, 429a27–28]" (ὥστε οἶδε καὶ τοὺς ἐξῃρημένους λόγους τῶν πραγμάτων. καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ δὲ τῇ πραγματείᾳ φησὶν "ἔστι δὲ ὁ κατ' ἐνέργειαν νοῦς τὰ πράγματα", "εὖ γε καὶ οἱ τὴν ψυχὴν τόπον εἰδῶν εἰρηκότες").

74 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 193.1–6 (I have modified the punctuation): "Περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς, φησί, τῆς κατὰ τὸ εἶδος", λέγει δὲ τοῦ χωριστοῦ εἴδους καὶ αἰτίου τοῖς ἐνταῦθα εἴδεσι τοῦ εἶναι, οὐ περὶ τοῦ ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς· περὶ τούτου γὰρ τοῦ φυσικοῦ διαλαβεῖν ἐστι. πότερον δὲ ἕν ἐστι τοῦτο ἢ πλείονα, καί εἰ ἕν τί ποτε τοῦτό ἐστι, καὶ εἰ πλείονα τίνα ταῦτα καὶ πόσα, "τῆς πρώτης φιλοσοφίας ἔργον ἐστὶ διορίσασθαι"· διὸ ὑπερτίθεται ἐν ἐκείνοις τὸν περι τούτων λόγον. διαλέγεται δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ Λ τῆς Μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, πότερον ἕν ἐστι τοῦτο ἢ πολλά, καὶ εἰ πολλὰ πόσα ταῦτα, καὶ ὅπως τὰ πολλὰ πρὸς τὸ ἕν ἔχουσιν, ὅτι πάντα ἐκεῖθεν ἤρτηται· "οὐκ ἀγαθόν" γάρ φησι "πολυκοιρανίη". ὥστε οἶδε καὶ αὐτὸς κατὰ Πλάτωνα καὶ τὰ χωριστὰ καὶ ἐξῃρημένα εἴδη καὶ αἴτια τῶν ἐνταῦθα. καὶ οὐ μάτην ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἐλέγομεν, ὅτι τὸ "τὰς ἀρχὰς ἀεὶ δεῖ μένειν" <οὐ> [addidi : non habent

That Aristotle believed in Platonic Ideas is in contradiction with the interpretation of Philoponus, who, as we have seen, adds an *epistasis* to Ammonius' exegegis of the *Posterior Analytics* in order to deny precisely that point.[75]

It must also be the concordist Ammonius who in the following passage appeals to the specific task of *phusikos* in order to rescue Melissus from Aristotle's criticisms:

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codd. ed.] περὶ τούτων ἔλεγε τῶν εἰδῶν· περὶ δὲ τοῦ φυσικοῦ εἴδους, ὅπερ ἐστὶ γενητὸν καὶ φθαρτόν, ἐν τῷ ἐφεξῆς λόγῳ διαλέξεται καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις πάσαις φυσικαῖς πραγματείαις. Translation by Osborne 2009, modified. The phrase "it was not in vain that we said earlier" refers to the commentary on *Phys.* I 6, 189a20 (τὰς δὲ ἀρχὰς ἀεὶ δεῖ μένειν), where divergent interpretations had been proposed for what these ἀρχαί are (some said the heavenly bodies but the heavenly bodies are efficient causes, whereas Aristotle is here speaking of formal causes; others said that these are τὰ πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν εἴδη, i.e. the Ideas, but Aristotle denies the existence of immaterially existing natural things; and others said that these principles are the second substrate, i.e. the three-dimensional extension, but, as already said, Aristotle is speaking here of the formal cause, whereas the three-dimensional extension is rather a material cause), which are now outdone by Ammonius' interpretation (Philoponus, *In Phys.* 134.2–11; I have modified the punctuation): "My view is that that '*aei menein*' here means, for Aristotle, being found in every change and every change occurring on the basis of these (τὸ ἐπὶ πάσης μεταβολῆς εὑρίσκεσθαι, καὶ πᾶσαν μεταβολὴν κατὰ ταύτας γίνεσθαι). Just as if someone, seeking the material cause, said that timbers are not the matter of things because they are not invariably (ἀεί) found – for timbers subsist as matter neither in bronze implements nor in gold ones – but the matter that is common need always be found in everything, that is, in every change and all things, so here too, seeking the commonest formal principles of all beings, he says that they must be always found, that is, they must be the same for all natural things and every change must take place in accordance with them (τὰς κοινοτάτας εἰδικὰς ἀρχὰς πάντων τῶν ὄντων ζητῶν, φησὶ δεῖν ἀεὶ αὐτὰς εὑρίσκεσθαι, τουτέστιν ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν φυσικῶν πραγμάτων τὰς αὐτὰς εἶναι, καὶ πᾶσαν μεταβολὴν κατ' αὐτὰς γίνεσθαι)". The "commonest formal principles of all beings" are not the separate Platonic forms but the immanent natural principles, i.e. the form and (*per accidens*) the privation. This explanation is explicitly attributed to Ammonius by Simplicius, *In Phys.* 198.17–27: "So perhaps the following [explanation] as well is better, as our own teacher corrects (ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος διορθοῦται καθηγεμών), who says that the expression '*aei menein*' does not signify an everlasting entity, nor does it indicate that these principles, which Aristotle now discusses, are ungenerated and imperishable. For how is it possible that the generation and corruption, which is precisely what is sought in this passage, will occur according to the change of such principles? Rather, Aristotle says '*aei menein*' in the sense that in every generated and perishable entity either form or privation need at any rate be found in the thing that changes (ἐπὶ ἑκάστου τῶν γινομένων καί φθειρομένων εὑρίσκεσθαι πάντως ἢ εἶδος ἢ στέρησιν ἐν τῷ μεταβάλλοντι) or, better, both form and privation [need be found]; for certainly every thing [that changes] has a form and a privation, which is the absence of that form, into which it changes by nature. For the white body does have the white form, but it also has the privation of black, into which it changes by nature". This is the reason for which the "οὐ" has to be supplied in the text. Note that there is no real contradiction between the assertion that Aristotle accepted the Platonic Forms and the assertion that "Aristotle does not accept the existence of the forms before-the-many" (as said in *In Phys.* 133.28: οὐδὲ βούλεται εἶναι τὰ πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν εἴδη ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης), since Aristotle is speaking in the *Physics* as *phusikos*, denying the existence of immaterially existing natural things, say an eternal Horse-itself, which would comprise the horse's substrate, as would misleadingly think those who confuse the definition of a natural thing, which exists posteriorly in human thought, with its Form; cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 4.22–26. In other words, Aristotle rejects a vulgar interpretation of the Platonic Ideas.

75 See above p. 172.

> It is, for instance, in this way that Aristotle too calls unmoved all the intelligibles, not only the divine but also the souls, in those passages in which he shows that it is necessary that the first movers be themselves unmoved. It is therefore well that Aristotle, as a physicist, attacks [Melissus'] arguments from a physical point of view, and that Melissus used these arguments from a theological point of view.[76]

Resolving apparent contradictions by appealing to the different roles assumed by philosophers (say, Aristotle as a physician and Melissus as a theologian, or Aristotle as a physician and Aristotle as theologian) was typical of Ammonius, as we are informed by Philoponus' commentary on book IV.[77] There are further concordist interpretations in the commentary on the first two books.[78]

Nonetheless, we also find in the commentary on books I-II sections that have plain creationist content; *In Phys.* 54.8 – 55.26 defends the generation of being and *In Phys.* 191.9 – 192.2 defends the generation of matter. This is something that we

76 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 57.8 – 12: οὕτω γοῦν καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἀκίνητα καλεῖ τὰ νοητὰ πάντα, οὐ μόνον τὰ θεῖα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ψυχάς, ἐν οἷς δείκνυσιν ὡς ἀνάγκη τὰ πρώτως κινοῦντα αὐτὰ εἶναι ἀκίνητα. καλῶς οὖν καὶ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, ὡς φυσικός, φυσικώτερον τρόπον ἐπιλαμβάνεται τῶν λόγων καὶ ὁ Μέλισσος θεολογικώτερον τοῖς τοιούτοις λόγοις ἐχρήσατο. Cf. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 300.28 – 301.6 (on *Phys.* II 7, 198a22): "To discuss the unmoved cause is no longer the job of the natural philosopher but of the theologian, and to discuss the forms that are separate from natural things does not belong to a natural philosopher. And if Aristotle, too, in his natural treatises sometimes discusses the unmoved cause, as in the eighth book of the *Physics*, and in *On the Soul* discusses the Intelligence which is entirely separate from bodies, and in *On the Generation and Corruption* again discusses the unmoved cause, we shall say that in reality the perfect natural philosopher at the height of his task will also mention the causes which are unmoved and above nature" (τὸ γὰρ περὶ τῆς ἀκινήτου αἰτίας διαλέγεσθαι οὐκέτι φυσικοῦ ἀλλὰ θεολόγου, καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν χωριστῶν εἰδῶν τῶν φυσικῶν <οὐ φυσικοῦ>. εἰ δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν ταῖς φυσικαῖς πραγματείαις ἔστιν ὅτε περὶ τῆς ἀκινήτου διαλέγεται αἰτίας ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ ὀγδόῳ τῆς Φυσικῆς, καὶ ἐν τῇ Περὶ ψυχῆς περὶ τοῦ νοῦ τοῦ χωριστοῦ πάντῃ σωμάτων, καὶ ἐν τῇ Περὶ γενέσεως πάλιν περὶ τῆς ἀκινήτου αἰτίας, ἐροῦμεν ὅτι τῷ ὄντι ὁ τέλειος φυσικὸς κατὰ τὸ ἀκρότατον τὸ ἑαυτοῦ μεμνήσεται καὶ τῶν ἀκινήτων αἰτιῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ φύσιν). Translation by Lacey 1993, slightly modified. See also Philoponus, *In Phys.* 241.15 – 27.

77 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 583.13 – 16: "When I made these points against what Aristotle said about place, the Philosopher [i.e. Ammonius] put forward the following defence; he said that Aristotle was a physician and discussed those things which exist and are governed by nature …" (ἀλλὰ γὰρ ταῦτα ἡμῶν τοῖς παρὰ τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους περὶ τοῦ τόπου εἰρημένοις ἀντιλεγόντων ἔλεγεν ὁ φιλόσοφος ἀπολογούμενος, ὡς ὅτι φυσικὸς ὢν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης περὶ τούτων ποιεῖται τὸν λόγον τῶν πραγμάτων, ὅσα καὶ ἔστι καὶ διοικεῖται ὑπὸ φύσεως). Philoponus goes on with repudiating Ammonius' defence.

78 E.g. Philoponus, *In Phys.* 49.19 – 21: "Some have thought that [here] he alludes to Plato, because they have absolutely no acquaintance even with the Platonic phrasing" (τινὲς δὲ ὑπενόησαν εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνα αὐτὸν αἰνίττεσθαι, παντελῶς ἄπειροι ὄντες καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς Πλατωνικῆς λέξεως); compare with Philoponus, *In DA* 37.18 – 20: "Some have thought that here he speaks of the Forms, alluding to Plato. But this is not the case. For Aristotle, too, thinks that the genera and species exist prior to the plurality [of individual instances]" (ἐνόμισάν τινες περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν αὐτὸν τοῦτο λέγειν εἰς Πλάτωνα αἰνιττόμενον. οὐχ οὕτω δὲ ἔχει· καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτῷ δοκεῖ εἶναι τὰ πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν γένη καὶ εἴδη). Translation by van der Eijk 2005.

would not expect from Ammonius but from Philoponus. Moreover, Aristotle's criticism of "those who speak of the Ideas" in *Phys.* II 2, 193a35 – 194a1, is dispassionately commented and includes some criticism of Aristotle, as one would expect from Philoponus, and in *In Phys.* 309.9 – 310.15 Aristotle is criticised both for saying without qualification that in all the processes in which there is an end (τέλος) all the preceding steps are for the sake of this, and for misleadingly parallelising the end in nature with the end in art.[79] Both the content and the phrasing of these four sections suggest that what we have to do with *epistaseis* by Philoponus.[80] If this is true, not only Philoponus' commentaries on the *Prior Analytics*, the *Posterior Analytics*, the *On Generation and Corruption* and the *On the Soul* but also Philoponus' commentary on the first two books of the *Physics* consist in ἀποσημειώσεις ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ Ἑρμείου μετά τινων ἰδίων ἐπιστάσεων. That such a commentary on books I-II co-

79 I thank Nicholas Aubin for drawing my attention to this passage.

80 1) Philoponus, *In Phys.* 54.8 – 12: "These are, then, Aristotle's objections against Melissus' argument; he doesn't object to [Melissus'] thesis that the being has not been generated, for he too thinks that this is true because he believes that the universe is ungenerated. I think it is fair not to leave unexamined the argumentation, by which they construct the thesis that the being has not been generated" (αἱ μὲν οὖν πρὸς τὸν τοῦ Μελίσσου λόγον ἐνστάσεις τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους αὗται, πρὸς δὲ τὸ μὴ γεγονέναι τὸ ὂν οὐκ ἀντιλέγει· δοκεῖ γὰρ καὶ αὐτῷ τοῦθ' οὕτως ἔχειν, ἀγένητον τὸ πᾶν οἰομένῳ. εὔλογον δὲ οἶμαι μὴ ἀνεξέταστον καταλεῖψαι τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν, δι' ἧς ὡς οὐχ οἷόν τέ ἐστι γεγονέναι τὸ ὂν κατεσκευάσθη), ending in *In Phys.* 55.24 – 26: "Let us then, in the present circumstances, restrict ourselves to those considerations with regard to the non-generation of being; for we have sufficiently dealt with such theories elsewhere" (πρὸς μὲν οὖν τὸ μὴ γεγονέναι τὸ ὂν τοσαῦτα καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν ὡς πρὸς τὸ παρὸν ἠγείσθω, ἐν ἄλλοις ἡμῖν γεγυμνασμένων ἱκανῶς τῶν τοιούτων θεωρημάτων). 2) Philoponus, *In Phys.* 191.9 – 11: "In this way matter is shown to be uncreated and imperishable, given this axiom, that nothing develops from absolute and utter non-being. But suppose someone did not go along with the axiom?" (οὕτως οὖν δείκνυται ἡ ὕλη καὶ ἀγένητος οὖσα καὶ ἄφθαρτος ἀξιώματος τούτου κειμένου, ὅτι οὐδὲν γίνεται ἐκ τοῦ μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄντος. εἰ δέ τις μὴ συγχωρήσειε τῷ ἀξιώματι;), ending in *In Phys.* 191.34 – 192.2: "With respect to the present discussion, this is as far as we go, although there are further arguments on the topic" (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ὡς πρὸς τὸν παρόντα λόγον, πλειόνων εἰς τὸν τόπον ὄντων ἐπιχειρημάτων). Translation by Osborne 2009. 3) Philoponus, *In Phys.* 225.4 – 10: "What comes from Aristotle then, and to what extent it is plausible, we have now stated, and it is clear that his intention is directed against Plato. But for my part I assert that if this is what he accused him for, that he separated apart in reality the forms of natural things, then the accusation was reasonable (for it is impossible that things which have their being in a substrate should ever be real standing on their own). But if he is saying this, namely that it is impossible to separate the form from the matter by reason or in thought, [this] does not seem reasonable to me" (τὰ μὲν οὖν παρὰ Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ ᾗ τὸ πιθανὸν ἔχουσιν εἴρηται, καὶ ὅτι πρὸς Πλάτωνα αὐτῷ ἡ ἀπότασις δῆλον. ἐγὼ δέ φημι ὅτι εἰ μὲν τοῦτο αὐτῷ ἐνεκάλει τὸ καθ' ὑπόστασιν χωρίζειν ἰδίᾳ τὰ εἴδη τῶν φυσικῶν, εἶχε τὸ εὔλογον ἡ ἔγκλησις (ἀδύνατον γὰρ τὰ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ τὸ εἶναι ἔχοντα αὐτὰ καθ' αὑτά ποτε ὑποστῆναι), εἰ δὲ τοῦτό φησιν ὅτι ἀδύνατον τῷ λόγῳ ἢ τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ χωρίσαι τῆς ὕλης τὸ εἶδος, οὐκ εὔλογον ἔμοιγε εἶναι δοκεῖ). Translation by Lacey 1993, slightly modified. This is denied (by Ammonius) in *In Phys.* 138.24 – 25: "It is impossible for the form to exist without matter even in thought" (τὸ μέντοι εἶδος οὐδὲ κατ' ἐπίνοιαν ὑπάρξαι δύναται χωρὶς τῆς ὕλης). 4) Philoponus, *In Phys.* 309.9 – 10: "This is how Aristotle argues, but I think that this argument is not sound" (ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης οὕτως, δοκεῖ δέ μοι μὴ ὑγιῶς ἔχειν τοῦτο τὸ ἐπιχείρημα).

exists in the manuscript tradition with Philoponus' *own* commentary on books III-IV should not puzzle us.[81] Philoponus' *own* commentary on the third book of *On the Soul* is also jointly transmitted with Philoponus' commentary on the first two books of that treatise, which is an edition of the seminars of Ammonius enriched with some criticisms of his own.

There might be some evidence for this in the manuscript tradition, which has been evaluated rather hastily by Vitelli. The Florentine scholar edited the commentary under the title "Ἰωάννου τοῦ Φιλοπόνου εἰς τὸ Α τῆς Ἀριστοτέλους Φυσικῆς Ἀκροάσεως" (and so on for the rest of the books), thus rejecting the title published in 1535 by the first editor of the commentary Vittore Trincavelli. Here is how Vitelli explains his disagreement with his predecessor:

> Commentariorum inscriptionem Ἰωάννου Ἀλεξανδρέως τοῦ Φιλοπόνου εἰς τὸ περὶ φυσικῆς ἀκροάσεως τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀποσημειώσεις ἐκ τῶν συνουσιῶν τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ Ἑρμείου μετά τινων ἰδίων ἐπιστάσεων videtur maximam partem ex ingenio dedisse Trincavellius; certe oblitterata est (supersunt –κροάσεως ἀριστ-) in M, προλεγόμενα τῶν φυσικῶν (ἀποσημειώσεις Ἰωάννου Ἀλεξανδρέως τοῦ Φιλοπόνου addit L^2) habet L, om. K. [...] equidem praeposui titulum a me fictum, quo si quis aptiorem fingi posse censuerit, non repugnabo.

Trincavelli, however, was very well acquainted with the typology of the commentaries on Aristotle (note that he wisely described Philoponus' so-called corollaries as παρεκβάσεις,[82] and not as ἐπιστάσεις) and would have no reason to fabricate such a title (in opposition to Vitelli, who practically had no integral title before him). I believe that what the Venetian scholar did was to transcribe the title (adding perhaps either Ἀλεξανδρέως or Φιλοπόνου) which he was still able to read in M (*Marcianus* 230; to be dated around 1300), i.e. the manuscript that he used for his edition. We, like Vitelli before us, cannot read it any more due to the deterioration of the first page of the manuscript over time; but there is certainly enough space in it for such a long title.[83]

We may thus surmise that Philoponus' commentary on the *Physics*, as we know it in the Byzantine manuscript tradition and in the available printed editions, is a composite commentary (as is the commentary on *On the Soul*): the commentary on books I-II is an edition of Ammonius' seminars enriched with some critical observations by Philoponus, whereas the commentary on books III-IV reflects Philoponus' own teaching. There are, however, two passages in the commentary on books III and IV, which seem to contradict our reconstruction. In them Philoponus endorses Ammonius' ex-

81 Note, however, that the oldest manuscript of the commentary, the *Laurentianus plut*. 87.6 (12th cent.) contains only book IV, having lost its first quires. The numbering of quires allows us to see that it originally contained only books III and IV.

82 See Golitsis 2008: 84 n. 1.

83 If my eyes do not fool me, it is still possible to read a στ (what remains from ἐπιστάσεων?). The inscription, however, is by a later hand.

planation of Aristotle's criticisms as being addressed not to the philosophers themselves but to those who misunderstand their teachings:

> He reproaches Plato for saying that there were two kinds of the unlimited, the great and the small, but using neither among his principles. Now according to [Plato], the principles are numbers, but in these numbers there is neither the unlimited through division nor that through addition. For numbers do not possess the unlimited through division (as the division stops at the monad), and he himself does not allow the increase through addition to reach the unlimited. For he says that number is increased as far as the decad, but the decade itself circles back upon itself. It should be noted that [Aristotle] himself stated in the earlier discussion [cf. *Phys.* I 4, 187a17–18] that the great and the small meant to Plato the indefinite and matter, but now, as he himself is speaking with regard to numbers, he attacks the account on the principle that he clearly follows everywhere, of refuting the appearance and not the [deeper] meaning of [what] the ancient [philosophers said].[84]

> About place all the others, he says, merely said that it exists, but only Plato attempted to say what it is, telling us that matter is space and place. Now Aristotle, as is his wont, is here examining the outward appearance [of the argument] and in that sense reasonably takes Plato to task for saying that matter is place. However, it is very clear that it is not the kind of place we are talking about here now – i.e. the place that can receive compound bodies – that Plato called matter. Rather, he called matter the 'place' of the physical forms, by analogy, because just as every body is in a place, so every physical form is in matter. This is similar, indeed, to the way in which Aristotle himself too in his *On the Soul* calls the soul the place of the forms: "and those people put it very well who say that the soul is the place of the forms" [*DA* III 4, 429a27–8], and he says that the intellect is the place of intelligible forms. It is in this way that also Plato says that matter is the place of the physical forms.[85]

84 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 473.12–22: Ἐγκαλεῖ τῷ Πλάτωνι, ὅτι δύο λέγων εἶναι τὰ ἄπειρα, τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρόν, οὐδετέρῳ χρῆται ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς. ἀρχαὶ δὲ κατ᾽ αὐτὸν οἱ ἀριθμοί, οὐκ ἔστι δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἀριθμοῖς τούτοις οὔτε τὸ κατὰ διαίρεσιν ἄπειρον, οὔτε τὸ κατὰ πρόσθεσιν. τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ διαίρεσιν ἄπειρον οὐκ ἔχουσιν οἱ ἀριθμοί (ἵσταται γὰρ ἡ τομὴ εἰς τὴν μονάδα), τὸ δὲ κατὰ πρόσθεσιν ἐπ᾽ ἄπειρον αὔξεσθαι αὐτὸς οὐ δίδωσι· μέχρι γὰρ δεκάδος αὔξεσθαί φησι τὸν ἀριθμόν, τὴν δὲ δεκάδα αὐτὴν εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀνακυκλεῖσθαι. σημειωτέον δὲ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἔλεγε τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρὸν τὸ ἀόριστον καὶ τὴν ὕλην σημαίνειν τῷ Πλάτωνι, νῦν δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν ἀριθμῶν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος, οὕτως ἐπιλαμβάνεται τοῦ λόγου, ὡς δηλονότι πανταχοῦ τὸ φαινόμενον ἐλέγχει καὶ οὐ τὴν διάνοιαν τῶν ἀρχαίων. Translation by Edwards 1994.

85 Philoponus, *In Phys.* 516.1–12: Οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι, φησί, πάντες μόνον ἀπεφήναντο περὶ τοῦ τόπου ὅτι ἔστι, μόνος δὲ ὁ Πλάτων ἐπεχείρησεν εἰπεῖν τί ἐστι, λέγων ὅτι ἡ ὕλη ἐστὶν ἡ χώρα καὶ ὁ τόπος. ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης, ὡς εἴωθε, τὸ φαινόμενον ἐλέγχων εἰκότως ἐγκαλεῖ τῷ Πλάτωνι τὴν ὕλην τόπον εἶναι εἰπόντι, πρόδηλον δὲ ὅτι οὐ τοῦτον τὸν τόπον περὶ οὗ νῦν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος, τὸν δεκτικὸν τῶν συνθέτων σωμάτων, τοῦτον ἔλεγε τὴν ὕλην ὁ Πλάτων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἀναλογίαν τῶν φυσικῶν εἰδῶν τόπον ἐκάλει τὴν ὕλην, διότι ὥσπερ ἅπαν σῶμα ἐν τόπῳ, οὕτως ἅπαν εἶδος φυσικὸν ἐν ὕλῃ. ὥσπερ ἀμέλει καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης τὴν ψυχὴν τόπον εἰδῶν καλεῖ ἐν τῇ Περὶ ψυχῆς πραγματείᾳ· "καὶ εὖ δὴ" γάρ φησιν "οἱ λέγοντες τὴν ψυχὴν τόπον εἰδῶν", καὶ τὸν νοῦν τῶν νοητῶν εἰδῶν τόπον φησίν. οὕτως οὖν καὶ ὁ Πλάτων τὴν ὕλην τόπον τῶν φυσικῶν εἰδῶν φησιν. Translation by Algra and van Ophuijsen 2012, slightly modified.

These passages are clearly in the spirit of Ammonius and must therefore reproduce his explications.[86] There is, of course, nothing wrong in Philoponus' tacitly reproducing Ammonian material, with which he would agree. Philoponus, however, explicitly rejects the idea that Aristotle did not address his criticisms to the philosophers themselves through an *epistasis* present in his edition of Ammonius' seminars on the *Posterior Analytics*; and we considered this commentary to be earlier than the commentary on the *Physics*. Wouldn't he then contradict himself by endorsing (or even by appearing to endorse) the thesis that Aristotle did not criticize, say, Plato, but those who do not understand Plato correctly?

There is a minimalistic, a naive and a simple solution to this problem. The minimalistic solution consists in saying that we cannot expect Philoponus to express in *every* occasion *all* of his disagreements with Ammonius. But this solution is rather weak, since it would at any rate contradict his own *epistasis* and would puzzle his readers as to what was Philoponus' own thesis: since he made a criticism of the Ammonian interpretation in a commentary previously published, why does he now leave the same interpretation with no comment at all? Did he recant? The naive solution would argue that Philoponus did not agree with Ammonius about Aristotle's criticism of the theory of Ideas but he accepted Ammonius' interpretation with regard to other Aristotelian criticisms (such as those quoted above). But it would then be impossible to argue why the Ammonian interpretation is valid in some cases and invalid in others. The simple solution, which is the most plausible, is that the commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* is posterior to the commentary on books III-IV of the *Physics*. We thus reach a most interesting conclusion: when Philoponus composed his own commentaries for his own teaching, such as the (lost) commentary on *Phys*. VIII or the commentary on *Phys*. III-IV, he was still editing posthumously for publication the seminars of his teacher. These two projects ran in parallel and the one had impact on the other. This, I think, is the reason why Philoponus' development as a commentator has so much troubled Philoponan scholars.

There is a last problem with the relative dating of Philoponus' commentary on the *Meteorology*, which has been taken either to intervene between Philoponus' polemical treatises against Proclus and against Aristotle, most notably by Étienne Évrard,[87] or to postdate even Philoponus' second polemical treatise.[88] I believe that this confusion has been generated by a misunderstanding of some cross-references. Évrard was certainly right in pointing out both the affinity of Philoponus' commentary on the *Meteorology* with his treatise *On the eternity of the world against Proclus* and the fact that both works announce with a similar wording the treatise *On the eternity of the world against*

86 The passage of the *On the Soul* (*DA* III 4, 429a27–8) is quoted as part of Ammonius' argumentation in the *epistasis* of the commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*; cf. Philoponus, *In An. Post*. 243.7–8.
87 Évrard 1953.
88 See Wildberg 1987.

Aristotle, composed around 532.[89] But he was most probably wrong in identifying in the commentary on the *Meteorology* a back reference concerning the equilibrium of the elementary masses as a reference to Philoponus' treatise against Proclus.[90] The passage in the polemical treatise is much more specific than the reference allows (it specifically argues against Aristotle's contention that an igneous heaven would destroy the rest of the elements),[91] and the wording that Philoponus uses in order to refer to this work (ἐτέρωθι) is found, in identical or similar terms (ἐν ἑτέροις, ἑτέρωθι), in three more references within the commentary,[92] which Évrard himself recognizes as referring to an

89 Philoponus, *In Mete*. 16.30 – 32: "We will elsewhere discuss Aristotle's arguments in the first book of *On the Heavens* set up to prove on the ground of the circular movement that the heaven is made of a fifth corporeal substance" (τὰς δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς κυκλοφορίας ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν Περὶ οὐρανοῦ διεσκευασμένας ἐπιχειρήσεις αὐτῷ τοῦ πέμπτης εἶναι σωμάτων οὐσίας τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐν ἑτέροις διελευσόμεθα). Translation by Kupreeva 2011. Cf. Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi contra Proclum* 483.18 – 21: τὰς μὲν οὖν Ἀριστοτέλους ὑπὲρ τοῦ πέμπτον εἶναί τι σῶμα τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπιχειρήσεις ἐν τοῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν (σὺν θεῷ δὲ εἰρήσθω) λεχθησομένοις ἐπισκεψόμεθα. I take the vagueness of the reference in the first occurrence (ἐν ἑτέροις, as opposed to πρὸς αὐτόν, i. e. Aristotle) as a sign of anteriority: had Philoponus already composed his treatise against Proclus when he wrote the commentary on the *Meteorology*, he would have most probably announced its sequel, i. e. his similar treatise against Aristotle (as he actually does in the *contra Proclum*).

90 Philoponus, *In Mete*. 24.38 – 25.2: "On all these points we have stated our opinion elsewhere; it is available to anyone interested, so that we can spare ourselves a great many discussions" (περὶ δὲ τούτων ἁπάντων ἑτέρωθι τὰ δοκοῦντα ἡμῖν εἴρηται, καὶ γνῶναι πρόκειται τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν, ἵνα μὴ πολλὰς τὰς παρεκβάσεις νῦν ποιώμεθα). Translation by Kupreeva 2011. According to Évrard, this passage refers to *contra Proclum* 517.8 – 519.17.

91 See Wildberg 1987.

92 Philoponus, *In Mete*. 37.14 – 23: "In this way the air beyond the circumference necessarily flows in a circle on the outside, being pulled along with the revolution of the heavens, together with the tinder sphere, a motion which according to Aristotle is not natural to it, but comes from the external constraint of the body in a circular motion. Note that the Platonists do not think that the tinder sphere and the air next to it are pulled along with the heaven, but rather that they have this motion naturally. Of the totalities of the elements, they say, some are motionless, namely earth and water, others are in circular motion, to wit, air and the tinder sphere; none of these totalities is in rectilinear motion. This is not the right time to discuss these questions; we have debated them fully elsewhere" (οὕτως οὖν ὁ ὑπὲρ τὴν περιφέρειαν ταύτην ἀὴρ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἔξωθεν περιρρεῖ τῇ περιφορᾷ τῶν οὐρανίων συνεφελκόμενος ἅμα τῷ ὑπεκκαύματι, οὐ φυσικὴν ἔχων κατ' Ἀριστοτέλην ταύτην τὴν κίνησιν, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς ἔξωθεν τοῦ κυκλοφορικοῦ σώματος ἀνάγκης. ἰστέον δ' ὅτι τοῖς Πλατωνικοῖς οὐ συνεφέλκεσθαι δοκεῖ τῷ οὐρανῷ τό τε ὑπέκκαυμα καὶ ὁ προσεχὴς ἀήρ, ἀλλὰ φυσικὴν ἔχειν τὴν τοιαύτην κίνησιν· τῶν γὰρ ὁλοτήτων αἱ μέν εἰσιν ἀκίνητοι, φασίν, ὡς ἡ τῆς γῆς καὶ τοῦ ὕδατος, αἱ δὲ κύκλῳ κινοῦνται, ὡς ἡ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ ἡ τοῦ ὑπεκκαύματος· ἐπ' εὐθείας γὰρ οὐδεμία τῶν ὁλοτήτων κινεῖται. περὶ δὲ τούτων οὐ τοῦ παρόντος γυμνάζειν καιροῦ· διηγώνισται γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐντελῶς ἐν ἑτέροις). Translation by Kupreeva 2011. Philoponus, *In Mete*. 91.16 – 20: "By a 'large part of air' he means the air extending down to the top of the highest mountains, which, when it becomes stagnant, is not pulled along by the bodies moving in a circle, being impeded by the surrounding mountains. So, he means that the revolution of these two bodies is forced. And how can what is forced and contrary to nature be unceasing? But about these matters we have said enough elsewhere" (ἐπὶ πολύ φησι τοῦ ἀέρος τὸν διατείνοντα λέγων ἀέρα μέχρι τῆς κορυφῆς τῶν ὑψηλοτάτων ὀρῶν, ὃς λιμνάζων οὐ συνεφέλκεται τοῖς κυκλοφορουμένοις ὑπὸ τῶν περιεχόντων ὀρῶν κωλυόμενος. βίαιον οὖν τὴν περιφορὰν τῶν δύο τούτων σωμάτων εἶναι βούλεται. καὶ πῶς τὸ

unknown work. The similarity in expression suggests to me that Philoponus had a single work in mind. Granted that Philoponus generally refers to his works with precision,[93] ἐτέρωθι (or ἐν ἑτέροις) should be taken not as a sign of vagueness or defective memory but as pointing to his Σύμμικτα θεωρήματα,[94] i.e. a miscellany in which Philoponus dealt with several controversial topics. Indeed, granted that Philoponus announces quite frequently in the *contra Proclum* that he plans to compose a treatise against Aristotle,[95] I find it implausible that he would interrupt his twofold polemical project by deciding to compose in-between a commentary on the *Meteorology*. From 529 onwards Philoponus would cease to be a mere exegete, save for *Genesis*, to which his *De opificio mundi* is devoted.

3 Chronology of Philoponus' philosophical works[96]

before 517 *In An. Pr.*; *In GG*; *In DA* I-II; *In Phys.* I-II; ***In Cat.***; ***In Phys.* VIII**
517 ***In Phys.* III-IV**
after 517 *In An. Post.*; ***In DA* III**[97]
before 529 ***In Mete.***
529 ***De aeternitate mundi contra Proclum***
ca. 532 ***De aeternitate mundi contra Aristotelem***
after 532 ***De opificio mundi***

βίᾳ καὶ παρὰ φύσιν διηνεκές; ἐτέρωθι δὲ περὶ τούτων εἰρήκαμεν ἱκανῶς). Translation by Kupreeva 2012. Philoponus, *In Mete*. 97.20 – 21: "From this it is clear that the motion [of the comets] is not supernatural, as Damascius says somewhere, which we have refuted elsewhere" (ἐξ οὗ δῆλον ὅτι μηδὲ ὑπὲρ φύσιν αὐτοῖς ἡ κίνησις, ὥς που φησι Δαμάσκιος, ὅπερ ἐτέρωθι [Évrard recte : ante που codd. Wildberg Kupreeva] ἠλέγξαμεν). Translation by Kupreeva 2012, adapted.

93 Cf., e.g., Philoponus, *In Mete*. 35.18 – 19: "This has been discussed adequately in our commentary on the fourth book of the *Physics*" (περὶ δὲ τούτου ἐν τοῖς εἰς τὸ τέταρτον τῆς Φυσικῆς ἀκροάσεως σχολικοῖς ἡμῶν συγγράμμασιν αὐτάρκως εἴρηται); transl. Kupreeva 2011. Philoponus, *De opificio mundi* 88.21 – 22: "We have shown this in the first book of our writings against Proclus" (καὶ τοῦτο δεδείχαμεν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου γραφέντων ἡμῖν). For the same reason I find it difficult to accept that those passages of the commentary on the *Meteorology* can refer back to *contra Aristotelem*, as Wildberg 1987 suggests.

94 Mentioned in Philoponus, *In Phys.* 156.16 – 17: "A demonstration of the fact that the second substrate is immutable like body has been provided by us in the *Summikta theorêmata*" (ὅτι δ᾽ ὡς σῶμα ἀμετάβλητόν ἐστι τὸ δεύτερον ὑποκείμενον, δέδεικται ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς Συμμίκτοις θεωρήμασι); transl. Osborne 2009. The ἡμῖν implies that this sentence is an addition of Philoponus to Ammonius' comments. It was in the nature of such a work not to be definite but to be constantly enriched with new topics.

95 Cf., besides the reference given in n. 89, *De aet. mundi contra Proclum* 258.22 – 26, 396.23 – 25, 399.20 – 28.

96 Philoponus' own works are printed in bold; the rest are editions of Ammonius' seminars (with criticisms by Philoponus).

97 That *In DA* III has to be dated before 529 is suggested by the doctrine of formless matter, which is endorsed in *In DA* III but rejected in *contra Proclum*.

Sten Ebbesen

12 The Un-Byzantine Byzantine on two sophisms

Introduction

From 1969 to 1979 I scoured Greek manuscripts from numerous libraries in search of material relating to the study of fallacies and the exegesis of Aristotle's work on the subject, the *Sophistici Elenchi* or *Sophistical Refutations*, as it is translated into English. One day in the late 70s I received a letter from a Greek scholar, Paraskevi (Voula) Kotzia, who was preparing an edition of a little text on the Aristotelian fallacies on the basis of a manuscript in the Marciana in Venice. To her dismay, I could inform her that the text was an extract from Nicephorus Blemmydes' handbook of logic and extant in several more manuscripts. This did not, however, discourage her from continuing her work on the edition, which –with the appropriate scholarly apparatus– appeared as a neat little article in the 1979 issue of the yearbook of the faculty of philosophy of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki[1] —my own former *alma mater*, although only for one year (1966 – 67). Voula being five years younger than me we had not met then, and only did so in 1993 when I had invited her for a Dano-Hellenic symposium in the Danish Institute at Athens, at which she read a first version of an amusing investigation into allegedly non-significant words like σκινδαψός.[2]

My studies in the 1970s brought to light a considerable amount of writings on fallacies from the early 11th century till the end of the Byzantine era, but with a few exceptions all texts shared a common trait: they were scholia or fully-fledged commentaries on Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations* or they were surveys of the thirteen Aristotelian fallacies. One exception was a short text by Michael Psellus on Stoic soritic arguments, which, I have later found out, also occurs as a sort of appendix to a little treatise on the fallacious arguments of the heretic Eunomius (a favourite *Prügelknabe* among Byzantine writers).[3] Another was a unique discussion of two sophisms that have no background in Aristotelian exegesis.

1 Kotzia 1979.

2 Kotzia 1994. It is just possible that Voula and I met in August 1978 during the *World Congress on Aristotle* in Thessaloniki, but I do not recall any such meeting.

3 I first published the Psellan text about Stoic fallacies, which I had found as a marginal note in ms *Vat. Urb. gr. 35*, in Ebbesen 1973a and later reprinted it in Ebbesen 1981, vol. III: 111 – 112. My text appears as a part of *opusculum* 3 in Gautier 1989: 12 – 14 (Gautier also uses the *Urbinas*, but apparently without being aware of my edition).

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Two manuscripts[4] carry a little text, unfortunately mutilated at the end, that discusses two completely untraditional sophisms, viz. Ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι and Ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον. The discussion is a little crude, but remarkably systematic and not uninteresting. I have seen nothing even remotely like it in the whole of the Byzantine material, which is why I dubbed the author *The Un-Byzantine Byzantine*.[5] Since the text shares its manuscript tradition with a small excerpt from Galen's *On language-dependent sophisms*, it could be that the same man was responsible for both the sophisms and the extract from Galen's work –– either in the sense that he excerpted Galen and composed the sophisms themselves, or in the sense that he excerpted Galen and an unknown work that supplied him with the sophisms.

I am unable to date the Un-Byzantine Byzantine, but since the two manuscripts share a common archetype and the oldest one of them [C] dates from about 1100, the third quarter of the 11th century seems to be the latest possible date of composition. It is harder to assign a *terminus post quem* – the text does not make me think "Antiquity!"; I believe it was composed later than 600, but I am not at all sure of this.

I shall first present an edition of the text with a parallel, somewhat paraphrasing, translation into English, and then proceed to an exegesis, paragraph by paragraph. In the edition, bits of text included between hooks (⌜...⌝) are such as are illegible in ms. C, in which the text on fol. 305v, the very last page of the codex, has suffered severe damage.

1 Edition

Sophisma I.A

1. Ἆρ' ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι; δύνασαι δὲ λέγειν τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν· ἔστιν ἄρα τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν.	**1.** *1a.* Is that-which-you-can-say-good good? *1b.* Is what you can call good good? <Yes.> *2.* But you can call/say the evil good. *3.* So, the evil is good.
2. Ἢ οὐ δύνασαι λέγειν· ψεύδοιτο[6] γὰρ ἄν.	**2.** But perhaps you cannot call/say so, for it would be untrue.
3. Ἢ εἰ καὶ τὸ 'δύνασαι' ἐξέλθοι, οὐδὲν ἧττον τὸ[7] ἄτοπον ἀκολουθεῖ, οἷον·	**3.** But perhaps, even if we drop the 'can', the absurdity follows nonetheless, thus:
4. Ἆρα[8] ὃ λέγει τις ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι;	**4.** *1a.* Is that-which-someone-says-good good? *1b.* Is what someone calls/says good good?

4 C = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coislin gr. 330: ff. 304r-305v (saec. XI$^{ex\,-}$ XII^{in}) and A = Roma, Bibliotheca Angelica 42, ff. 416v-418r (saec. XIII$^{ex\,-}$ XIV^{in}, scribe: Μανουὴλ Χρυσοκέφαλος). For more on the manuscripts, see Ebbesen 1973b: 378 – 379.

5 Thus in Ebbesen 1981, vol. I: 351.

6 ψεύδοιτο] *an* ψεύδοιο *scribendum?*

7 τὸ] *om.* **C.**

8 ἆρα] ἄρα **A.**

λέγει δέ τις τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν·
τὸ ἄρα κακὸν ἀγαθόν.
5. Ἢ καὶ τὸ 'λέγει' οὐχ ἓν σημαίνει, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἀληθῶς, τὸ δὲ ψευδῶς.
6. Ἢ εἰ καὶ τοῦτο πολλαχῶς, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο ὁ ἔλεγχος· καὶ γὰρ εἰ καὶ τοῦτο ἀπίοι, εἰσέλθοι δὲ τὸ 'συγχωρεῖ'[9] ἢ 'τίθεται' ἢ 'δοξάζει', ὁ αὐτὸς ἔσται[10] ἔλεγχος.
7. Ἢ καὶ ταῦτα ὅτι ὁμοίως ἐκείνῳ οὐχ ἓν[11] σημαίνει, ἢ εἰ διὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐκεῖνο, τῶν κειμένων λέξεων μὴ ἀναιρουμένων, οὐκ ἂν ὁ λόγος[12] μεταρρυθμιζόμενος ἁπλοῦς καὶ εἷς ἐφαίνετο;[13]

8. Ἀλλὰ δῆλον ὅτι **[A 417r]** πάλαι[14] ἀσαφὴς καὶ ποικίλος, νῦν δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, οἷον·
9. Ἆρα[15] <τὸ> ἀγαθὸν ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν <ὅτι ἀγαθόν>, ἀγαθόν ἐστι;
Ναί.
10. Καὶ ἰδού,[16] οὐδὲν ἄτοπον· τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν ὃ δύνασαι[17] λέγειν ὅτι ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν ἐστι· καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὃ λέγει τις ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν[18] ἐστιν· οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὃ οὐ δύναταί τις λέγειν ὅτι ἀγαθόν,[19] ἀγαθόν ἐστι,[20] καὶ ὅ τις οὐ λέγει ἀγαθόν.[21]
11. Ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι ὁ[22] αὐτὸς λόγος δύναται δεκτικὸς εἶναι πολλῶν μοχθηριῶν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡ[23] πάσης μοχθηρίας ἐμφάνισις λύσις ἐστί· παρὰ μόνον γὰρ τὸ ἐσχάτως ῥηθὲν ἡ μοχθηρία, καὶ ὁ τοῦτο ἐμφανίζων μόνος λύει τὸν λόγον, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ὁ λέγων ὅτι τὸ 'λέγειν' πολλαχῶς, εἴτε ἐστί, εἴτε οὐκ ἔστι· οὐδὲ ὁ λέγων ὅτι τὸ 'δύνασθαι' διττόν.

2. But someone calls/says the evil good.
3. So, the evil is god.
5. But perhaps 'calls/says' does not mean one thing, but either "truly" or "falsely".
6. But perhaps, even if this word is ambiguous, this is not the cause of the refutation, for even if it were to be replaced with 'concedes', 'posits' or 'believes', there would be the same refutation.
7. But perhaps those words, like 'calls/says', do not signify one thing, or if they are actually the reason why 'calls/says' does so, might the proposition not become simple and one by being rearranged while keeping the original words?
8. Indeed, while it was opaque and kaleidoscopic before, it is no longer so when arranged like this:
9. Is the good that you can call/say that it is good, good?
Yes.
10. Voilà, no absurdity! For the good that you can call/say that it is good, is good. And the good that someone calls/says is good, is good. And not only that, but also the good that one cannot call/say that it is good, is good, and that which one does not call/say good.
11. So, it is clear that the same argument may be susceptible of many flaws, but pointing out just every flaw is no solution. Indeed, only the last-mentioned phenomenon is *the* flaw, so the one who points that out is the only one to solve the argument, not the one who says that 'call/say' is ambiguous, whether it actually is so or not, nor the one who says that 'can' has two senses.

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9 συγχωρεῖ **A**, *ut videtur*] συγχωρεῖν **C.**
10 ἔσται] γὰρ **AC.**
11 οὐχ ἓν] οὐδὲν **A.**
12 οὐκ ἂν ὁ λόγος] *ante* τῶν κειμένων λέξεων μὴ ἀναιρουμένων *locavit* **A.**
13 εἷς ἐφαίνετο] ἴσως εἷς ἂν ἐφαίνετο **A.**
14 πάλαι] πάλιν **AC.**
15 ἆρα] ἄρα **A.**
16 ἰδού] ? **A.**
17 δύνασαι] δύναμαι **A.**
18 ἐστι – ἀγαθόν] *om.* **A.**
19 ὅτι ἀγαθόν] *om.* **A.**
20 ἐστι] *om.* **A.**
21 ἀγαθόν] ἐστιν *add.* **A.**
22 ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος – λύσις ἐστί] cf. Aristotle, *SE* 24, 179b17–18: οὐδὲν δὲ κωλύει τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον πλείους μοχθηρίας ἔχειν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡ πάσης μοχθηρίας ἐμφάνισις λύσις ἐστίν.
23 οὐχ ἡ] οὐχί **C.**

12. Εὐλόγως ἄρα ἔλεγε καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ὅτι οὐχ ἡ πάσης μοχθηρίας ἐμφάνισις λύσις ἐστίν.[24]

12. Hence, Aristotle was justified in saying that pointing out just any flaw is no solution.

Sophisma I.B

1. Ἆρ' ὃ λέγεις ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι;[25] λέγεις δὲ τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν·
τὸ ἄρα κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι <ἀγαθὸν> ἀγαθόν ἐστιν.

1. Is what you say truly that it is good, good? <Yes.>
But you say the evil truly that it is good.
So, the evil truly that it is good is good.

2. Ἢ οὐχὶ τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς[26] ὅτι ἀγαθόν συνάγεται, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἔλεγε[27] τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν· ἔλεγε γὰρ καὶ συνεχώρει.

2. But perhaps the correct conclusion is not "the evil truly that it is good" but that he *said* the evil truly that it is good, for he said it and conceded it.

3. Ἢ τὸ πρῶτον μᾶλλον συνάγεται· ὃ γὰρ λέγει ἀληθῶς ὅτι [C 305r] ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν εἶναι ἐδίδου. ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ὃ ἀληθῶς ⌜κακὸν ὅτι ἀγαθὸν⌝[28] λέγει[29] δίδωσιν.

3. But perhaps the correct conclusion is rather the first. For what he says truly that it is good, he granted to be good; but he does not grant that he says what is truly evil that it is good.

4. Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο δώσει, λέγει δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ⌜ἀρχῆς ὑπόθεσιν,⌝ ὅτι τὸ κακόν ἀληθῶς <ὅτι> ἀγαθὸν λέγειν ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν[30] ἔσται ⌜πρὸς αὐτὸν συνηγ⌝μένον.[31]

4. But if he does grant that, and speaks in according with the original stipulation, one can conclude against him that the evil truly that it is good to say is good.

5. Ἢ οὐδὲ τοῦτο οὕτως συνάγει, ἀλλ' ὅτι τὸ κακὸν ⌜ἀληθῶς ὅτι⌝ ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθὸν λέγειν.

5. But perhaps the argument does not even conclude this, but rather that the evil truly that it is good is good to say.

6. Ἀλλ'οὐδὲν ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ ἀτόπῳ διαφέρ⌜ει⌝, [A 417v] ἀλλὰ πρῶτον τὸ προ[σ]τεθὲν[32] ἐπισκεπτέον·[33] ἦν δὲ 'ὃ λέγεις ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν ἐστιν'.

6. But this makes no difference as far as the absurdity is concerned, but first we must look at the first part(?), viz. 'what you say truly that it is good'.

7. Ἢ ἄλλο σημαίνει συντιθέμενος καὶ διαιρούμενος· ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ πυθέσθαι ὅτι 'Ἆρα[34] ὃ λέγεις', ἔπειτα ἐπάξαι τὸ 'ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν', καὶ ἄλλο τὸ 'Ἆρα[35] ὃ λέγεις[36] ἀληθῶς', εἶτα τὸ 'ὅτι ἀγαθόν'.

7. Perhaps the phrase does not signify the same when composed and when divided. For it is one thing to ask 'Is what you say' and then add 'truly that it is good', and another to ask 'Is what you say truly' and then 'that it is good'.

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24 Aristotle, *SE* 24, 179b18.
25 ἐστι] ἐστιν **A.**
26 ἀληθῶς] ἀληθὲς **C.**
27 ἔλεγε] ἔλεγεν **A.**
28 εἶναι – ἀγαθὸν] *om.* **A.** *Igitur* ⌜κακὸν ὅτι ἀγαθὸν⌝ *cum* **A.** *desit,* **C.** *illegibilis sit, coniecturæ nostræ deberi scito.*
29 λέγει] λέγειν **C.**
30 τὸ κακόν – ἀγαθόν] κακόν ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ἀγαθὸν λέγειν ἀγαθόν **C**; τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν λέγειν **A.**
31 συνηγ⌝μένον] συνημένον **A.**
32 προ[σ]τεθὲν] *an* προταθὲν *scribendum?*
33 ἐπισκεπτέον] ? **A.**
34 ἆρα] ἄρα **AC.**
35 ἆρα] ἄρα **AC.**
36 ἔπειτα – λέγεις] *om.* **A.**

8. Ἢ εἰ καὶ ἄλλο καὶ ἀλλο σημαίνει, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὅτι ἄλλο ἐστὶ τὸ λέγειν τὸν λόγον καὶ ἄλλο τὸ πρᾶγμα.

8. But, even if it does not signify the same, this is not the cause <of the refutation>, but rather that it is one thing to say the phrase and another to say the thing.

Sophisma II

1. Ὅτι τὸ *Ἆρα*[37] *ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον* ἐπισκεπτέον παρὰ τί σοφίζεται.

1. *Item.* We have to examine the origin of the fallacy in "Is it possible to eat somebody among men today?".

2. Φασὶ γὰρ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα[38] τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· χρόνος γὰρ τὸ σήμερον, τὸν δὲ χρόνον οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων δύναται φαγεῖν.

2. For they say that it is not possible to eat somebody among men today, because 'today' is a time, and none among men can eat time.

3. Καὶ πάλιν φασὶν ὅτι ἀνάγκη φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· εἰ γὰρ τὸ σήμερον χρόνος, ἐν δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ συνεχῶς τινος τῶν ἀνθρώπων γίνεται θάνατος καὶ φθορά, ἀνάγκη ἄρα καὶ τὸ σήμερον δύνασθαι φαγεῖν καὶ διαφθεῖραί τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

3. And again they say that it is necessary to eat somebody among men today, for as 'today' is a time, and in time there is continually death and destruction of some one among men, it is necessary that also 'today' can eat and destroy somebody among men.

4. Ἢ τὸ φαγεῖν νῦν ὡς οὐ κεῖται λαμϐάν⌜ουσιν⌝.[39]

4. But perhaps they now take 'eat' differently from the way it is used in the sentence under consideration.

5. Ἢ εἰ καὶ μεταφέρουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο.

5. But, even if they use it metaphorically, this is not the cause <of fallacy>.

6. Παρὰ τί δέ;

6. What, then, is the cause?

7. Ἢ ὅτι οὐ ταὐτόν ἐστι 'σήμερον' εἰπεῖν καὶ 'τὸ σήμερον'· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἠρωτημένον ὅτι 'Ἆρα[40] ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων *τὸ σήμερον*' ἀλλὰ *σήμερον* τοῦ ἄρθρου χωρίς.

7. Perhaps that it is not the same to say *today* and 'today'. For the question was not "Is is possible to eat somebody among men 'today' but *today* without the quotes.

8. Ἔτι τινές φασιν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· τῶν γὰρ σήμερον ἀνθρώπων, ἤτοι[41] τῶν νεογνῶν, οὐδεὶς δύναται φαγεῖν.

8. Besides, some say that it is not possible to eat somebody among men today, because among the today men, i. e. the newborn, nobody can eat.

9. Ἢ τοῦτο προστιθέντος ἐστίν, ἤ, εἰ μή, κολοϐῶς ἐρωτῶντος.

9. But perhaps this depends on the questioner adding something, or, alternatively, asking in an incomplete way.

10. Ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ[42] τοῦτο, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ παρὰ σύνθεσίν ἐστιν· οὐ ταὐτὸ[43] γάρ ἐστιν εἰπεῖν ὅτι 'οὐκ ἔστι **[C 305v]** ⌜φάγεῖν **[A 418r]** τινα τῶν⌝ ἀνθρώπων', εἶτα διελόντα[44] 'σήμερον' καὶ ὅτι 'οὐκ

10. But even if such is the case, the fallacy does not depend on this, but on composition. For it is not the same to say *(1)* "it is not possible to eat somebody among men" and then, after a break (division), "today", and *(2)* "it is not possible to

37 ἆρα] ἄρα **AC.**
38 τινα] *om.* **C.**
39 λαμϐάν⌜ ουσιν ⌝ **C.**] συλαμϐάνουσιν(?) **A.**
40 ἆρα] ἄρα **AC.**
41 ἤτοι] ἤγουν **A.**
42 καὶ] μὴ **AC.**
43 ταὐτὸ] ταὐτὸν **A.**
44 διελόντα] διελεῖν **AC.**

ἔστι φαγεῖν ⌜τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον' συν⌝θέντ⌜α⌝.
11. ῏Η κἂν συντεθῇ τὸ 'σήμερον' καὶ ⌜τὸ 'φαγεῖν'⌝,[45] οὐ ⌜δύν⌝αται σημαίνειν τὸ προειρημένον εἰ μὴ ⌜γένηται μεταποί⌝ησις τοῦ λόγου καὶ ὑπερβατόν.
12. Πῶς οὖν τὸ οὕτως ⌜ἔχον λυτέον ⌝;[46]
13. ῏Η καθ' ὁδὸν ἰέτω[47] ἡ λύσις καὶ πρῶτον ῥητέον περὶ τοῦ ⌜πρώτου·
14. Φασὶ γὰρ⌝ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· χρόνος γὰρ τὸ σήμερον, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ ἔστι τινὰ τῶν[48] ἀνθρώπων φαγεῖν <***>

eat somebody among men today" with the parts joined (composition).
11. But perhaps even if 'today' and 'eat' are joined, the sentence cannot mean the aforementioned unless a change of order and a hyperbaton is performed.
12. So, how is one to solve something like that?
13. But perhaps we ought to leave the solution for later, and first talk about the first point.
14. It is said that it is not possible to eat someone among men today because 'today' is a time, and nobody among men can eat that <***>

2 Interpretation

Now, let us try to make sense of the text. It is certainly not easy to grasp the argumentation, but I believe I understand most of it now after having looked at it intermittedly for forty years, although there are still places where I am in doubt.[49]

Sophism I.A

In §**1** the sophism is presented. We are to imagine a classical dialectical situation with a questioner and an answerer. The questioner's very first sentence is the ambiguous Ἆρ' ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι; Does it mean (1a) "Is that-which-you-can-say-good good?", i.e., "Is the good that you can say good?", or does it mean (1b) "Is what you can call good good?". At least in the first sense, the premiss must obviously be conceded, and the answerer happily does so, we must assume. Then the opponent adds the second premiss, (2) δύνασαι δὲ λέγειν τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν "but you can call the evil good", which is undeniable, and from premisses 1b and 2 he concludes that the evil is good: ἔστιν ἄρα τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν.

Then starts a series of attempted solutions of the sophism. In §**2** it is proposed that premiss 2 is false, because you cannot really say "The evil is good", since

45 τὸ σήμερον καὶ ⌜τὸ φαγεῖν ⌝] *om.* **A.**
46 λυτέον *scripsi*] κλητέον **A**, *def.* **C.**
47 καθ' ὁδὸν ἰέτω *dubitans scripsi*] κάθοδον ἰέτω **C**; καθεδὸν ἰέτω **A.**
48 τῶν] *om.* **A.**
49 I first presented my interpretation of the sophismas at a meeting of the *Finnish Society for Byzantine Studies* in 2006, but did not feel it was quite ready for publication. Six years later I presented it to a graduate seminar sponsored by the *Conférence Universitaire de la Suisse Occidentale*. I have made little progress over the last ten years, so I guess it is time I present the text and my exegesis to a wider public.

that is an obvious falsehood: Ἢ οὐ δύνασαι λέγειν· ψεύδοιτο γὰρ ἄν. It is not explained why you cannot state such a falsehood, but I presume it is because it is nonsense, evil and good being contraries.

In §**3** the solution is rejected on the ground that if the sophism is restated without the use of 'can', this does not block the unacceptable conclusion: Ἢ εἰ καὶ τὸ 'δύνασαι' ἐξέλθοι, οὐδὲν ἧττον τὸ ἄτοπον ἀκολουθεῖ. In §**4** we then get the reformulated sophisma without the modal operator:

> Ἆρα ὃ λέγει τις ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι;
> λέγει δέ τις τὸ κακὸν ἀγαθόν·
> τὸ ἄρα κακὸν ἀγαθόν.

§5 introduces a new attempt at solution. *Λέγει*, the verb we translate as "calls" or "says", is ambiguous to meaning "calls/says truly", and "calls/says falsely": Ἢ καὶ τὸ 'λέγει' οὐχ ἓν σημαίνει, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἀληθῶς, τὸ δὲ ψευδῶς. We are to understand, I presume, that in the first premiss of §**4** it occurs in the "truly" sense, in the second in the "falsely" sense, and so nothing can be concluded from the two premisses.

The rejoinder in §**6** is that recognizing such an ambiguity is of no help in solving the sophism, for our problems do not disappear if we substitute other verbs for *λέγει:* Ἢ εἰ καὶ τοῦτο πολλαχῶς, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο ὁ ἔλεγχος· καὶ γὰρ εἰ καὶ τοῦτο ἀπίοι, εἰσέλθοι δὲ τὸ 'συγχωρεῖ' ἢ 'τίθεται' ἢ 'δοξάζει', ὁ αὐτὸς ἔσται ἔλεγχος. This manœuvre resembles that of removing the δύνασαι in §§**3 – 4.**

Of course, we are told in §**7**, the reason our problems do not disappear might be that the other verbs ('concedes', 'posits', 'believes') suffer from the same ambiguity as *λέγει* – after all, one may concede, posit or believe something either truly or falsely. Apparently, the author also suggests that the duplicity of conceding, positing and believing may be the reason why there is the same two ways of saying or calling: Ἢ καὶ ταῦτα ὅτι ὁμοίως ἐκείνῳ οὐχ ἓν σημαίνει, ἢ εἰ διὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐκεῖνο, τῶν κειμένων λέξεων μὴ ἀναιρουμένων, οὐκ ἂν ὁ λόγος μεταρρυθμιζόμενος ἁπλοῦς καὶ εἷς ἐφαίνετο;

Anyway, the substitution trick does not help us, so why not try a rearrangement of the elements in the original premiss and see if that gives us an unambiguous sentence from which no mischievous conclusions can be drawn? This is attempted in §§**8 – 9:**

> Ἀλλὰ δῆλον ὅτι πάλαι[50] ἀσαφὴς καὶ ποικίλος, νῦν δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, οἷον·
> Ἆρα <τὸ> ἀγαθὸν ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν <ὅτι ἀγαθόν>, ἀγαθόν ἐστι; – Ναί.

And, hurray, it works, as demonstrated in §**10:**

50 πάλαι] πάλιν **A.**, **C.**

> Καὶ ἰδού, οὐδὲν ἄτοπον· τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν ὃ δύνασαι λέγειν ὅτι ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν ἐστι· καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὃ λέγει τις ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν ἐστιν· οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὃ οὐ δύναταί τις λέγειν ὅτι ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν ἐστι, καὶ ὅ τις οὐ λέγει ἀγαθόν.

Actually, the author does more than just move the furniture of the major premiss around, but the important part is that he inserts a τὸ ἀγαθόν "the good" at the beginning of the first premiss, outside the scope of λέγειν "to call" or "to say", so that the relative ὃ "that" or "what" definitely refers to something good, which means that no matter what you say about the good that is the nucleus in a subject consisting of "the good" and a relative clause, it won't cease to be a good, and consequently it does not matter whether one says "that you can say" as in §**1**, "that you cannot say" as in §**2**, or "that someone says" as in §**4.** There is no way to refute the new first premiss by a *reductio ad absurdum*, as in §**1.**

After this discussion, which is not the least reminiscent of Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations*, the author concludes in §§**11–12** with a bow to the Father of Logic, who had rightly claimed that pointing out a flaw in a sophisma is not the same as solving it. There may be several flaws besides the real culprit. Only by fingering the real culprit does the logician-detective solve his case:

> Ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος δύναται δεκτικὸς εἶναι πολλῶν μοχθηριῶν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡ πάσης μοχθηρίας ἐμφάνισις λύσις ἐστί· παρὰ μόνον γὰρ τὸ ἐσχάτως ῥηθὲν ἡ μοχθηρία, καὶ ὁ τοῦτο ἐμφανίζων μόνος λύει τὸν λόγον, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ὁ λέγων ὅτι τὸ 'λέγειν' πολλαχῶς, εἴτε ἐστί, εἴτε οὐκ ἔστι· οὐδὲ ὁ λέγων ὅτι τὸ 'δύνασθαι' διττόν. Εὐλόγως ἄρα ἔλεγε καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ὅτι οὐχ ἡ πάσης μοχθηρίας ἐμφάνισις λύσις ἐστίν.

Sophism I.B

Sophism **I.B** is a variant of the first one. It picks up the suggestion in **I.A** §**3** that it might be an idea to drop the modal δύνασαι and the suggestion in **I.A** §**5** that one ought to treat λέγει as an ambiguous term, which must be disambiguated either as λέγει ἀληθῶς or as λέγει ψευδῶς. Thus, in the new formulation of the sophismatic proposition "you say truly" replaces "you can say". Moreover, an inserted "that" (ὅτι) makes it clear that the verb λέγεις corresponds to English "you say" and not to "you call". So, here we go:

> **1.** Ἆρ' ὃ λέγεις ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι;
> λέγεις δὲ τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν·
> τὸ ἄρα κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι <ἀγαθὸν> ἀγαθόν ἐστιν.
>
> Is what you say truly that it is good, good? <Yes.>
> But you say the evil truly that it is good.
> So, the evil truly that it is good is good.

The conclusion seems to be correctly derived, but is nonsensical. Notice that in the second (the minor) premiss, the relative pronoun ὃ "what" is instantiated by τὸ

κακὸν "the evil". This instantiation opens up the possibility of taking the adverb ἀληθῶς "truly" to modify "evil" instead of "you say", so that the meaning becomes "You say that the truly evil is good", which could well be the case, whereas "you say truly that the evil is good" could never be true.

This, however, is not the solution that is first attempted. First, in §**2** it is suggested that we cannot really conclude that the predicate "good" applies to "the evil truly that it is good", but only to "he said that the evil truly that it is good":

> Ἢ οὐχὶ τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν συνάγεται, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἔλεγε τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν· ἔλεγε γὰρ καὶ συνεχώρει.

In §**3** this is rejected, because that was not what the answerer actually granted:

> Ἢ τὸ πρῶτον μᾶλλον συνάγεται· ὃ γὰρ λέγει ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν εἶναι ἐδίδου. ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ὃ ἀληθῶς κακὸν ὅτι ἀγαθὸν λέγει δίδωσιν.

Nevertheless, in §**4**, the author wants to test what happens if we assume that the answerer is willing to grant as much. Then an absurd conclusion can be derived from the premisses, namely "that the evil truly that it is good to say is good." At this point, the manuscripts offer diverging readings neither of which seems to make sense, so I have conjecturally restored a text that I think does so:

> Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο δώσει, λέγει δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπόθεσιν, ὅτι τὸ κακόν ἀληθῶς <ὅτι> ἀγαθὸν λέγειν ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν ἔσται πρὸς αὐτὸν συνηγμένον.

§**5** suggests that the conclusion that actually follows is different, because the word λέγειν "to say" should be moved so that it qualifies the last occurrence of ἀγαθὸν "good": Ἢ οὐδὲ τοῦτο οὕτως συνάγει, ἀλλ' ὅτι τὸ κακὸν ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθὸν λέγειν.

This, however, does not make any difference as to the absurdity of the conclusion, we are told in §**6**, so we had better look closely at the crucial phrase in the argument, viz. "what you say truly that it is good":

> Ἀλλ'οὐδὲν ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ ἀτόπῳ διαφέρει, ἀλλὰ πρῶτον τὸ προ[σ]τεθὲν ἐπισκεπτέον· ἦν δὲ 'ὃ λέγεις ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν ἐστιν'.

In fact, we learn in §7, the phrase is ambiguous, for "truly" can modify either "that it is good" or "you say" according to how we carve up the phrase. That is, we have a case of the Aristotelian fallacy of composition and division:

> Ἢ ἄλλο σημαίνει συντιθέμενος καὶ διαιρούμενος· ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ πυθέσθαι ὅτι 'Ἆρα ὃ λέγεις', ἔπειτα ἐπάξαι τὸ 'ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἀγαθόν', καὶ ἄλλο τὸ 'Ἆρα ὃ λέγεις ἀληθῶς', εἶτα τὸ 'ὅτι ἀγαθόν'.

But, the author concludes in §**8**, though this may be the case, the real trouble with the sophism is that no proper distinction was made between use and mention: the

sophism works by taking the object of "you say" now to be a state of affairs, now to be the very phrase used to signify that state of affairs, so that the phrase "truly that it is good" gets a life of its own:

> Ἢ εἰ καὶ ἄλλο καὶ ἀλλο σημαίνει, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὅτι ἄλλο ἐστὶ τὸ λέγειν τὸν λόγον καὶ ἄλλο τὸ πρᾶγμα.

Sophism II

Sophism **II** is Ἆρα[51] ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον, "It is possible to eat somebody among men today". It does not really work in English, for it depends on the possibility in Greek of taking the sentence in three ways: (1) The obvious one is to take it to mean "It is possible that some man will have a meal today"; in this case there is no object of 'to eat'. (2) and (3) are rather strained interpretations of the sentence, but just possible: either (2) you take 'men' to be the subject and 'today' to be the object of 'to eat', or (3) you reverse the roles of 'men' and 'today'. The first, natural, interpretation of the sentence forces one to concede it.

But then, in §**2**, we are presented with what purports to be a standard objection (Φασὶ ...). The sophismatic proposition cannot be true because 'today' is a time, and no man can eat time; i.e. the objection takes the sentence in sense (2):

> Φασὶ γὰρ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· χρόνος γὰρ τὸ σήμερον, τὸν δὲ χρόνον οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων δύναται φαγεῖν.

On the other hand, §**3** says, if we take 'today' to be the subject of the eating (sense 3), the proposition must be true, for time continually eats people, since no day passes without somebody dying:

> Καὶ πάλιν φασὶν ὅτι ἀνάγκη φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· εἰ γὰρ τὸ σήμερον χρόνος, ἐν δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ συνεχῶς τινος τῶν ἀνθρώπων γίνεται θάνατος καὶ φθορά, ἀνάγκη ἄρα καὶ τὸ σήμερον δύνασθαι φαγεῖν καὶ διαφθεῖραί τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

§§**2 – 3** together constitute what in Western scholastic logic was to be known as the *improbatio* and *probatio* of a sophismatic proposition.[52]

In §**4** the claim in §**3** is contested on the ground that saying that time eats people is a metaphorical use of the verb 'to eat', whereas the proposition was granted for the literal sense: Ἢ τὸ φαγεῖν νῦν ὡς οὐ κεῖται λαμβάνουσιν.

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51 ἆρα] ἄρα **A.**, **C.**

52 For the formats of Western *sophismata*, see S. Ebbesen, 'How to Build your own Sophisma (late 13th- early 14th-century style)', in A. de Libera, L. Cesalli, F. Goubier & L. Gazziero, eds., *Sophismata. Histoire d'une pratique philosophique*, Sic et non, Vrin: Paris, forthcoming.

OK, §**5** says, but this is not the root of our trouble: Ἢ εἰ καὶ μεταφέρουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο. "What is it then?" asks §**6.** The trouble is a use-mention confusion, §**7** proposes. In its proper use, 'today' is a modifier and cannot be the object of any verb, but taken as a name of the adverb (τὸ 'σήμερον') it can serve as an object of verbs:

> Ἢ ὅτι οὐ ταὐτόν ἐστι 'σήμερον' εἰπεῖν καὶ 'τὸ σήμερον'· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἠρωτημένον ὅτι 'Ἆρα ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων *τὸ σήμερον*' ἀλλὰ *σήμερον* τοῦ ἄρθρου χωρίς.

§**8** introduces a new, and very strained, interpretation of the sophismatic proposition. Some, it is said, claim that it is false because none among the today-men, that is new-born humans, can eat:

> Ἔτι τινές φασιν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· τῶν γὰρ σήμερον ἀνθρώπων, ἤτοι τῶν νεογνῶν, οὐδεὶς δύναται φαγεῖν.

This, of course, presupposes that sucking is not counted as eating.

But, as §**9** correctly points out, the argument of §**8** depends on an illicit sleight-of-hand. It is perfectly possible to read τῶν σήμερον ἀνθρώπων in the sense of "among the people of today", but it is not obvious that this should mean "the new-born", so if the questioner wanted this to be the meaning, he should have clarified it in the original question: Ἢ τοῦτο προστιθέντος ἐστίν, ἢ, εἰ μή, κολοβῶς ἐρωτῶντος.

Anyway, §**10** says, this is not the real problem with §**8.** The real problem is the segmentation of the sentence: we get a different result according as we take "today" together with "among men" or not. By taking them together we get the today-men. That is, we have a case of the Aristotelian fallacy of composition and division:

> Ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ τοῦτο, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ παρὰ σύνθεσίν ἐστιν· οὐ ταὐτὸ γάρ ἐστιν εἰπεῖν ὅτι 'οὐκ ἔστι φάγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων', εἶτα διελόντα 'σήμερον' καὶ ὅτι 'οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον' συνθέντα.

But, § **11** protests, this is not true, for the phrase is τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον "the men today", not τῶν σήμερον ἀνθρώπων "the today-men", and if σήμερον "today" is to function as an adjectival modifier of "the men", Greek requires that the adverb be sandwiched between the definite article and the noun. As the phrase is, it cannot mean "the today-men":

> Ἢ κἂν συντεθῇ τὸ 'σήμερον' καὶ τὸ 'φαγεῖν', οὐ δύναται σημαίνειν τὸ προειρημένον εἰ μὴ γένηται μεταποίησις τοῦ λόγου καὶ ὑπερβατόν.

How are we then to solve our problem? §**12** asks: Πῶς οὖν τὸ οὕτως ἔχον λυτέον; I am not quite certain which problem is meant. The one about the today-men seems to have been solved already.

Anyway, in §**13** the author decides to return to the argument of §**2** (Ἢ καθ' ὁδὸν ἰέτω ἡ λύσις καὶ πρῶτον ῥητέον περὶ τοῦ πρώτου), and in §**14** he does so:

> Φασὶ γὰρ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν τινα τῶν ἀνθρώπων σήμερον· χρόνος γὰρ τὸ σήμερον, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ ἔστι τινὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φαγεῖν.

At this point, unfortunately, our manuscripts desert us. Unless, unexpectedly, a new one with a more complete text turns up, we shall never know what happened after §**14.**

The Un-Byzantine Byzantine did not produce a work of high-powered logic, but he does seem to have had one important quality in common with top logicians: stubborn patience in looking at problematic propositions or arguments from ever new angles.

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