Themistius on Intellect

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Themistius on Intellect

Theophrastus and Plotinus as Sources of In De Anima *III 5*

Elisa Coda*

Abstract
Themistius' paraphrase of Aristotle's *De Anima* III 5 is one of the two sources for our knowledge of Theophrastus' lost *De Anima*. Themistius quotes Theophrastus' aporias about the intellect and transforms them into the proof that both Aristotle and Theophrastus sided with Plato in assessing the immortality of our intellect. Thus, intellect turns out to be the immortal part of our soul. At variance with intellect, that part of our soul that shares its affections with body is mortal. Themistius' treatment of *De Anima* III 5 has not only Theophrastus as its source, but also Plotinus' distinction between intellect – our true self – and that part or function of our soul that intermingles with body.

It is no exaggeration to say that the 1998 edition of an anonymous paraphrase of the *De Anima* by Rüdiger Arnzen[1] was a turning point in our understanding of the Arabic Aristotle. The painstaking work of editing, translation, and study of this Neoplatonic paraphrase made available a milestone in the Arabic reception of the late-Antique tradition of commentary on no less a crucial text as the *De Anima*. It thus became clear that since its beginnings[2] – and either before the translation into Arabic of Aristotle's own *De Anima*, or together with it[3] – a Neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle's

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[1] *Aristoteles' De Anima. Eine verlorene spätantike Paraphrase in arabischer und persischer Überlieferung. Arabischer text nebst Kommentar, Quellengeschichtlichen Studien und Glossaren*, Brill, Leiden – New York – Köln 1998 (Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus, 9).

[2] The paraphrase, as Arnzen demonstrates by means of a detailed analysis of its language (pp. 108-77), is one of the translations of the so-called "circle of al-Kindī" whose existence has been discovered and studied by G. Endress, see e.g. "Platonic Ethics and the Aristotelian Encyclopaedia. The Arabic Aristotle and his Readers in Court and Chancellery", in E. Coda – C. Martini Bonadeo (eds.), *De l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge. Études de logique aristotélicienne et de philosophie grecque, syriaque, arabe et latine offertes à Henri Hugonnard-Roche*, Vrin, Paris 2014 (Études Musulmanes, 44), pp. 465-90.

[3] If we trust the ancient Arabic sources, the *De Anima* was translated slightly later than its Neoplatonic paraphrase, and in a different context: that of the circle of Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (d. 873) and his associates. The translation was the work of his son Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn (d. 911), as mentioned in the medieval Arabic bibliographical sources, chiefly by Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 995, cf. *Kitab al-Fihrist,* mit Anmerkungen hrsg. von G. Flügel, I - II [= J. Rödiger – A. Müller], Leipzig 1871-1872, vol. 1, p. 251), as well as in parallels by Ibn al-Qifṭī (d. 1248, cf. *Ta'riḫ al-ḥukamā'*, auf Grund der Vorarbeiten A. Müllers hrsg. von J. Lippert, Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Leipzig 1903, p. 41.12-13), and Ḥaǧǧī Ḫalīfa (d. 1658). However, the translation that has come down to us, and which is attributed to Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn in the manuscript tradition, it not likely to be his and might belong to an earlier stage of the Graeco-Arabic translations. Cf. H. Gätje, *Studien zur Überlieferung der aristotelischen Psychologie im Islam*, C. Winter, Heidelberg 1971, pp. 20-7; A.L. Ivry, "The Arabic Text of Aristotle's *De Anima* and its Translator", *Oriens* 36 (2001), pp. 59-77; A. Treiger, "Reconstructing Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn's Arabic

doctrine of the soul was available. As a consequence, the philosophers of the Arabic-speaking world who had access to the anonymous paraphrase edited by Rüdiger Arnzen viewed Aristotle as a philosopher who taught on incorporeality and immortality of the human soul.

Later on, Themistius' paraphrase was also translated into Arabic.[4] This translation contributed significantly to shaping the vision of Aristotle's doctrines on soul and intellect both of Avicenna and Averroes.[5] For this reason I deemed it right to offer Rüdiger Arnzen, as a little token of gratitude and friendship, a discussion of a controversial point in the exegesis of Aristotle's *De Anima* as it is understood by Themistius.

The relevant section of Themistius' paraphrase is made even more interesting in consideration of the fact that it revolves around an otherwise lost passage of Theophrastus' own work on the soul.[6]

Translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*", *Studia graeco-arabica* 7 (2017), pp. 193-211. Aristotle's *De Anima* survives also in an Arabic-into-Hebrew translation: *Aristotle's De Anima Translated into Hebrew by Zeraḥyah ben Isaac ben Shealtiel Ḥen.* A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Index by G. Bos, Brill, Leiden 1994 (Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus, 6). As for the Arabic-into-Latin translation by Michael Scot, see the up-to-date bibliography in Treiger, "Reconstructing Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn's Arabic Translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*", p. 194, n. 8. A. Elamrani-Jamal, "*De Anima*. Tradition arabe", in R. Goulet (ed.), *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques* (=*DPhA*), CNRS-Éditions, *Suppl*., Paris 2003, pp. 346-58, has provided a valuable survey.

[4] Themistius' paraphrase of the *De Anima* was translated into Arabic by Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn; the unique MS that contains it, however, is not complete. Edition: M.C. Lyons, *An Arabic Translation of Themistius' Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*, Cassirer, Oxford 1973. The Arabic version has been compared with the Greek text by G.M. Browne, "*Ad Themistium Arabum*", *Illinois Classical Studies* 12 (1986), pp. 223-45; Id., "*Ad Themistium Arabum* II", *Illinois Classical Studies* 23 (1998), pp. 121-6. The translation of Themistius' paraphrase is also mentioned in the bio-bibliographical sources: cf. *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, p. 251.11-18 Flügel, and Ibn al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*, p. 41.12-13 Lippert, but this information is problematic; for an outline cf. E. Coda, "Common Sense in Themistius and its Reception in the pseudo-Philoponus and Avicenna", in D. Bennett – J. Toivanen (eds.), *Philosophical Problems in Sense Perception: Testing the Limits of Aristotelianism*, Springer (forthcoming).

[5] Avicenna's acquaintance with Themistius was noticed by Sh. Pines, "Some Distinctive Metaphysical Conceptions in Themistius' Commentary on *Book Lambda* and their Place in the History of Philosophy", in J. Wiesner (ed.), *Aristoteles: Werk und Wirkung*, II, De Gruyter, Berlin - New York 1987, pp. 177-204 (repr. in *The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines*, vol. 3, The Magnes Press, Jerusalem 2000, pp. 267-94). See also H.A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect. Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect and Theories of Human Intellect*, Oxford U.P., New York – Oxford 1992, esp. pp. 8, 214-15, 322, 326-8, 331-5, and D. Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works. Second, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Including an Inventory of Avicenna's Authentic Works*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2014 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 89), pp. 54, 58, 170-2, 273, 326, 328-9, 353-5. Recent enlightening studies on the influence of Themistius' paraphrase on Avicenna and Averroes include R.C. Taylor, "Avicenna and the Issue of the Intellectual Abstraction of Intelligibles", in M. Cameron (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind in the Early and High Middle Ages*, Routledge, London 2018 (The History of the Philosophy of Mind, 2); Id., "Themistius and the Development of Averroes' Noetics", in R.L. Friedman – J.-M. Counet (eds.), *Medieval Perspectives on Aristotle's De Anima*, Peeters, Louvain 2013 (Philosophes Médiévaux, 58), pp. 1-38.

[6] For an outline on Themistius as a source for the knowledge of Theophrastus in Medieval authors see P. Huby, "Medieval Evidence for Theophrastus Discussion on Intellect", in W.W. Fortenbaugh – P. Huby – A.A. Long (eds.), *Theophrastus of Eresus: On His Life and Works*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick – London 1985 (Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities), pp. 165-81. As for Averroes, cf. in part. A. Hyman, "Aristotle's Theory of the Intellect and its Interpretation by Averroes", in D.J. O'Meara (ed.), *Studies in Aristotle*, The Catholic Univ. of America Press, Washington, D.C. 1981 (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, 9), pp. 161-92; Id., "Averroes' Theory of the Intellect and the Ancient Commentators", in G. Endress – J.A. Aertsen (eds.), *Averroes and the Aristotelian Tradition. Sources, Constitution and Reception of the Philosophy of Ibn Rushd (1126-1198)*, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 1999 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 31), pp. 188-98; D. Gutas, "Averroes on Theophrastus, through Themistius", *ibid*., pp. 125-44; R.C. Taylor, "Intellegibles in Act in Averroes", in J.-B. Brenet (ed.), *Averroès et les Averroïsmes Juif et Latin.* Actes du Colloque International Paris, 16-18 Juin 2005, Brepols, Turnhout 2007 (Textes et Études du Moyen Age, 40), pp. 111-40.

1. Interpreting the De Anima*: Themistius' and Theophrastus' Accounts of Intellect*

In his paraphrase[7] of Aristotle's *De Anima* III 5, Themistius (317-389 AD) quotes a long passage by Theophrastus (371-287 b.C.) about the Aristotelian doctrine of the intellect, and outlines parts of his argument that he does not quote *verbatim*. Priscian of Lydia's *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum*[8] is another important source for Theophrastus' views, not only on the intellect but also on other issues related to the *De Anima*.[9] It is a fair guess that both Themistius and Priscian rearranged the Theophrastean materials to suit each his own purpose. In this paper I will largely ignore Priscian,[10] focusing instead on the passages listed as Fr. 307A, 320A, and 320B in the edition of Theophrastus' fragments by Fortenbaugh, Huby, Sharples, and Gutas (henceforth FHS&G).[11] These excerpts enumerate some aporias put forward by Theophrastus in connection with Aristotle's doctrines on the intellect.

Recent scholarship has increasingly highlighted the importance of Theophrastus for the development and reception of Aristotle's thought, in general[12] and in regard

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[7] *Themistii In libros Aristotelis de anima paraphrasis*, ed. R. Heinze, Reimer, Berlin 1899 (*CAG* V.3); *Themistius: On Aristotle On the Soul*, English trans. by R. Todd, Bloomsbury, London [etc.]1996 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle).

[8] Prisciani Lydi *Quae extant Metaphrasis in Theophrastum et Solutionum ad Chosroem liber,* ed. I. Bywater, Reimer, Berlin 1866 (Supplementum Aristotelicum, I.2), pp. 1-37; English trans. *Priscian: On Theophrastus on Sense-Perception with 'Simplicius': On Aristotle On the Soul 2.5-12*, trans. by P. Huby – C. Steel, in collaboration with J.O. Urmson, Notes by O. Lautner, Bloomsbury, London 1997, pp. 3-101 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle). Selected passages in the *Metaphrasis* that depend upon Iamblichus' lost *De Anima* are included in J.M. Finamore - J.M. Dillon, *Iamblichus. De Anima. Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2002 (Philosophia Antiqua, 92). See also M. Perkams, "Priscien de Lydie", in Goulet (ed.), *DPhA*, CNRS-Éditions, Paris 2012, t. Vb = P280, pp. 1514-21, in part. pp. 1516-17.

[9] These excerpts are from Theophrastus' treatise **Περὶ ψυχῆς**, which is lost; it is not attested in Diogenes Laertius nor in other Greek lists of Theophrastus' works: cf. J.-P. Schneider, "Théophraste d'Érèse", in R. Goulet (ed.), *DPhA*, CNRS-Éditions, Paris 2016, t. VI = T97, pp. 1034-1120, in part. p. 1046-55 and 1084. The Arabic bibliographical sources credit Theophrastus with a treatise *On the Soul* (*K. al-Fihrist,* p. 252.7 Flügel), but their reliability is disputed; cf. Gätje, *Studien zur Überlieferung der Aristotelischen Psychologie im Islam* (above, n. 3), pp. 73-4 and D. Gutas, "The Life, Works, and Sayings of Theophrastus in the Arabic Tradition", in Fortenbaugh – Huby – Long (eds.), *Theophrastus of Eresus: On His Life and Works* (above, n. 6), pp. 63-114, in part. pp. 81-2.

[10] As P. Huby explains in her Introduction to the English translation quoted above, n. 10, the *Metaphrasis* "opens with a sentence containing the word *ephexês* (next) and does not actually name Theophrastus, although it is clear that he is the subject of the main verb. This implies that Priscian is here continuing a commentary on a work of Theophrastus of which *On the Soul* is not the first part (...). At the end the copyist has a note: 'look out for the rest', which confirms the impression that what we have is not the end of Priscian's work. What we have is based on Aristotle *On the Soul* 2.5-3.5, with the exception of the short chapter 2.6 and the very end of 3.5" (pp. 3-4). The first to compare the excerpts from Theophrastus as they feature in Themistius and Priscian was Hicks in his edition and translation of the *De Anima*: *Aristotle's De Anima with Translation, Introduction and Notes* by R.D. Hicks, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 1907, *Appendix*, pp. 590-4.

[11] W.W. Fortenbaugh - P. Huby - R. Sharples - D. Gutas (eds.), *Theophrastus of Eresus. Sources for His Life, Writings, Thought and Influence*, 2 vols., Brill, Leiden 1992 (Philosophia Antiqua, 54), vol. 2, pp. 52-55, 90-3, and P. Huby, *Theophrastus of Eresus, Commentary Volume 4, Psychology (Texts 265-327)*, Brill, Leiden 1999 (Philosophia Antiqua, 81), pp. 115-21, 183-90.

[12] Up-to-date research is conducted within the context of the 'Project Theophrastus', running from 1979 and published in the series Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities (= RUSCH) and by Brill in the series Philosophia Antiqua. Cf. Fortenbaugh – Huby – Long (eds.), *Theophrastus of Eresus: On His Life and Works* (above, n. 6); W.W. Fortenbaugh – R. Sharples (eds.), *Theophrastean Studies: On Natural Science, Physics and Metaphysics, Ethics, Religion and Rhetoric*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick - London 1988 (RUSCH, 3); J.M. van Ophuijsen – M. van Raalte (eds.), *Theophrastus. Reappraising Sources*, New Brunswick - London 1992 (RUSCH, 8); Theophrastus *On First Principles (known as his Metaphysics). Greek Text and Medieval Arabic Translation, Edited and Translated with Introduction, Commentaries and Glossaries, and with an Excursus on Graeco-Arabic Editorial technique* by D. Gutas, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2010 (Philosophia Antiqua, 119).

to the intellect.[13] The passage in Themistius' paraphrase that corresponds to Fr. 307A and 320A-B FHS&G was already taken into account by Robert Drew Hicks, when in 1907 he published his edition and translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*. Hicks awakened scholarly interest in Theophrastus' excerpts on intellect with his collection of the fragments preserved by Themistius and Priscian in an *Appendix* to his translation. On this basis, he called attention to the fact that Theophrastus was the first to connect Aristotle's account of intellect in the *De Anima* and the feature of "coming from outside (θύραθεν)" that Aristotle mentions in passing in *De Generatione animalium* II 3, 736 b 27-29.[14] Hicks' view has met with wide scholarly consensus both in past[15] and recent scholarship.[16]

In order to determine how Themistius interprets Theophrastus' ideas about the Aristotelian doctrine of intellect, it is useful to take into account the context in which the quotations occur. This requires starting with a quotation of the text from which the whole issue arises, notwithstanding the fact that it is one of the most well-known passages of the entire Aristotelian corpus.

De Anima III 5, 430 a 14-25

> And in fact there is one sort of understanding that is such by becoming all things, while there is another that is such by producing all things in the way that a sort of state, like light, does (καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὡς ἕξις τις, οἷον τὸ φῶς), since in a way light too makes potential colors into active colors. And this [productive] understanding is separable, unaffectable, and unmixed, being in substance an activity (καὶ οὗτος ὁ νοῦς χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγής, τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὢν ἐνέργεια) for the producer is always more estimable than the thing affected, and the starting-point than the matter, not sometimes understanding and at other times not. But, when separated, this alone is just what it is. And it alone is immortal and eternal but we do not remember because this is unaffectable, whereas the passive understanding is capable of passing away (ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτός), and without this it understands nothing (καὶ ἄνευ τούτου οὐθὲν νοεῖ) (trans. Reeve, p. 55, Greek added after Ross).[17]

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[13] E. Barbotin, *La théorie aristotélicienne de l'intellect d'après Théophraste*, Publications Universitaires, Louvain - Paris 1954 (Aristote. Traductions et études); P. Moraux, "Le *De Anima* dans la tradition grecque. Quelques aspects de l'interprétation du traité, de Théophraste à Thémistius", in G.E.R. Lloyd - G.E.L. Owen (eds.), *Aristotle on Mind and the Senses.* Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium Aristotelicum, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge [etc.] 1978, pp. 281-324; D. Devereux, "Theophrastus on Intellect", in W.W. Fortenbaugh - D. Gutas (eds.), *Theophrastus. His Psychological, Doxographical, and Scientific Writings*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick - London 1992 (RUSCH, 7), pp. 32-43; S. Magrin, "Theophrastus, Alexander and Themistius on Aristotle's *De Anima* III.4-5", in R. Wisnovsky *et al.* (eds.), *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture*, Brepols, Turnhout 2011, pp. 49-73.

[14] Aristotle's *De Anima* (above, n. 10), p. 595.

[15] Recapitulated as follows by D. Lefevre, "Aristotle and the Hellenistic Peripatos: From Theophrastus to Critolaus", in A. Falcon (ed.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aristotle in Antiquity*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2016 (Brill's Companions to Classical Reception, 7), pp. 13-34, here p. 18: "Theophrastus makes contact between the two discussions of the intellect carefully distinguished by Aristotle: that of the *On the Soul* (3.4-5) and of the *Generation of Animals* (2.3), which features the idea that intellect comes 'from outside'".

[16] Magrin, "Theophrastus, Alexander and Themistius on Aristotle's *De Anima* III.4-5" (above, n. 13), esp. p. 73.

[17] Aristotle, *De Anima* Translated With Introduction and Notes by C.D.C. Reeve, Hackett, Indianapolis - Cambridge 2017. Throughout this article, the Greek text is quoted as established by W.D. Ross, *Aristotelis De Anima*, Oxford U.P., Oxford 1956 (OCT).

Problems of great philosophical complexity arise from this passage, where Aristotle lays down the foundations of what was destined to become afterwards the doctrine of the Agent Intellect.[18] A few lines before the passage quoted above, namely at *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 10-14, he famously states that the distinction between matter and the productive cause holds true also in the case of the soul. In nature there is something that functions as matter, in so far as it is potentially (δυνάμει) all that can become actual in a given nature, and there is also a productive cause. These differences (ταύτας τὰς διαφοράς) can also be found in the soul. Hence, there is an intellect which becomes all objects, and another that 'produces' all objects and resembles light in the way in which it operates. Of the countless exegeses and discussions this passage gave rise to, I will focus on the earliest one, namely the one by Theophrastus, which is recorded by Themistius. Since Theophrastus' passage is encapsulated in the latter's exegesis of *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 14-25, let's first examine Themistius' own interpretation of the intellect that "becomes all objects", namely the human faculty to intelligize. This is labelled in the Peripatetic tradition "potential intellect, νοῦς δυνάμει", a label that elaborates on Aristotle's wording: at *De Anima* III 4, 429 a 30-31 we are told that δυνάμει πώς ἐστι τὰ νοητὰ ὁ νοῦς, an expression which is echoed by δυνάμει at III 5, 430 a 11.

In his discussion of this passage, Themistius engages in a reasoning the aim of which is to demonstrate that the potential intellect does not coincide with the passive intellect (νοῦς παθητικός). This discussion features at the end of the passage of *De Anima* III 5 under examination, i.e. at 430 a 24-25, when Aristotle says that such intellect is perishable (ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτός). The passive intellect for Themistius is to be identified with another item, the "common intellect" which he argues Aristotle had already taken into account at *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 25-29.[19]

Moraux protested against this move. Indeed, while it is true that here Aristotle alluded to something in the soul which he envisioned as common to the intellect and to that which possesses it, in identifying this κοινόν with our faculty to intelligize Themistius can be considered to be blatantly wrong,[20] insofar as Aristotle was speaking rather at that point of that part or function of

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[18] The reference studies are P. Moraux, "À propos du νοῦς θύραθεν chez Aristote", in *Autour d'Aristote. Recueil d'études de philosophie ancienne et médiévale offert à Monseigneur A. Mansion*, Publications Universitaires de Louvain, Louvain 1955, pp. 255-95; R. Walzer, "Aristotle's Active Intellect (νοῦς ποιητικός) in Greek and Early Islamic Philosophy", in *Plotino e il neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Roma 1974 (Problemi attuali di scienza e cultura, 198), pp. 423-36. I discuss this issue at greater length in my *Themistius and the Transmission of Aristotle* (Brepols, PATMA Series, forthcoming).

[19] Cf. Arist., *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 25-29: τὸ δὲ διανοεῖσθαι καὶ φιλεῖν ἢ μισεῖν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκείνου πάθη, ἀλλὰ τουδὶ τοῦ ἔχοντος ἐκεῖνο, ᾗ ἐκεῖνο ἔχει. διὸ καὶ τούτου φθειρομένου οὔτε μνημονεύει οὔτε φιλεῖ· οὐ γὰρ ἐκείνου ἦν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ, ὃ ἀπόλωλεν· ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἴσως θειότερόν τι καὶ ἀπαθές ἐστιν. "But thinking and loving or hating are not affections of the understanding but of what has it, insofar as it has it. That is why when that passes away it neither remembers nor loves. For they were not affections of it, but of what is common, which has passed away. But the understanding is perhaps something divine and is unaffectable" (trans. Reeve, p. 15).

[20] Moraux, "Le *De Anima* dans la tradition grecque" (above n. 13): "Même au niveau de l'intelligence, Thémistius admet une certaine liaison entre le psychique et le somatique. Aristote ayant mentionné un intellect passif, qui est corruptible, le paraphraste se fonde sur un autre texte, I 4, 408 b 25-9 – qu'il comprend sans doute mal – pour expliquer qu'il s'agit là du νοῦς κοινός, lequel est siège de la pensée discursive et des passions et n'est présent en l'homme que parce que celui-ci est fait d'âme et de corps" (p. 309). Moraux's opinion is echoed by Todd, who considers that Themistius' interpretation of the κοινόν is "perverse": cf.*Two Greek Aristotelian Commentators on the Intellect. The De Intellectu attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias and Themistius' Paraphrase of Aristotle De Anima 3.4-8. Introduction, Translation, Commentary and Notes* by F.M. Schroeder – R.B. Todd, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto 1990, p. 96, n. 95. On the contrary, for O. Ballériaux, "Thémistius et le néoplatonisme. Le νοῦς παθητικός et l'immortalité de l'âme", *Revue*

the human soul that is affected by the bodily affections. I suspect that Themistius' identification with one another of the κοινόν of *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 28 and the νοῦς παθητικός of III 5, 430 a 24-25 is less innocent than one might think. However, let's first take into account his argument.

> Εἰ οὖν μὴ μαχόμενα λέγει περὶ τούτου, ἄλλος ἂν εἴη κατ' αὐτὸν ὁ κοινός, ἄλλος δ' ὁ δυνάμει, καὶ ὁ μὲν κοινὸς [καὶ] φθαρτὸς καὶ παθητικὸς καὶ ἀχώριστος καὶ τῷ σώματι μεμιγμένος, ὁ δυνάμει δὲ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἄμικτος τῷ σώματι καὶ χωριστός (ταῦτα γὰρ περὶ αὐτοῦ διαρρήδην φησίν), οἷον πρόδρομος τοῦ ποιητικοῦ, ὥσπερ ἡ αὐγὴ τοῦ φωτός, ἢ ὥσπερ ἄνθος πρόδρομον τοῦ καρποῦ· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἡ φύσις ἀφροιμίαστον τὸ τέλος εὐθὺς παραδίδωσιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ καταδεέστερα μὲν συγγενῆ δὲ τῶν τελειοτέρων προτρέχει (*In De An.*, III 5 430 a 25, p. 105.27-34 Heinze).
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> So if his claims about this intellect are not inconsistent, then according to him the common and potential [intellects] must be distinct. While the common [intellect] is perishable, passive, and inseparable from and mixed with the body, the potential [intellect] is unaffected, unmixed with the body, and separate (for he says this of it explicitly). It is like a forerunner of the productive intellect, as the [sun's] ray is of the daylight, or as the flower is a forerunner of the fruit. For in other cases too nature does not immediately provide the end without a prelude; instead, things that are deficient, but of the same kind as more perfect things, are the latter's forerunners (trans. Todd, cf. *Themistius On Aristotle On the Soul*, trans. by R.B. Todd, Duckworth, London 1996, p. 131).

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de philosophie ancienne 12 (1994), pp. 171-200, the identity established by Themistius between the νοῦς παθητικός of Book III and the κοινόν of Book I is not without grounds in Aristotle's text (the reference is to Aristotle's words τοῦ κοινοῦ, ὃ ἀπόλωλεν quoted above, n. 21) "Les interprètes modernes unanimes analysent cet antécédent de ὃ ἀπόλωλεν comme le génitif du neutre τὸ κοινόν, le composé (de l'âme et du corps). Pour Thémistius, τοῦ κοινοῦ est un génitif masculin se rapportant à un νοῦ sous-entendu qu'il tire de ὁ δὲ νοῦς (408 b 18 et 408 b 29). Dès lors, tenant pour idéntiques l'intellect commun de A 4 et l'intellect passif de Γ 5, tous deux périssables, Thémistius s'autorise à puiser dans les deux passages pour déterminer la nature du νοῦς παθητικός, dont nous ne savons encore qu'une chose: il est corruptible et, comme tel, distinct tant de l'intellect en puissance que de l'intellect agent" (p. 179). For M. Gabbe, "Themistius as a Commentator on Aristotle: Understanding and Appreciating his Conception of *Nous Pathētikos* and *Phantasia*", *Dionysius* 26 (2008), pp. 73-92, Themistius' move to read the κοινόν "as a forward-looking allusion to the *nous pathetihos*" (p. 77) is neither perverse nor Platonic, rather it is a sophisticated intepretation of an Aristotelian problem: "Themistius's account of the passive intellect stems neither from a careless misreading of the text nor merely from an impulse to Platonize Aristotle. Themistius's *nous pathetikos* answers a need for an account of incidental perception, since the discernment of enmattered objects seems not to be in the purview of either the senses or the intellect. (...) Themistius understood the need to construct an explanation of incidental perception, and developed an original and sophisticated account – an account that explains how *nous pathetikos*, which as an intellect should be neither passive (strictly speaking) nor perishable, can be both" (p. 87). For J.F. Finamore, "Themistius on Soul and Intellect in Aristotle's *De Anima*", *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2011), pp. 1-23, Themistius reads the νοῦς παθητικός as the Aristotelian counterpart of the mortal kind of the soul of the *Timaeus*: "In fact, Themistius says (106.29-107.3), most of Plato's arguments about the immortality of the soul refer 'roughly speaking (σχεδόν τι, 106.30) to the intellect. Thus Themistius can claim that the rational soul in Plato is comparable to what he conceives as the two highest intellects in Aristotle; the spirited and irrational souls to the common intellect (107.5-7). Themistius concludes by interpreting the *Timaeus* in harmony with his own interpretation of Aristotelian doctrine. (...)The rational soul alone is immortal, and it is the one whole soul for human beings. The irrational elements are powers, inherent in the body " (pp. 14-15). Finally, for F.A.J. de Haas, "Themistius", in A. Marmodoro - S. Cartwright (eds.), *A History of Mind and Body in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2018, pp. 111-28, "It is a moot point whether this 'common' thing (*to koinon*) is the perishable compound of soul and body which is held responsible for emotions, desires and memory (as usually taken) or a reference to the a common intellect (*ho koinos*, *sc. nous*). For Themistius it is a common intellect, but indeed common in the sense that it explains how a human being can be a compound of soul and body. (...) This passive intellect, Themistius warns his readers, is not identical with imagination (as Neoplatonists would have it), though Themistius does not quite seem to fulfill his promise that he will argue for the distinction in more detail elsewhere" (pp. 115-16).

Themistius has already explained the difference between the actual and the potential intellect (pp. 98.12-100.15 Heinze). Here, he raises the question of whether or not the potential intellect coincides with the νοῦς παθητικός. In his interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine, our faculty to intelligize should be kept carefully distinct from that part or faculty of our soul that is connected with body and liable to affections: this is the νοῦς παθητικός, here declared by Aristotle perishable. On the contrary, our faculty to intelligize (ὁ δυνάμει) is said by Aristotle in as many words (note διαρρήδην, "explicitly") to be unaffected and unmixed with body (ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἄμικτος τῷ σώματι), hence separate (χωριστός), which can be read as immortal.

The way in which Themistius combines *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 28 with other statements taken from elsewhere in the *De Anima*, far from being innocent, can be seen as the key to reconstructing a doctrine of the immortality of the individual intellectual soul, with which Aristotle is credited unhesitantly: this is for Themistius Aristotle's explicit doctrine (διαρρήδην). However, a closer look at the passages which are connected together in one stroke by Themistius shows that, for Aristotle, the separatedness of our intellect is a possibility: one towards which Aristotle is surely inclined,[21] but not a statement.

As for Chapter 5 of Book III of the *De Anima*, the status of "unaffected", "unmixed with body" and "separate" that features famously at 430 a 17-18 is interpreted by Themistius as referring to our potentiality to intelligize. In Aristotle's passage, however, these terms connote the ποιητικόν, and by no means the potential intellect. In the table below, bold indicates the differences and underlined indicates the common terminology.

De Anima III 5, 430 a 14-18	Themistius, p. 105.29-30 Heinze
Καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὡς ἕξις τις, οἷον τὸ φῶς· τρόπον γάρ τινα καὶ τὸ φῶς ποιεῖ τὰ δυνάμει ὄντα χρώματα ἐνεργείᾳ χρώματα. καὶ **οὗτος ὁ νοῦς** χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγής, **τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὢν ἐνέργεια**	**ὁ δυνάμει** δὲ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἄμικτος τῷ σώματι καὶ χωριστός

In Aristotle's account, that intellect that is unaffected, unmixed with body, and separate is that which deserves a capital. An this is true both in the case one reads ἐνέργεια with Ross, and in the case one reads ἐνεργείᾳ, with another branch of the tradition.[22] This is made clear by the fact that the same features belong to the divine Intellect of *Metaphysics* XII 7, 1072 b 26-27 (ἡ γὰρ νοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωή, ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἡ ἐνέργεια) and 1073 a 3-4 (οὐσία … ἀΐδιος καὶ ἀκίνητος καὶ κεχωρισμένη τῶν αἰσθητῶν). Now, if Themistius feels entitled to refer the adjectives "unaffected, unmixed with the body, and separate" to the human potential intellect, it is not because this point had escaped him. On the contrary. He has already stated that what brings our intellect from potentiality to actuality is another intellect, and one which is already perfect and actual:

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[21] Immediately after having mentioned the κοινόν, namely at *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 29, Aristotle places it in contrast with the intellect, which is perhaps (ἴσως) more divine and unaffected (ἀπαθής).

[22] As stated in the relevant apparatus of Ross' edition (see above n. 17), ἐνέργεια (Ross' reading) features in MS U, in Philoponus' commentary, in the commentary on the *De Anima* attributed to Simplicius, in Themistius, in Simplicius' quotation in his commentary on the *De Caelo*, and in Theophrastus as quoted by Priscianus in the *Metaphrasis* (see above, n. 8); ἐνεργείᾳ is the reading of family E, of MSS C and X, and of Philoponus' lemma.

> Οὕτω καὶ τὸν δυνάμει νοῦν ἀναγκαῖον ὑπ' ἄλλου τινὸς νοῦ τελειοῦσθαι τελείου ὄντος ἤδη καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ οὐχὶ δυνάμει, ὃς ἀνάλογον ἔχων τῇ τέχνῃ κινεῖ τὸν δυνάμει νοῦν, καὶ τὴν εὐφυίαν τὴν πρὸς τὸ νοεῖν τῆς ψυχῆς τελειοῖ καὶ ἕξιν κατασκευάζει. Καὶ ἔστιν οὗτος ὁ νοῦς χωριστός τε καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγής (*In De An.*, III 5 430 a 12-18, p. 98.29-33 Heinze).
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> Similarly, the potential intellect must be perfected by some other intellect that is already perfect, i.e. actual, not potential. [This intellect] moves the potential intellect analogously to the craft [moving matter], and it perfects the soul's natural disposition for thinking, and fully constitutes its hexis. And this intellect is separate, unaffected, and unmixed (trans. Todd, p. 123).

This separate Intellect operates similarly to the craft that imparts form to the matter. At variance with craft, however, it unites with the potential intellect, pervading it totally – something which is possible because of their affinity of nature.[23] For this reason, Themistius also feels entitled to claim that we are not only our own faculty to intelligize, i.e. our potential intellect, but also intellect in actuality: ἡμεῖς οὖν ἢ ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς ἢ ὁ ἐνεργείᾳ (p. 100.16 Heinze). This means that when our potentiality is actualized we share the nature of that Intellect that "sinks into the whole of the potential intellect" (ἐνδύεται ὅλῳ τῷ δυνάμει νῷ ὁ ποιητικός) and "pervades it totally" (δι' ὅλου αὐτοῦ φοιτᾶν).[24]

Taking this for granted, one can see why Themistius keeps apart the νοῦς δυνάμει and the νοῦς παθητικός. On the one hand there is the potential intellect, that can become intellect ἐνεργείᾳ.

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[23] At p. 99.11-18 Heinze, Themistius says: "So the status that a craft has in relation to its matter is the same that the productive intellect also has to the potential [intellect], and in this way the latter becomes all things, while the former produces all things. That is why it is also in our power to think whenever we wish; for <the productive intellect> is not outside <the potential intellect as> the craft <is outside> its matter (as [for example] the craft of forging is with bronze, or carpentry with wood), but the productive intellect settles into the whole of the potential intellect, as though the carpenter and the smith did not control their wood and bronze externally but were able to pervade it totally. For this is how the actual intellect too is added to the potential intellect and becomes one with it", trans. Todd, p. 123. Commenting upon this passage, O. Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne", *Revue de philosophie ancienne* 7 (1989), pp. 199-233, aptly remarks that Themistius' source is Plotinus' *On Intellect, the Forms, and Being* (V 9[5]), 3.20-35, that I quote here after Armstrong's translation: "And then again you will enquire whether the soul is one of the simple entities, or whether there is something in it like matter and something like form, the intellect in it, one intellect being like the shape of the bronze, and the other like the man who makes the shape in the bronze. (...) Intellect provides it [i.e., the soul] with the forming principles, as in the souls of artists the forming principles for their activities come from their arts; and that one intellect is like the form of the soul, the one which pertains to its shape, but the other is the one which provides the shape, like the maker of the statue in whom everything that he gives exists": *Plotinus* with an English Translation by A.H. Armstrong (...) in Seven Volumes, V. *Enneads V.1-9*, Harvard U.P. – Heinemann, Cambridge (MA) – London 1984 (Loeb Classical Library), p. 293.

[24] The commentary on this passage by Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne" (see the preceding note) is enlightening: "(...) Thémistius dira alors que c'est l'intellect en acte qui fait de l'intellect en puissance un intellect en acte, comme d'ailleurs des formes immergées dans la matière et intellegibles en puissance seulement il fait des intelligibles en acte (οὕτω καὶ ὁ νοῦς οὗτος ὁ ἐνεργείᾳ προαγαγὼν τὸν δυνάμει νοῦν οὐ μόνον αὐτὸν ἐνεργείᾳ νοῦν ἐποίησεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ δυνάμει νοητὰ ἐνεργείᾳ νοητὰ αὐτῷ κατεσκεύασεν, 99.1-3). L'intellect agent, lorsque donc il illumine ainsi un intellect en puissance individuel, s'unit à lui (ἐκείνῳ συμπλακεὶς τῷ δυνάμει, 98.22), s'identifie à lui (ὁ κατ' ἐνέργειαν νοῦς τῷ δυνάμει νῷ προσγενόμενος εἷς γίνεται μετ' αὐτοῦ, 99.17-18), s'insinue en lui (ἐνδύεται ὅλῳ τῷ δυνάμει νῷ ὁ ποιητικός, 99.15), car c'est de l'intérieur que l'intellect agent confère à l'intellect en puissance sa forme propre (τὴν οἰκείαν μορφήν, 109.4). C'est de l'intérieur que l'intellect en acte joue ce rôle de l'artisan (λόγον ἔχει τῆς δημιουργίας, 99.19; δημιουργεῖ, 99.25) et non de l'extérieur (μὴ ἔξωθεν, 99.16): c'est comme si le bronzier, pour faire la statue, circulait à travers le bronze (δι' ὅλου ... αὐτοῦ φοιτᾶν, 99.16-17). *Dator formae*, l'intellect en acte est aussi la forme de l'intellect en puissance et, dès lors, on s'explique que les deux intellects puissent n'en faire qu'un: ἓν γὰρ τὸ ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἰδους (108.34)" (pp. 224-5).

On the other, there is the perishable νοῦς παθητικός. The distinction between the two is rooted in Aristotle's statements, read by Themistius however in a idiosyncratic way.

At *De Anima* II 2, 413 b 24-27 Aristotle mentions intellect (νοῦς) and the theoretical faculty (θεωρητικὴ δύναμις): nothing is really clear about it, he says, but it seems indeed (ἔοικε) that it is a different kind of soul (ψυχῆς γένος ἕτερον). It is different from that part of the soul which has affections. Also, it is the only part or faculty that can subsist separatedly, like the eternal from the perishable (καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἐνδέχεται χωρίζεσθαι, καθάπερ τὸ ἀΐδιον τοῦ φθαρτοῦ). Also, as we have already seen above, at *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 24-25 Aristotle states that the νοῦς παθητικός is perishable (φθαρτός).

These two ideas are merged by Themistius into the claim that "While the common [intellect] is perishable, passive, and inseparable from and mixed with the body, the potential [intellect] is unaffected, unmixed with the body, and separate" (see above, p. 6, for the full quotation). Themistius is entitled to do so as he is guided in his exegesis by the fact that both at *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 28 and at *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 24, Aristotle says that the intellect that is immortal and eternal has no memory in so far as it is unaffected.[25]

As for Alexander of Aphrodisias, while Themistius' reconstruction of Aristotle's doctrine of the soul takes into account his interpretation, it nevertheless parts company with it. That Themistius is perfectly conversant with Alexander's works related to the *De Anima* is made evident not only by the wording of the passage of Themistius' paraphrase under examination (let's remember that "potential intellect" is a typical expression of Alexander's noetics, not of Aristotle's[26]) but also by the general stance of the paraphrase, which could simply not be understood without Alexander's *De Anima* and *Mantissa*.[27]

For a reader of Themistius' paraphrase, it is clear that Aristotle conceives of our faculty to intelligize (νοῦς δυνάμει) as separate from the body and immortal. This faculty unites with the agent intellect.[28] This said, let's move on to the quotation of Theophrastus' aporias.

A few preliminary remarks are in order about the general structure of the section that includes Theophrastus. First comes the quotation of a passage where he raises a difficulty with Aristotle's intellect in the *De Anima*. This is Fr. 307A FHS&G. Then Themistius rephrases Theophrastus' doctrine with no quotations except for two very short ones. Then again, there is another literal quotation of some length listed as Fr. 320A and 320B by FHS&G. The quotations are signalled everywhere by φησίν, "he says"; also, it is worth noting from the outset that 320B is a verbatim

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[25] As noticed by Ballériaux, "Thémistius et le néoplatonisme" (above, n. 20).

[26] In his *On Intellect*, p. 106.19-23 Bruns, Alexander established a list of the meanings of "intellect" in Aristotle on the basis of *De Anima* III 5 (see the passage quoted above, p. 4). The first item in this list, namely the ὑλικὸς νοῦς or νοῦς δυνάμει, was destined to become widespread in later philosophical literature in Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew. Many questions arise from Alexander's *On Intellect*, that cannot be discussed here – first and foremost that of authorship, which has also been challenged.

[27] Widely acknowledged in scholarship: Moraux, "Le *De Anima* dans la tradition grecque" (above n. 13), pp. 310-11; Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne" (above n. 23), p. 206 with n. 20; Todd, *Themistius. On the Soul* (above p. 6), p. 1, n. 7. Though clearly under the influence of Alexander's interpretation of the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul, Themistius does not hesitate to criticize him on occasion (*In De An*., p. 76.16-21; p. 120.17-21 Heinze); see Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne", pp. 212-13. Further scholarship on this issue includes H.J. Blumenthal, "*Nous pathētikos* in Later Greek Philosophy", in J. Annas (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy. Supplementary volume*, Oxford U.P., Oxford 1991, pp. 191-205, in part. p. 194; Ballériaux, "Thémistius et le néoplatonisme (above, n. 20), in part. pp. 173-7; R.B. Todd, "Themistius and the Traditional Interpretation of Aristotle's theory of Phantasia", *Acta Classica. Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa* 24/1 (Jan 1981), pp. 49-59, in part. p. 49; Magrin, "Theophrastus, Alexander, and Themistius" (above, n. 13), in part. p. 67.

[28] Them., *In De An*., p. 100.16-28 Heinze, a passage which will be discussed below (pp. 17-19).

quotation of part of 320A. The importance of this fact will become clear later on, or so I hope. As a conclusion, Themistius provides his interpretation of Aristotle's and Theophrastus' doctrine, taken together and compared with Plato's views.

Fr. 307A FHS&G = Themistius, *In De Anima*, pp. 107.30-108.18 Heinze contains an aporia about the nature of our faculty to intelligize, labelled νοῦς δυνάμει.

> Ἄμεινον δὲ καὶ τὰ Θεοφράστου παραθέσθαι περί τε τοῦ δυνάμει νοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ. περὶ μὲν οὖν τοῦ δυνάμει τάδε φησίν· 'ὁ δὲ νοῦς πῶς ποτε ἔξωθεν ὢν καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπίθετος ὅμως συμφυής; καὶ τίς ἡ φύσις αὐτοῦ; τὸ μὲν γὰρ μηδὲν εἶναι κατ' ἐνέργειαν, δυνάμει δὲ πάντα, καλῶς, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ αἴσθησις. οὐ γὰρ οὕτως ληπτέον ὡς οὐδὲν[29] αὐτός (ἐριστικὸν γάρ)· ἀλλ' ὡς ὑποκειμένην τινὰ δύναμιν καθάπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὑλικῶν. ἀλλὰ τὸ ἔξωθεν ἄρα οὐχ ὡς ἐπίθετον, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ γενέσει συμπεριλαμβανόμενον θετέον. πῶς δέ ποτε γίνεται τὰ νοητὰ καὶ τί τὸ πάσχειν <ὑπ'> αὐτῶν; δεῖ γάρ, εἴπερ εἰς ἐνέργειαν ἥξει καθάπερ ἡ αἴσθησις. ἀσωμάτῳ δὲ ὑπὸ σώματος τί τὸ πάθος ἢ ποία μεταβολή; καὶ πότερον ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἡ ἀρχὴ ἢ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ; τῷ μὲν γὰρ πάσχειν ἀπ' ἐκείνου δόξειεν ἄν (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τῶν ἐν πάθει)· τῷ δὲ ἀρχὴν πάντων εἶναι καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ τὸ νοεῖν, καὶ μὴ ὥσπερ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν,[30] ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. τάχα δ' ἂν φανείη καὶ τοῦτο ἄτοπον, εἰ ὁ νοῦς ὕλης ἔχει φύσιν μηδὲν ὢν ἅπαντα δὲ δυνατός (*In De An*., III 5 430 a 25, pp. 107.30-108.8 Heinze).
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> But it is better to quote Theophrastus' account of the potential and actual intellects. On the potential intellect, then, he says the following: "How can the intellect, being from without and as if added, still be naturally cognate [with the soul][31]? And what is its nature? That it is in actuality nothing, but in potentiality all things is correct, in just the same way as perception. It must not, that is, be interpreted as being itself nothing (for that would be captious), but as some underlying potentiality, in just the same way as with material [bodies]. But 'from outside' is not, then, to be understood as 'added', but as 'being encompassed in the first generation [of the soul]'. 'How can [the potential intellect] become the objects of thought, and what is the [activity of] being affected <by> them? For this must [occur], if [the potential intellect] is going to come to actuality as sense-perception does. But what affection [is produced] on an incorporeal [object] by a corporeal [object],[32] and what kind of change [is this]? And is the source [of the change] from the object or from the [intellect] itself? Because [the intellect] is affected, it would seem to be from the object (for nothing that is affected is so from itself). Yet because the intellect is the source of all things, and thinking is in its power, unlike the senses, [the source of the change would seem to be] from within itself. But perhaps this too would seem absurd if the [potential] intellect has the nature of matter by being [in actuality] nothing, yet potentially all things" (trans. Todd, p. 133, modified).

The main perplexity that Theophrastus has on other vital points of Aristotle's philosophy, namely how to combine the transcendence of the principles and the necessity to account for the world of coming-to-be and passing away,[33] resurfaces also in this aporia about the intellect. Theophrastus' move

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[29] Heinze reads here οὐδέ, which Todd corrects into οὐδέν (p. 190, n. 73). He suggests in the apparatus that the reading οὐδέ should be interpreted as ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἔλαβεν, wich would give rise to the following meaning: "it must not be interpreted in a way that Aristotle himself would not have accepted, for that would be captious".

[30] Punctuation changed after Todd, who relies (p. 190, n. 75) on Hicks (above, n. 10) and Barbotin, *La théorie aristotélicienne de l'intellect d'après Théophraste* (above, n. 13).

[31] Todd's rendition for συμφυής is "innate [to the soul]".

[32] Todd translates "by an incorporeal [object]", following a suggestion made by Heinze in his apparatus: σώματος] fort. ἀσωμάτου, that was met with approval also by Hicks (quoted above, n. 10), p. 590.

[33] Theophrastus, *On First Principles* (above, n. 12), § 2 Usener: "The starting point is, whether [there is] some connec-

was destined to influence the subsequent history of the reception of the *De Anima* in the Peripatetic tradition as a whole. As remarked in the scholarship from Hicks onwards,[34] Themistius' quotation attests that the attempt at solving the problems raised by *De Anima* III 5 by having recourse to the *De Generatione animalium* dates back to Aristotle's contemporary and successor Theophrastus. Indeed, what was made widespread by Alexander of Aphrodisias, namely the identification of the ποιητικόν of the *De Anima* with the θύραθεν of the *De Generatione animalium*, is rooted in Theophrastus' aporia. Should we say that the intellect is of the same nature as our soul, or rather that it comes from outisde (ἔξωθεν in Theophrastus, θύραθεν in Aristotle), as something that supervenes? Theophrastus' ἐπίθετος is the obvious antecedent of Alexander's ἐπίκτητος.[35] Alexander answers famously in the affirmative to the question whether the intellect, taken as the actual intelligizing, supervenes in us from outside. This implies elaborating more on the two Aristotelian texts already combined together in Theophrastus' aporia. In a way that the divine νοῦς of *Metaphysics Lambda* is identified with the νοῦς that comes from outside, enabling our potential intellect to actually intelligize. Alexander parts company with Theophrastus on the solution, although his starting point is Theophrastus' aporia. Theophrastus' solution goes against supervenience insofar as he says that "from outside" does not mean "added, ἐπίθετος", and that the intellect is "encompassed in the first generation, συμπεριλαμβανόμενον". For Alexander, instead, the intellect in us supervenes from outside, either as the principle that actualizes the intelligible forms (the solution of Alexander's *De Anima*) or as the principle that directly actualizes the potential intellect (the solution of Alexander's Περὶ νοῦ).[36] In a sense, Themistius follows in Alexander's footsteps. Indeed, also for Themistius, as we shall see in a while, the aporia brings about its own solution, and one which will be led back to Aristotle's doctrine. Themistius outlines Theophrastus' argument as follows:

> καὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς μακρὸν ἂν εἴη παρατίθεσθαι καίτοι μὴ μακρῶς εἰρημένα, ἀλλὰ λίαν συντόμως τε καὶ βραχέως τῇ γε λέξει· τοῖς γὰρ πράγμασι μεστά ἐστι πολλῶν μὲν ἀποριῶν, πολλῶν δὲ ἐπιστάσεων, πολλῶν δὲ λύσεων. ἔστι δὲ ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ τῶν Φυσικῶν, δευτέρῳ δὲ τῶν Περὶ ψυχῆς, ἐξ ὧν ἁπάντων δῆλόν ἐστιν, ὅτι καὶ περὶ τοῦ δυνάμει νοῦ σχεδὸν τὰ αὐτὰ διαποροῦσιν, εἴτε ἔξωθέν ἐστιν εἴτε συμφυής, καὶ διορίζειν πειρῶνται, πῶς μὲν ἔξωθεν πῶς δὲ συμφυής. λέγουσι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπαθῆ καὶ χωριστόν, ὥσπερ τὸν ποιητικὸν καὶ τὸν ἐνεργείᾳ· 'ἀπαθὴς γάρ' φησιν 'ὁ νοῦς, εἰ μὴ ἄρα ἄλλως παθητικός', καὶ ὅτι τὸ παθητικὸν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ οὐχ ὡς τὸ κινητὸν ληπτέον (ἀτελὴς γὰρ ἡ κίνησις), ἀλλ' ὡς ἐνέργειαν. καὶ προϊὼν φησι τὰς μὲν αἰσθήσεις οὐκ ἄνευ σώματος, τὸν δὲ νοῦν χωριστόν (*In De An*. III 5, 430 a 25, p. 108.8-18 Heinze).

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tion and something like a mutual association between intelligibles and the [things] of nature, or [there is] none, but the two are, as it were, separated, though somehow both contributing to bring about all of existence" (trans. Gutas, pp. 111-13).

[34] See above n. 16 and the commentary on Fr. 320A FHS&G by P. Huby - D. Gutas, *Theophrastus of Eresus, Commentary Volume 4, Psychology (Texts 265-327)*, Brill, Leiden 1999 (Philosophia Antiqua, 81), pp. 184-5. See also J. Glucker, "Theophrastus and the Peripatos", in van Ophuijsen - van Raalte (eds.), *Theophrastus. Reappraising Sources* (above, n. 12), pp. 281-98, in part. p. 285 and n. 7; Huby, "Medieval Evidence for Theophrastus' Discussion of the Intellect" (above, n. 6), in part. p. 169; Devereux, "Theophrastus on Intellect" (above, n. 13), in part. pp. 42-3.

[35] Huby, "Medieval Evidence for Theophrastus' Discussion of the Intellect", p. 169.

[36] Scholars have noticed time and again the differences between Alexander's *De Intellectu* and *De Anima*. The basic documentation is provided by P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen von Andronikos bis Alexander von Aphrodisias, vol. III, Alexander von Aphrodisias*, ed. by J. Wiesner, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 2001, pp. 317-53 (on Alexander's lost commentary on the *De Anima*), pp. 354-85 (Alexander's own *De Anima*), and pp. 386-94 (*De Intellectu*), and the survey of the principal issues by the late lamented P. Accattino, "Alessandro di Afrodisia interprete del *De Anima* di Aristotele", *Studia graeco-arabica* 4 (2014), pp. 275-88.

> It would prolong this to quote the next part too, although it is not stated at length, but in fact in too compressed and concise a way, in style at least. For in its content it is replete with numerous problems, analyses, and solutions. These are in Book Five of his *Physics*, which is Book Two of his *On the Soul*, from all of which it is clear that they [Aristotle and Theophrastus] work through essentially the same problems regarding the potential intellect too ("Is it from without or naturally cognate?"), and they try to define in what sense it is from without, and in what sense it is cognate. They say that [the potential intellect] is also unaffected and separate, just like the intellect that is productive and actual. "For intellect", he says, "is unaffected, unless it is passive in some other way". And [he says] that in its case 'being passive' must not be understood as "being moveable" (for movement is imperfect), but as activity. And he goes on to say that there are no senses without a body, but the [potential] intellect is separate [from body] (trans. Todd, p. 133, modified).

This passage is extremely valuable for Theophrastean studies, since it locates the quotations in two of his works: the *Physics* and *On the Soul*.[37] Furthermore it is important also from the point of view of the history of philosophy. It attests Themistius' transformation of the aporia raised by Theophrastus into a solution that makes the two horns compatible with each other, provided that the distinction is made between the sense in which intellect is naturally cognate with us (συμφυής) and that in which it comes from outside (ἔξωθεν). Another important point in this passage that has been noticed time and again,[38] is the shift from the singular φησίν to the plural λέγουσι that occurs after Themistius' remark that both Aristotle and Theophrastus were looking for a solution apt to make the two horns of the dilemma compatible. The solution shared by both consists in keeping apart the potential intellect that is unaffected and separate as the agent intellect (ὥσπερ τὸν ποιητικὸν καὶ τὸν ἐνεργείᾳ) and the passive intellect (τὸ παθητικόν). What belongs only to Theophrastus – note the shift back to the singular φησιν reiterated by ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῦ and by καὶ προϊών φησι – is that Theophrastus hihglights the difference between παθητικόν and κινητόν. While the former adjective applies to intellect, the latter does not.

The second extended literal quotation elaborates more on the nature of the potential intellect. It is listed as Fr. 320A FHS&G = Them., *In De An.*, pp. 108.18-109.1 Heinze. Part of this fragment is quoted also earlier by Themistius, at p. 102.24-29 Heinze, and is listed as Fr. 320B by FHS&G.

> ἁψάμενος δὲ καὶ τῶν περὶ τοῦ ποιητικοῦ νοῦ διωρισμένων Ἀριστοτέλει ‘ἐκεῖνο’ φησὶν ‘ἐπισκεπτέον, ὃ δή φαμεν ἐν πάσῃ φύσει τὸ μὲν ὡς ὕλην καὶ δυνάμει, τὸ δὲ αἴτιον καὶ ποιητικόν’, καὶ ὅτι ἀεὶ τιμιώτερον τὸ ποιοῦν τοῦ πάσχοντος, καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ὕλης. Ταῦτα μὲν ἀποδέχεται, διαπορεῖ δέ· ‘τίνε οὖν αὗται αἱ δύο φύσεις; καὶ τί πάλιν τὸ ὑποκείμενον ἢ συνηρτημένον τῷ ποιητικῷ; μικτὸν γάρ πως ὁ νοῦς ἔκ τε τοῦ ποιητικοῦ καὶ τοῦ δυνάμει. εἰ μὲν οὖν σύμφυτος ὁ κινῶν, καὶ εὐθὺς ἐχρῆν καὶ ἀεί· εἰ δὲ ὕστερον, μετὰ τίνος καὶ πῶς ἡ γένεσις; ἔοικε δ᾽ οὖν[39] ὡς

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[37] See above, n. 9. On the basis of Themistius' testimony, some scholars have suggested that Theophrastus' *On the Soul* might coincide with books 4-5 of his *Physics*; the latter, in eight books, is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius. The issue is discussed, with the relevant bibliography, by R.W. Sharples, *Theophrastus of Eresus, Sources for his Life, Writings, Thought and Influence. Commentary Volume 3.1: Sources on Physics (Texts 137-223), with Contributions on the Arabic Materials* by D. Gutas, Brill, Leiden 1998 (Philosophia Antiqua, 79), pp. 2-5.

[38] See Huby – Gutas, *Theophrastus of Eresus, Commentary Volume 4* (above, n. 34), pp. 116-21,

[39] Todd translates "substance" on the basis of his n. 80 of p. 134: "For *d'oun hôs* (108.26) I read *d'ousia*, proposed by Browne (242) on the basis of the Arabic version; the variant is apparently not in the Arabic in the earlier version of this passage at 102.28. It is supported by 108.32-4 where Theophrastus is taken to be proposing that the actual and potential intellects are a separate compound related as form to matter; also cf. Themistius at 49.9 above for the contemplative intellect as *ousia*".

ἀγένητος, εἴπερ καὶ ἄφθαρτος. ἐνυπάρχων δ' οὖν διὰ τί οὐκ ἀεί; ἢ διὰ τί λήθη καὶ ἀπάτη καὶ ψεῦδος; ἢ διὰ τὴν μῖξιν'.

In also addressing the distinctions drawn by Aristotle regarding the productive intellect, he says, "What must be investigated is our saying that in the whole of nature one thing is like matter, and is in potentiality, while another is causative and productive"; and that "That which produces [an affection] is always more valuable than that which is affected, and the first principle [more valuable] than the matter". While accepting this, he still pursues problems: "What, then, are these two natures? And what, furthermore, is that which is substrate for, and conjoint partner of, the productive intellect? For the intellect is somehow mixed out of that which is productive and that which is potential. So if the [intellect] that moves is innate [to the soul], it would also have [to be so] originally and perpetually. But if [the intellect that moves] is a later [development], with what, and how, does it come into existence? It seems that if indeed it is also imperishable, it is a substance that does not come into existence. If it is inherent [to the soul], why is it not always? Why is there loss of memory, confusion and falsity? It is because of the mixture [with the passive intellect]" (trans. Todd, pp. 133-4, modified).[40]

For Theophrastus the solution of the aporia which derives from the conflicting features of the productive intellect and the potential one can be found in the interpretation that intellect arises from the union of potentiality and actuality, and is "somehow mixed out of that which is productive and that which is potential". Indeed, as noticed first by Hicks, mixture is the key notion of this passage.[41] Let's now turn to Themistius' interpretation.

ἐξ ὧν ἁπάντων δῆλόν ἐστιν, ὅτι οὐ φαύλως ὑπονοοῦμεν ἄλλον μέν τινα παρ' αὐτοῖς εἶναι τὸν παθητικὸν νοῦν καὶ φθαρτόν, ὃν καὶ κοινὸν ὀνομάζουσι καὶ ἀχώριστον τοῦ σώματος, καὶ διὰ τὴν πρὸς τοῦτον μῖξιν τὴν λήθην καὶ τὴν ἀπάτην γίνεσθαί φησιν ὁ Θεόφραστος· ἄλλον δὲ τὸν ὥσπερ συγκείμενον ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ, ὃν καὶ χωριστὸν τοῦ σώματος εἶναι τιθέασι καὶ ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀγένητον, καὶ πῶς μὲν δύο φύσεις τούτους τοὺς νοῦς, πῶς δὲ μίαν· ἓν γὰρ τὸ ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἴδους. ἀλλ' ὅπερ εἶπον, τὸ μὲν ἀποφαίνεσθαι περὶ τοῦ δοκοῦντος τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἰδίας καὶ σχολῆς ἐστι καὶ φροντίδος, ὅτι δὲ μάλιστα ἄν τις ἐξ ὧν συνηγάγομεν ῥήσεων λάβοι τὴν περὶ τούτων γνῶσιν Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ Θεοφράστου, μᾶλλον δὲ ἴσως καὶ αὐτοῦ Πλάτωνος, τοῦτο γοῦν πρόχειρον ἴσως διισχυρίζεσθαι (*In De An.*, pp. 108.28-109.3 Heinze).

From all this it is clear that our assumption is not mistaken: that for [Theophrastus and Aristotle] there is (1) one intellect that is the passive and the perishable one, that they also call "common" and "inseparable from the body" (and it is because of mixture with it that Theophrastus says that loss of memory and confusion

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[40] This aporia is quoted by Themistius twice: first at p. 102.24-29 Heinze (= Fr. 320B FHS&G); then, some pages later, it features once again, together with its wider context, at pp. 108.18-109.1 Heinze (= Fr. 320A FHS&G).

[41] This point was noticed by Hicks (above n. 10) who commented upon Theophrastus' aporia as follows: "On this last important problem [*sc.* the twofold nature of the intellect] he gives no uncertain sound. Intellect, presumably the human intellect, is in a manner composite, μεικτόν πως: cf. the last words διὰ τὴν μεῖξιν. One of the two elements, viz. that which serves as substratum or correlate to the other, the active element, he identifies with the capacity or potentiality of thinking, ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς. As to that which is the agent (ὁ κινῶν), it must be both ἀγένητος and ἄφθαρτος. But we have our choice of alternatives: either we may assume it to be connatural with the man, σύμφυτος, in which case it must have been active from the moment of birth and unintermittently; or we may suppose it to be a later growth, and then we must perforce explain how it springs up in him and what brings it there. But (...) it is clear that on the origin of intellect as a whole he accepted the conclusions of *De Gen. An.* II., c. 3" (p. 595).

> occur); and (2) another that is the intellect that is as though compounded from the potential and actual [intellects], and this they posit as separate from body, imperishable, and not coming into existence. These intellects are in some sense two natures, and in some sense one and the same nature, for what [is combined] from matter and form is one. But, as I have said, making claims about what philosophers believe involves special study (*skholê*) and reflection. Still, it does seem perhaps relevant to insist that someone could best understand the insight of Aristotle and Theophrastus on these [matters], indeed perhaps also that of Plato himself, from the passages that we have gathered (trans. Todd, modified, p. 134).

Note that Theophrastus' mixture takes place between the potential and the productive intellect.[42] Themistius is speaking, instead, of some sort of union between the passive intellect (νοῦς παθητικός) discussed earlier in this paper[43] and the intellect, that in Theophrastus' account results from the mixture between the potential and the productive ones. The key to understanding why Themistius feels entitled to refer his exegesis in one stroke both to Theophrastus and to Aristotle is to be found in the fact that for Themistius, as we have seen before, the νοῦς παθητικός of *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 24-25 coincides with the κοινόν of *De Anima* I 4, 408 b 28. Now he says that both Aristotle and Theophrastus maintain that our intellect results from the mixture of the potential and productive intellect, and that it is different from that part of our soul that they both label (ὀνομάζουσι, plural) "common" and "inseparable from the body".

Themistius' summary of the passage taken from Theophrastus seems inaccurate on two counts: first, Theophrastus does not mention the νοῦς παθητικός, nor the κοινόν – or at least not so in the passages quoted and commented upon by Themistius; second, his phrasing entails that for Theophrastus the cause of "loss of memory and confusion" is mixture with body, namely the typical feature of the νοῦς παθητικός / κοινόν, while Theophrastus was speaking of a totally different kind of mixture, that between the potential and productive intellect. But 'inaccurate' is probably not the right word. In the next section, I will try to argue for another explanation.

2. Peripatetic Psychology Revisited

That in this section of the paraphrase Plotinus' ideas are aired has already been noticed by O. Ballériaux, who also called attention to Themistius' reference to one of his treatises.[44] Thus

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[42] Theophrastus' "mixture" has attracted scholarly attention. According to Barbotin, *La théorie aristotélicienne de l'intellect d'après Théophraste* (above, n. 13), p. 199, the new entity that is the outcome of the mixture shares the nature of both. For Devereux, "Theophrastus on Intellect" (above, n. 13), p. 42, the main point is that two elements of the new entity – our intellect – must be altered in order to intermingle, and this because of the Aristotelian definition of mixture given in the *De Generatione et corruptione*; hence, for him, the productive intellect acquires something from the passive nature of the potential intellect, and vice versa. The issue is discussed in detail by M. Gabbe, *Theophrastus and the Intellect as Mixture*, Philosophy Faculty Publications. Department of Philosophy, University of Dayton 2008. On the basis of a comparison between Priscian's and Themistius' accounts, Gabbe comes to the conclusion that "'the productive and the potential' refers, neither to distinct intellects nor to opposed noetic powers, but to the very same thing: an acquired ability to render the world intelligible in active contemplation. (…) On the interpretation here offered, the application of the description 'mixture' to the intellect is not meant to emphasize the intellect's duality. But let us recall that a genuine mixture does not result in duality, but uniformity; all parts of a mixture are alike. This, then, is what I take Theophrastus to emphasize with the notion of the intellect as a mixture: not differentiation and division, but uniformity, singularity and wholeness" (pp. 31-3).

[43] See above, pp. 11-13.

[44] Themistius refers to Plotinus in a somewhat critical vein. As noticed by Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne" (above n. 23), pp. 217-8, Themistius (*In De An*., p. 104.15-23 Heinze) objects that instead of asking whether all souls are one and the same, one should ask whether all intellects are one and the same. The question whether all souls are one and the same soul is the subject-matter of IV 9[8].

it comes as no surprise that the Aristotelian κοινόν and the Plotinian analysis of the body-soul interactions merge together in Themistius' interpretation.

In his penultimate treatise *What is the Living Being, and What is Man?* (I 1[53]), placed by Porphyry at the very beginning of the *Enneads*,[45] Plotinus raises the following question:

> I 1[53], 1.1-14
>
> Ἡδοναὶ καὶ λῦπαι φόβοι τε καὶ θάρρη ἐπιθυμίαι τε καὶ ἀποστροφαὶ καὶ τὸ ἀλγεῖν τίνος ἂν εἶεν; Ἢ γὰρ ψυχῆς, ἢ χρωμένης ψυχῆς σώματι, ἢ τρίτου τινὸς ἐξ ἀμφοῖν. Διχῶς δὲ καὶ τοῦτο· ἢ γὰρ τὸ μῖγμα, ἢ ἄλλο ἕτερον ἐκ τοῦ μίγματος. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐκ τούτων τῶν παθημάτων γινόμενα καὶ πραττόμενα καὶ δοξαζόμενα. Καὶ οὖν καὶ διάνοια καὶ δόξα ζητητέαι, πότερα ὧν τὰ πάθη, ἢ αἱ μὲν οὕτως, αἱ δὲ ἄλλως. Καὶ τὰς νοήσεις δὲ θεωρητέον, πῶς καὶ τίνος, καὶ δὴ καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ ἐπισκοποῦν καὶ περὶ τούτων τὴν ζήτησιν καὶ τὴν κρίσιν ποιούμενον τί ποτ' ἂν εἴη. Καὶ πρότερον τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι τίνος; Ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ ἄρχεσθαι προσήκει, ἐπείπερ τὰ πάθη ἤ εἰσιν αἰσθήσεις τινὲς ἢ οὐκ ἄνευ αἰσθήσεως.
>
> Pleasures and sadnesses, fears and assurances, desires and aversions and pain – whose are they? They either belong to the soul or to the soul using a body or a third thing composed of both (and this can be understood in two ways, either as meaning the mixture or another different thing resulting from the mixture). The same applies to the results of these feelings, both acts and opinions. So we must investigate reasoning and opinion, to see whether they belong to the same as the feelings, or whether this is true of some reasonings and opinions, and something different of others. We must also consider intellectual acts and see how they take place and who or what they belong to, and observe what sort of thing is that acts as overseer and carries out the investigation and come to a decision about these matters. And, first of all, who or what does sensation belong to? That is where we ought to begin, as feelings are either a sort of sensations or do not occur without sensation (trans. Armstrong, vol. I, p. 95).

The answer is difficult, because on the one hand Plotinus has to stick to the Platonic tenet that man is his rational soul; on the other hand, it is absolutely clear in his mind that the subject of affections – as noticed chiefly by Aristotle in the *De Anima* – must be something common to the soul and the body. Plotinus elaborates more on the συναμφότερον of the *First Alcibiades* (130 A 9), in the light of the *Timaeus* definition of the soul as διαπλακεῖσα, intertwined with the body (*Tim*. 36 E 2, where however the expression refers to the cosmic soul). He reshapes the Platonic notion of the soul in terms of mixture: θῶμεν τοίνυν μεμῖχθαι, "Let us assume, then, that there is a mixture" (I 1[53], 4.1, trans. Armstrong). On the one hand, soul is the principle of life in the living being: this is the subject of the affections; on the other, soul is rational, and reason is crowned by the intellect[46] which is impassive and uninterruptedly connected with the intelligible reality: a *conditio sine qua non* for our intellectual knowledge. The fact that our reasoning cannot occur if not in connection with the intelligible forms has little or nothing to do with the fact that we are aware of this phenomenon: usually we are not, but this bears only on our capacity to understand how things are, and things are so that the intelligible principles or each sound reasoning must be within the reach of the reasoning soul. This implies that there is a part or a faculty of our soul that

[45] My understanding of this treatise owes much to the commentary by C. Marzolo, *Plotino. Che cos'è l'essere vivente, e che cos'è l'uomo? I 1[53]*, Pisa U.P., Pisa 2006 (Greco, arabo, latino. Le vie del sapere, 1).

[46] In itself, an echo of the distinction and connection of διάνοια and νοῦς in Plato's *Republic* VI, 511 D 2-5.

is intrinsecally united with them.[47] But soul is by no means only this. It is also the living being, and the living being cannot be conceived of as the sum of soul and body (another way to say that the dualism that was imputed to Plato is untenable).[48] The living being is a third reality, a real mixture, an amphibious being.

I 1[53], 5.1-3
Ἀλλὰ τὸ ζῷον ἢ τὸ σῶμα δεῖ λέγειν τὸ τοιόνδε, ἢ τὸ κοινόν, ἢ ἕτερόν τι τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν γεγενημένον.

But we must define the living being as either the body of this special kind, or the community of body and soul, or another, third thing, the product of both (trans. Armstrong, vol. I, p. 103).

Thus Plotinus has identified the subject of the affections, and is confident he has demonstrated that Plato was by no means a naive dualist. his move to combine together the συναμφότερον of the *First Alcibiades* and the Aristotelian entelechy – soul as the life of the living being – allows him to answer the starting question "Pleasures and sadnesses, fears and assurances, desires and aversions and pain – whose are they?" in the following way:

I 1[53], 7.1-6
Ἢ τὸ συναμφότερον ἔστω τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ παρεῖναι οὐχ αὑτὴν δούσης τῆς τοιαύτης εἰς τὸ συναμφότερον ἢ εἰς θάτερον, ἀλλὰ ποιούσης ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ τοιούτου καί τινος οἷον φωτὸς τοῦ παρ᾽ αὐτὴν δοθέντος τὴν τοῦ ζῴου φύσιν ἕτερόν τι, οὗ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα ζῴου πάθη εἴρηται.

Let us say that it is the compound which perceives, and that the soul by its presence does not give itself qualified in a particular way either to the compound or to the other members of it, but makes, out of the qualified body and a sort of light which is given near to it, the nature of the living creature, another different thing to which belong sense-perception and all other affections which are ascribed to the living body (trans. Armstrong modified, vol. I, p. 109).

Only a percipient reader of this treatise might have conceived of the Platonic doctrine of the soul as an ally in the solution of Theophrastus' riddle. Themistius was such a percipient reader. When he met with Theophrastus' discussion of the origins of "loss of memory, confusion and falsity" as originated by the mixture, he reshaped it in the Neoplatonic vein that was inspired to him by Plotinus' treatment of the composite whole: our soul.

I said at the beginning that the Theophrastean aporias are encapsulated by Themistius in a treatment of *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 14-25 that opens and ends with a loose reference to Plato.[49] He openly declares that the riddle the solution to which has been reached thanks to the

[47] This is a rough summary of a typical Plotinian doctrine, that of the so-called "undescended soul", that has been repeatedly dealt with in scholarship: see J.M. Rist, "Integration and the Undescended Soul in Plotinus", *American Journal of Philology* 88 (1967), pp. 410-22; C. D'Ancona *et al.*, *Plotino. La discesa dell'anima nei corpi (IV 8[6]). Plotiniana Arabica (Teologia di Aristotele, I e VII; "Detti del Sapiente Greco")*, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2003 (Subsidia mediaevalia patavina, 4); A. Schniewind, "Les âmes amphibies et les causes de leur différence. À propos de Plotin, *Enn*. IV 8[6], 4.31-5", in R. Chiaradonna (ed.), *Studi sull'anima in Plotino*, Bibliopolis, Napoli 2005 (Elenchos. Collana di testi e studi sul pensiero antico, 42), pp. 179-200.

[48] This point is highlighted by C. D'Ancona in her preface to *Plotino. Che cos'è l'essere vivente, e che cos'è l'uomo? I 1[53]* (above, n. 45).

[49] Magrin, "Theophrastus, Alexander, and Themistius" (above, n. 13), p. 73, accounts for the reference to Plato in a

harmony of Plato, Aristotle, and Theophrastus consists in that the soul is liable to affections, but at one and the same time also capable of actual intellection. Remember that when Themistius accounted for the actualization of the capability of the potential intellect to intelligize, it was to a separate intellect perfect, always actual and never potential (τελείου ὄντος ἤδη καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ οὐχὶ δυνάμει) that he had recourse.[50] Themistius says in as many words that this intellect that operates on our potential intellect like the art of a craftsman cannot be the divine Intellect of *Metaphysics Lambda*, and here again the Plotinian source has already been detected.[51] That Plotinus' treatise *What is the Living Being, and What is Man?* is not a loose inspiration but a real source becomes clear in the comparison between Themistius' and Plotinus' treatment of our real "self".

> Ἡμεῖς οὖν ἢ ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς ἢ ὁ ἐνεργείᾳ. εἴπερ οὖν ἄλλο ἐπὶ τῶν συγκειμένων ἁπάντων ἔκ τε τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ τὸ τόδε καὶ τὸ τῷδε <εἶναι>, ἄλλο ἂν εἴη καὶ τὸ ἐγὼ καὶ τὸ ἐμοὶ εἶναι, καὶ ἐγὼ μὲν ὁ συγκείμενος νοῦς ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ, τὸ δὲ ἐμοὶ εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ ἐστίν, ὥστε καὶ ἃ διανοοῦμαι ταῦτα, καὶ ἃ συγγράφω, γράφει μὲν ὁ σύνθετος νοῦς ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ, γράφει δὲ οὐχ ᾗ δυνάμει, ἀλλ' ᾗ ἐνεργείᾳ· τὸ γὰρ ἐνεργεῖν ἐκεῖθεν αὐτῷ ἐποχετεύεται. εἰ δὲ οὐχ οἷός τε δέξασθαι ἀμερῶς, ἃ ἐκεῖνος δίδωσιν ἀμερῶς, οὐδὲν θαυμαστόν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων τὰς ποιότητας αἱ ὕλαι δέχονται ἀμερῶς, καίτοι κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον λόγον ἀμερεῖς οὔσας, ἀλλὰ τὴν λευκότητα ἀμέριστον οὖσαν δέχεται μεμερισμένως ἡ ὕλη. ὥσπερ οὖν ἄλλο τὸ ζῶον καὶ ἄλλο τὸ ζῴῳ εἶναι, καὶ τὸ ζῴῳ εἶναι παρὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐστι τοῦ ζώου, οὕτω καὶ ἄλλο μὲν τὸ ἐγώ, ἄλλο δὲ τὸ ἐμοὶ εἶναι· μόνος γὰρ οὗτος εἶδος ἦν ἀκριβῶς, μᾶλλον δὲ οὗτος εἶδος εἰδῶν, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα καὶ ὑποκείμενα ἅμα καὶ εἴδη, καὶ προῄει δὴ [αὐτῶν] ἡ φύσις εἴδεσι μὲν πρὸς τὰ ἀτιμότερα αὐτοῖς χρωμένη, ὕλαις δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἐντιμότερα. ἔσχατον δὲ καὶ ἀκρότατον τῶν εἰδῶν ὁ ποιητικὸς οὗτος νοῦς, καὶ ἄχρι τούτου προελθοῦσα ἡ φύσις ἀπεπαύσατο ὡς μηδὲν ἔχουσα ἕτερον τιμιώτερον, ὅτῳ δ ἂν αὐτὸν ἐποίησεν ὑποκείμενον. ἡμεῖς οὖν ὁ ποιητικὸς νοῦς, καὶ εἰκότως Ἀριστοτέλης ἀπορεῖ πρὸς ἑαυτόν, πῶς οὖν μετὰ τὸ θάνατον οὐ μνεμονεύομεν ὧν ἐνταῦθα νοήσωμεν; καὶ ἡ λύσις ἀκόλουθος καὶ τοῖς ἀρτίως περὶ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τοῖς πρότερον εἰρημένοις, ὅτι ὁ μὲν ποιητικός ἀπαθής, ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτός (*In De An.*, pp. 100.16-101.4 Heinze).
>
> We, then, are the potential intellect or the actual [intellect]. So if, in the case of everything that is combined from what is potential and actual, something and what is to be something are distinct, then I and what it is to be me will also be distinct, and while I am the intellect combined from the potential and the actual [intellects], what it is to be me comes from the actual [intellect]. Thus while the intellect combined from the potential and the actual [intellects] is writing what I am [now] discursively thinking about and composing, it is writing not *qua* potential but *qua* actual [intellect], for activity from the [actual intellect][52] is channelled to it. (It is not strange that the potential

different way: "we should see in Alexander's and Themistius' noetics the development of two different lines of interpretation of Aristotle's *De Anima* III.4-5 that originate from an attempt at solving the aporiai Theophrastus raised on the content of these chapters. Theophrastus reads *De Anima* III 4-5 as the Aristotelian attempt to come to terms with Plato's theory of recollection as presented in the *Phaedrus* and the *Phaedo*, and he raises against Aristotle the same kind of problems one might raise against Plato".

[50] See above, p. 8 and n. 23 and 24.

[51] The point is discussed in detail by Ballériaux, "Thémistius et l'exégèse de la noétique aristotélicienne" (above, n. 23).

[52] Todd interprets ἐκεῖθεν as "the [potential] intellect", but this entails that an activity is channelled (ἐποχεύεται)

intellect is unable without being divided into parts to receive what the actual intellect grants in that way, for in the case of [physical] bodies their matter does not receive qualities without being divided into parts, although qualities are by their own definition not divided into parts; instead, matter receives in a state of division into parts whiteness [for example] that is [itself] not divided into parts). So just as the living being and what it is to be a living being are distinct, and the latter comes from the soul of the living being, so too I and and what it is to be me are distinct. Thus what is to be me is, then, derived from the soul, yet from this not in its totality – not, that is, from the faculty of perception, which is matter for the imagination, nor again from the faculty of imagination, which is matter for the potential intellect, nor from the potential intellect, which is matter for the productive intellect. What is to be me is, accordingly, derived from the productive intellect alone, since this alone is form in a precise sense, and indeed this is "a form of forms", and the other things are at once both substrates and forms, and nature indeed progresses by using them as forms for less estimable things, and as matter for more estimable ones. But ultimate and supreme among forms is the productive intellect, and when nature has advanced as far as it, stopped, as she had nothing else more estimable for which she could have made it a substrate. We, then, are the productive intellect, and it is reasonable for Aristotle to raise for himself the problem of why we do not, therefore, remember after death whatever we think here. And the solution, entailed both by his present and by his earlier statements about the intellect, is that the productive [intellect] is unaffected, while the passive [intellect] is perishable (trans. Todd, modified, pp. 124-5).

The disctinction between what is "ours" and our true self comes from Aristotle,[53] but in his identification between our actual intellect and our true essence Themistius echoes Plotinus.

I 1[53], 7.7-20

Ἀλλὰ πῶς ἡμεῖς αἰσθανόμεθα; Ἢ, ὅτι οὐκ ἀπηλλάγημεν τοῦ τοιούτου ζῴου, καὶ εἰ ἄλλα ἡμῖν τιμιώτερα εἰς τὴν ὅλην ἀνθρώπου οὐσίαν ἐκ πολλῶν οὖσαν πάρεστι. Τὴν δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ αἰσθάνεσθαι δύναμιν οὐ τῶν αἰσθητῶν εἶναι δεῖ, τῶν δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἐγγιγνομένων τῷ ζῴῳ τύπων ἀντιληπτικὴν εἶναι μᾶλλον· νοητὰ γὰρ ἤδη ταῦτα· ὡς τὴν αἴσθησιν τὴν ἔξω εἴδωλον εἶναι ταύτης, ἐκείνην δὲ ἀληθεστέραν τῇ οὐσίᾳ οὖσαν εἰδῶν μόνων ἀπαθῶς εἶναι θεωρίαν. Ἀπὸ δὴ τούτων τῶν εἰδῶν, ἀφ' ὧν ψυχὴ ἤδη παραδέχεται μόνη τὴν τοῦ ζῴου ἡγεμονίαν, διάνοιαι δὴ καὶ δόξαι καὶ νοήσεις· ἔνθα δὴ ἡμεῖς μάλιστα. Τὰ δὲ πρὸ τούτων ἡμέτερα, ἡμεῖς δὴ τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἄνω ἐφεστηκότες τῷ ζῴῳ. Κωλύσει δὲ οὐδὲν τὸ σύμπαν ζῷον λέγειν, μικτὸν μὲν τὰ κάτω, τὸ δὲ ἐντεῦθεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀληθὴς σχεδόν· ἐκεῖνα δὲ τὸ λεοντῶδες καὶ τὸ ποικίλον ὅλως θηρίον. Συνδρόμου γὰρ ὄντος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῇ λογικῇ ψυχῇ, ὅταν λογιζώμεθα, ἡμεῖς λογιζόμεθα τῷ τοὺς λογισμοὺς ψυχῆς εἶναι ἐνεργήματα.

But then, how is it we who perceive? It is because we are not separated from the living being so qualified, even if other things too, of more value, enter into the composition of the whole essence of man, which is made up of many elements. And soul's power of sense-perception need not be perception of sense-objects, but rather it must be receptive of the impressions produced by sensation on the living being; these are already intelligible entities. So external sensation is the image of this perception of the soul, which is in its essence truer and is a contemplation of forms alone without being affected. From these forms, from which the soul alone receives its lordship over the living being, come reasonings, and

from the potential intellect, which is something that sounds difficult to accept.

[53] Arist., *De Anima* III 4, 429 b 10-14.

> opinions and acts of intuitive intelligence; and this precisely is where "we" are. That which comes before this is "ours", but "we", in our presidency over the living being, are what extends from this point upwards. But there will be no objection to calling the whole thing "living being"; the lower parts of it are something mixed, the part which begins on the level of thought is, I suppose, the true man: those lower parts are the "lion-like" (*Rep*. IX, 509 A 9) and altogether "the various beast" (*Rep*. IX, 588 C 7). Since man coincides with the rational soul, when we reason it is really we who reason because rational processes are activities of the soul (trans. Armstrong modified, vol. I, pp. 109-11).

That Themistius included in his treatment of the *De Anima* various elements of Neoplatonic origin is not a novelty. What is interesting here is the complex treatment of a difficult point in Aristotle's doctrine of the soul that had puzzled the Peripatetic school since its earliest times. The solution advanced by Alexander of Aphrodisias was suggested by Theophrastus' aporias; these, in turn, are developed by Themistius in a direction that is remarkably different compared to Alexander, although it is quite clear that Themistius is familiar with Alexander's interpretation. If our intellect is liable to affections, it is perishable; Alexander's solution entails that only an agent intellect outside our soul can make our intellect immortal. Themistius' approach is, instead, shaped by Plotinus' distinction between the subject of the πάθη and our intellect. Immortal, our real self is connected in many ways to that composite whole that is our soul. All these are ours, whereas "we" are that substance that remains after the separation from the body and the νοῦς παθητικός that is our connecting link with the body.

3. Theophrastus sides with Themistius on Intellect: the Medieval Reception

I have alluded before to the fact that scholarship detected long ago that Theophrastus' fortune in medieval Arabic thought owes much to Themistius.[54] On the basis of the analysis of Themistius' treatment of the Theophrastean aporias, some final remarks are possible. I will start with Averroes' quotation of Theophrastus and Themistius, that has been convincingly described by D. Gutas as proof that Averroes had access to Theophrastus only through Themistius.[55] In his *Long Commentary* on the *De Anima*, lost in Arabic except for fragments[56] but extant in Latin translation, Averroes says that both authors granted to the human faculty to intelligize the status of an ingenerated and imperishable substance:

> Averrois Cordubensis, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis De Anima libros* recensuit F.S. Crawford, Cambridge [MA] 1953 (Corpus Commentariorum Auerrois in Aristotelem ... Versionum Latinarum VI 1), pp. 387.7-11; 388.54-389.62; 389.71-82; 390.98-101; 393.176; 393.187-190; 393.193-394.201 Cum declaravit quod intellectus materialis non habet aliquam formam materialium, incepit diffinire ipsum hoc modo, et dixit quoniam non habet naturam secundum hoc nisi naturam possibilitatis ad recipiendum formas intellectas materiales. (...) Hoc igitur movit Aristotelem ad imponendum hanc naturam que est alia a natura materie et a natura forme et a natura congregati. Et hoc idem induxit

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[54] To sum up, with Davidson's effective formula, the main influence of Themistius' paraphrase of the *De Anima* on the Muslim philosophers who were acquainted with it – chiefly Avicenna and Averroes – one can say that "In Themistius, the potential intellect is immortal as soon as the active intellect intertwines with it at the outset of human thought" (*Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect* [above, n. 5], p. 43).

[55] Gutas, "Averroes on Theophrastus, through Themistius" (above, n. 6).

[56] C. Sirat - M. Geoffroy, *L'original arabe du Grand Commentaire d'Averroès au De Anima d'Aristote. Prémices de l'édition*, Vrin, Paris 2005 (Sic et Non).

> Theofrastum et Themistium et plures expositores ad opinandum quod intellectus materialis est substantia neque generabilis neque corruptibilis. Omne enim generabile et corruptibile est hoc; sed iam demonstratum est quod iste non est hoc, neque corpus neque forma in corpore. (...) Sed cum post viderunt Aristotelem dicere quod necesse est, si intellectus in potentia est, ut etiam intellectus in actu sit, scilicet agens (...), opinati sunt quod iste tertius intellectus, quem ponit intellectus agens in intellectum recipientem materialem (et est intellectus speculativus), necesse est ut sit eternus; cum enim recipiens fuerit eternum et agens eternum, necesse est ut factum sit eternum necessario.
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> Averroes (Ibn Rushd) of Cordoba, *Long Commentary on the De Anima of Aristotle*, Translated and with Introduction and Notes by R.C. Taylor with Th.-A. Druart, subeditor, Yale U. P., New Haven – London 2009, pp. 304-10.
> After he had explained that the material intellect does not have some form characteristic of material things, he began to define it in the following way. He said it has no nature according to this except the nature of the possibility for receiving intelligible material forms. (...) This, therefore, moved Aristotle to set forth this nature, which is other than the nature of matter, other than the nature of form, and other than the nature of the composite. The same consideration brought Theophrastus, Themistius, and several commentators to hold the opinion that the material intellect is a substance which is neither generable nor corruptible. For everything which is generable and corruptible is a determinate particular; but it has already been demonstrated that [the material intellect] is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a form in the body. (...) But they later saw Aristotle say that if there is an intellect in potency, there must also be an intellect in act, namely, an agent (...), they held the opinion that this third intellect which the agent intellect places into the recipient material intellect (this is the theoretical intellect) must be eternal. For since the recipient was eternal and the agent eternal, then the product must necessarily be eternal.

If my analysis is correct, it is Themistius who transforms Theophrastus' riddle into indirect proof that our faculty to intelligize is an imperishable separate substance. Leaving aside the discussion of the consequences that Averroes draws from this idea,[57] one thing is sure: Averroes had no reason to doubt that Theophrastus' genuine position was different. Thus, Themistius' treatment of *De Anima* III 5, 430 a 14-25 conveys to Averroes a Neoplatonized interpretation of the nature of the passive intellect of which Theophrastus was clearly innocent.

[57] Such a discussion would exceed the limits of this paper and it would mean taking into account the different positions held in scholarship on Averroes' final position on the status of the potential intellect, which for some is that which is put forth in the *Long Commentary*, while for others it is not. Aware as I am of the diversity of the solutions advanced, I deem it useful to sum up once again with Davidson's words the general frame of Averroes' reception of Themistius: "Averroes ignores Avicenna's thesis that just as natural forms are emanated upon properly prepared portions of physical matter, so too are intelligible thoughts emanated on properly prepared material intellects. Instead, he follows Alfarabi as well as the Greek commentators Alexander and Themistius in representing the active intellect as a sort of light that illuminates images in the imaginative faculty as well as the material intellect itself": Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect* (above, n. 5), p. 353.

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