

## A NOTE ON ARISTOTLE, *DE ANIMA*,

A. 3, 406<sup>b</sup>1–3

τὸ δὲ σῶμα κινεῖται φορᾷ· ὥστε καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μεταβάλλοι ἂν κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἢ ὅλη ἢ κατὰ μέρη μεθισταμένη.

EVER since the first edition of the *De anima* by Trendelenburg, modern scholars have been in trouble as to the exact interpretation of this phrase and especially of the expression κατὰ τὸ σῶμα. Although the right one, as we think, was suggested a long time ago by Shorey,<sup>1</sup> a restatement of it seems justified, because the later treatment of the problem in the edition of Sir David Ross<sup>2</sup> has apparently established a different (and, as we believe, a wrong) *communis opinio*.<sup>3</sup>

The first detailed examination of the whole passage was given by Bonitz,<sup>4</sup> who saw no other possibility of making the text render the required sense than to alter κατὰ τὸ σῶμα to κατὰ τόπον.<sup>5</sup> This is indeed 'a rather improbable corruption'.<sup>6</sup> It is also clear that such an emendation of a reading defended by the *consensus* of all our manuscripts should only be accepted if there really is no other way out.

Nevertheless, Bonitz's arguments against an interpretation such as was later proposed by Ross still seem valid.<sup>7</sup> So it is a pity that the latter did not explain himself, especially as the expression 'in accordance with the body' ('dem Leibe entsprechend') is really ambiguous: if it means that the soul moves in the same manner as the body, i.e. from place to place,<sup>8</sup> 'the expression is almost incredibly clumsy, because then the conclusion would be an exact repetition of the major premiss'; but in its more restricted sense, i.e. that the movement of the soul is one of 'an exact correspondence in every detail' with the body, it 'would render impossible the further inference that the soul may leave the body and return to it'.<sup>9</sup>

Let us reconsider for a moment the main trend of the argument. Aristotle begins his discussion περὶ κινήσεως by drawing our attention to the fact that

<sup>1</sup> P. Shorey, 'Aristotle's *De anima*', *A.J.Ph.* xxii (1901), 149–64 (on the edition and translation of G. Rodier, Paris, 1900).

<sup>2</sup> D. Ross (Oxford, 1961), 187–8, who does not formulate, however, any explicit objection against Shorey.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the translation of J. A. Smith, *Oxf. Transl.*, vol. iii: 'Hence it would follow that the soul too must in accordance with the body change either its place as a whole or the relative places of its parts'; P. Siwek (Roma, 1965), 69: *omnino ac corpus locum mutabit*; and A. Jannone-E. Barbotin (Budé, Paris, 1966), 13: 'changement de la même manière que le corps'. Cf. Rodier's 'comme le corps'. Only O. Gigon, *Arist. vom Himmel, von der Seele, von der Dichtkunst* (Zürich, 1950), 269, translates it by 'innerhalb des Leibes'.

<sup>4</sup> H. Bonitz, 'Zur Erklärung einiger Stellen aus Aristoteles Schrift über die Seele,' *Hermes*,

vii (1873), 422–8. His arguments are fully stated and discussed in the edition of R. D. Hicks (London, 1907), 246–9.

<sup>5</sup> Bonitz, op. cit., 424 (he appeals to the texts of Philoponus and Themistius, but see Hicks, 248). This emendation was recently adopted again in the translation of W. Theiler (Berlin, 1966), 13. 9 ('örtlich').

<sup>6</sup> Ross, 187. The words κ.τ.σ. appear also in the text quoted by Simpl., p. 37. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Bonitz, op. cit., 423–4. We shall quote his objections in the rewording of Hicks, 247 (for Hicks's own propositions, see Ross, 187).

<sup>8</sup> So Simpl., p. 37. 4: *τουτέστι καθάπερ σῶμα τοπικῶς* (Philop., p. 106. 19–21, says the same thing, but without quoting the words of Aristotle).

<sup>9</sup> Hicks, 247.

everything either moves *per se* (καθ' αὐτό) or in virtue of something else (καθ' ἕτερον), e.g. like the passengers on a ship.<sup>1</sup> Considering then the consequences for the soul of the first possibility,<sup>2</sup> he ends this with the statement that, since it is reasonable to conceive that the soul imparts to the body the same kind of movement which it has itself, so, conversely, it must have the kind of movement the body has. Then follows our passage, the consequence of which, Aristotle says, would be that the soul might also conceivably leave the body and re-enter it, which would mean that living beings might die and, afterwards, rise up again.<sup>3</sup>

We do not think that, with the current interpretation<sup>4</sup> of the foregoing sentence, in the eyes of Aristotle such a consequence could have seemed necessary at all, as it indicates the *sort* of motion (sc. φορᾶ) only, and nothing more. If a movement of the body is actually a movement of the soul, the body's movement from place to place is the soul's movement from place to place,<sup>5</sup> so it does not follow at all that the soul must necessarily be able to leave the body as well.

What we really need here is the statement that the soul can move itself *independently* of the body, i.e. that it moves really καθ' ἑαυτήν. Practically contradicted by the translation 'in accordance with the body', this sense is easily obtained if we translate κατά by 'throughout'.<sup>6</sup> While the use of μεταβάλλειν alone to indicate change of place is perfectly normal in Aristotle,<sup>7</sup> κατὰ τὸ σῶμα now (1) supplies the required specification of the γένος of this μεταβάλλειν (a movement throughout the body clearly implies that it moves φορᾶ: Aristotle is thus avoiding a 'clumsy repetition'), giving us at the same time the τόπος of this movement (see *supra*), and (2) it clearly describes a movement independent of the body, so that the soul may leave it as well.<sup>8</sup>

As we have said, this interpretation had been suggested already by Shorey.<sup>9</sup> It is possible, however, that, in doing so, he connected in his mind κατὰ τὸ σῶμα with the participle μεθισταμένη.<sup>10</sup> This connection was already rejected by Bonitz as it too would make impossible the following conclusion on ἐξελεῖν and εἰσεῖναι<sup>11</sup> (which is also the reason why we prefer the translation 'throughout' instead of the more ambiguous 'within'). But the phrase reads much more naturally, we think, if we connect κατὰ τὸ σῶμα with μεταβάλλοι ἄν, taking the following participial clause as a further specification of this motion 'throughout the body'.

To support his suggestion, Shorey referred to the comparison in 406<sup>b</sup>15 ff. with quicksilver. We do not think, however, that this is completely to the

<sup>1</sup> 406<sup>a</sup>4-10.

<sup>2</sup> Stating, e.g., that if the soul does move by its essence and not *per accidens*, it must have a place (τόπος): 406<sup>a</sup>14-22.

<sup>3</sup> 406<sup>b</sup>3-5.

<sup>4</sup> Bonitz's emendation too belongs with this interpretation, for it tries to make Aristotle express more explicitly the same idea.

<sup>5</sup> This is actually presented as a new point of view in 406<sup>b</sup>15 ff.

<sup>6</sup> See LSJ, s.v., B. I. 2: 'with or without signf. of motion, on, over, throughout a space'.

<sup>7</sup> See Bonitz, op. cit., 423.

<sup>8</sup> Bonitz, loc. cit., already admitted: 'Es legt nahe, die in μεταβάλλειν allein nicht zu findende Beschränkung auf die räumliche Veränderung in den Worten κ. τ. σ. zu

suchen', but as he only understood it as meaning 'dem Leibe entsprechend', he had to reject this.

<sup>9</sup> Shorey, op. cit., 152: 'In spite of the Greek commentators may this not mean "within the body" rather than "comme le corps"?'.

<sup>10</sup> Though Shorey does not express an opinion on this point (his quoting of the phrase only up to and including κ. τ. σ. rather suggests the contrary), Ross, influenced probably by Bonitz's note, writes, p. 187: 'Shorey keeps τὸ σῶμα, connecting it with μεθισταμένη rather than with μεταβάλλοι ἄν.'

<sup>11</sup> Bonitz, op. cit., 424.

point, because in that passage Aristotle is dealing with a mechanical explanation of the movement of the *body* by that of the soul. More suggestive, perhaps, is Heraclitus' comparison of the soul with a spider, which, as soon as one of the threads of its web is damaged, dashes to its help: *sic hominis anima aliqua parte corporis laesa illuc festine meat*; or the aphorism in the Hippocratic *Epidemics* *ψυχῆς περίπατος φροντὶς ἀνθρώποισιν*, 'the perambulation of soul (in the body) appears to men as thinking'.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion I offer the following translation: 'Now, the body moves by locomotion; so the soul as well must be able to change its place throughout the body, whether in moving as a whole or in its parts.'

University of Ghent

H. DE LEY

<sup>1</sup> *Vorsokr.* 22 B 67 a; *Epid.* 6. 5. 5 (Littre, v. 316). See K. Deichgräber, *Die Epidemien und das C.H.*, 54 and 61; M. Pohlenz, *Hippokratesstudien* [*N.A.G.*, 1937, 1. 2, 4], 86-7 = *Kl. Schriften*, ii. 194 f., who refers to the

*Morb. Sacr.*, 'wo die eingeatmete Luft, die Trägerin des Seelischen, ständig durch den ganzen Leib zirkuliert (c. 4)'. Compare also *Vict.* 6 § 3: 'Ἐκάστη δὲ ψυχὴ . . . περιφοιτᾷ τὰ μέρη τὰ ἑωυτῆς.