

The Unity of Intellect in Aristotle's *De Anima*

Lloyd P. Gerson

University of Toronto

Desperately difficult texts inevitably elicit desperate hermeneutical measures. Aristotle's *De Anima*, book three, chapter five, is evidently one such text. At least since the time of Alexander of Aphrodisias, scholars have felt compelled to draw some remarkable conclusions regarding Aristotle's brief remarks in this passage regarding intellect. One such claim is that in chapter five, Aristotle introduces a *second* intellect, the so-called 'agent intellect', an intellect distinct from the 'passive intellect', the supposed focus of discussion up until this passage.¹ This view is a direct descendent of the view of Alexander himself, who identified the agent intellect with the divine intellect.² Even the staunchest defender of such a view is typically at a loss to give a plausible explanation of why the divine intellect pops into and then out of the picture in the intense and closely argued discussion of the human intellect that goes from chapter four through to the end of chapter seven.³ Revolting against an extravagant postulation of entities, Michael Wedin, for example, has argued with considerable subtlety and ingenuity that there is in fact only one intellect discussed in *De Anima*.⁴ This unified intellect is fully capable of being integrated into Aristotle's hylomorphic psychology. In order to make his case, though, Wedin is himself forced (1) to discount the importance of some texts and (2) to interpret others in a way that strains credulity.

I want to argue in this paper first of all that the idea that there are two intellects in *De Anima* is a myth, based on several important confusions about the argument and the text itself. Second, I want to argue that the single intellect Aristotle discusses throughout the entire work and especially in the central chapters of the third book is not in need of deflationary therapy. This intellect is, in Aristotle's view, all the things he repeatedly says it is, including immortal. It is neither identical with a kind of soul nor is it a part of soul, at least in any straightforward sense of 'part'. It is, nevertheless, as Aristotle repeatedly says in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, 'that which we are especially'. At least one reason some have thought that Aristotle does not mean what he says about intellect is that if he did, he would be expressing an unaristotelian (read: platonic) position. But since—

¹ See e. g., Caston (1999).

² See Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De Anima* 89, 9-19 and Moraux, P. (1942), 97-9. Among the impressive number of modern scholars who have followed Alexander are Clark (1975), 174ff; Guthrie (1981), 309-27; Rist (1989), 181-2; Frede (1996), especially 383-390. Caston (1999), 211-12, draws the conclusion that the second intellect must be identical with the divine intellect.

³ Caston (1999), 224, writes in conclusion, 'Had those brief 15 lines constituting chapter 5 dropped out of the tradition, I do not believe we would have missed anything significant as regards the psychological *mechanisms* of thought. But we would have missed something of great importance to Aristotle: namely, how mind fits into the world and where it tends, and above all, how we, like the heavenly spheres, are moved in all we do through our imperfect imitation of God' (emphasis Caston's). As for why Aristotle, at the beginning of chapter 6 continues to discuss the 'psychological mechanisms of thought', a discussion which has been ongoing since the beginning of chapter 4, Caston cannot, in my view, adequately explain. Wilkes (1992), 109-27, especially 125-7, finds the entire chapter an 'embarrassment'.

⁴ See Wedin (1988), especially cc. 5-6; also, Cohen (1992).

and here is the unargued for assumption—a supposition of a platonic or platonizing Aristotelianism is contrary to fact, Aristotle simply cannot mean what he says. I think this assumption is unfounded, in part because what Plato has to say about the intellect is not at all far removed from the straightforward interpretation of what Aristotle himself says. Accordingly, one reason for various desperate measures is eliminated.

§1. Intellect in the Plan of *De Anima*.

Aristotle's first reference to his own view about intellect (οἶνον⁵) is in the first book of *De Anima*, where he introduces the discussion of intellect and its relation to soul. He here argues that though it is usual to say things like 'the soul is pained or glad or courageous or afraid' it would be better to say 'not that the soul pities or learns or thinks discursively, but that a man does so with the soul'.⁵ This passage is frequently cited as emblematic of Aristotle's hylomorphism.⁶ However, there are numerous passages in *De Anima* in which the soul—not the hylomorphic composite—is cited by Aristotle as subject of mental states.⁷ At the very least, Aristotle here acknowledges a puzzle about identifying the correct subject in psychological explanations.

Then, Aristotle points out the implicit contrast between intellect and the composite of soul and body:

As for intellect, it seems to come to be in us as a sort of substance and to be indestructible (οὐ φθίρεςται). Now it might be destroyed, if at all, by the feebleness owing to old age, but surely what happens here is the same as in the case of the sense organs. For if an old man were to receive an eye of a certain kind, he would see as a young man sees. So old age is owing to the body which has been affected in some way, as in the case of drunkenness or disease, and not to the soul which is in that body. Thus, thinking (τὸ νοεῖν) and theorizing (θεωρεῖν), too, lose strength when something else in the body is destroyed, but intellect itself is unaffected (ἀπαφείνεται). Then, discursive thinking (διανοεῖσθαι) and also loving and hating, are not states of intellect, but of that which has intellect, insofar as it has it (ἡ ἐκεῖνο ἐπέει). And for this reason, when that [i.e., the composite]⁸ has been destroyed, [the composite] neither remembers nor loves. For these do not belong to the intellect but to that which is in common [i.e., the composite], which has been

⁵ A 4, 408a34-b18.

⁶ See e. g., Hicks (1907), 275; Barnes (1971-2); Owens (1981); Modrak (1987), 115.

⁷ See Heinaman (1990), 92-99. See especially, 97, n.28 for references to *De Anima* and other works where Aristotle variously names the composite and the form as subjects. Heinaman argues that it is the composite that is the subject of the anger considered as a complex of activity and bodily change, whereas it is the soul that is the subject of the psychic state of anger. Heinaman includes in his list of references to the soul as subject references to intellect as subject, e. g., G 4, 429a10-11; 17-18; 22-24; G 6, 430b5-6. As I argue below, I think this is a mistake, though the subjecthood of soul in relation to the composite is analogous to the subjecthood of intellect in relation to soul.

⁸ See Hicks (1907), 278, *ad loc.* on the implicit subject.

destroyed. Intellect, however, is perhaps something more divine and is unaffected.⁹

Several important points are made in this passage. First, intellect is set over against the composite. It is a 'sort of substance' that 'comes to be in us' and is 'indestructible'.¹⁰ Intellect is 'unaffected' by things that happen to the composite owing, presumably, to its being of a nature different from that.

Second, Aristotle sets up a parallel between soul and intellect. Just as ordinary claims that the 'soul thinks' etc. are more properly applied to the composite, so, too, in the case of intellect, thinking, loving, and hating, are not properly attributable to the intellect, but to that which has intellect, namely, the composite. The parallel should not be taken to imply the identity or even extensional equivalence of soul and intellect. The distinctive properties of intellect, which are different from those of soul, rule this out. On the contrary, the qualification 'insofar as it has it' (I. 27), referring to the composite and to intellect and implying that there is a sense in which it does *not* have it, rules out the identity of intellect with soul. It also, strictly speaking, rules out the possibility that intellect is unequivocally a part of soul.¹¹ If intellect were just a part of soul as is, say, the faculty of sense-perception, then there would be *no* sense in which the composite did not 'have it'.

Third, intellect is here implicitly introduced as causally related to certain mental states that are more properly attributable to the composite than to intellect itself. For if the composite has mental states 'insofar as it has intellect', then intellect evidently plays some explanatory role in accounting for these mental states.¹² Determining exactly what that role is will be crucial in recognizing the unity of intellect.

At the beginning of book two, the implicit contrast between soul and intellect is made again, this time as a consequence of Aristotle's definition of the soul. Soul is

the first actuality of a natural body with the potentiality of having life. And a body of this kind is one that has organs.¹³

⁹ A 4, 408b18-29.

¹⁰ Cf. *On Generation of Animals*, B 3, 736b27: *leipetai dh; ton noun monon quragen epeisienai kai; qeion eihai monon: oujen gar aijtou thaejergeia akoinwnei h; swmatikh; egergeia*. Also, B 6, 744b21; *Nicomachean Ethics*, K 7, 1177b30; *Metaphysics*, L 9, 1074b16. I disagree here with Caston (1999), 215-16, who explains *quragen* as referring to the male in relation to the female, not to the divine principle that is separable. For the traditional interpretation of *nou* as referring to a transcendent (i.e., divine) intellect, see Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De Anima* 90, 19 – 91, 6.

¹¹ A 5, 411b15-30, which speculates on how parts of the soul are related to bodily parts, does not provide a counterexample to this. In this passage, Aristotle argues that 'all the parts of the soul are in each part of the body' (cf. 24-27), but this does not apply to intellect which has no organ. The use of the word 'part' in relation to soul apparently has its origin in Plato. Cf. *Republic* 442B11; C5; 444B3. Aristotle's innovation is principally to isolate intellect from the soul, by defining the latter as the first actuality of a body. Yet, the composite or the soul can employ or access intellect and in this sense intellect is said to be a 'part' of soul. See *infra* section 3 where I discuss further the accessing of intellect by soul.

¹² Cf. G 4, 429a23, where the causal role is made explicit by the instrumental dative: *legw de; noun wpe dianoeitai kai; upol ambanei h; yuchw*

¹³ B 1, 412a27-412b1.

Accordingly,

that the soul is not separate from the body, nor are parts of it (if it has parts), is not, then, unclear. (For the actualities of some living things are the parts themselves). Nothing, though, prevents some actualities from being separate¹⁴ because they are not actualities of any body. Further, it is not clear whether the soul as the actuality of the body is like the sailor of the boat.¹⁵

If there is any doubt at all that Aristotle is here alluding to intellect, this should be dispelled a bit later when, again comparing soul and intellect, he says

that with regard to intellect, that is, the theoretical faculty, it is not yet clear,¹⁶ but it seems to be a kind different from soul, and only this is possibly separate, just in the way that the eternal is separate from the destructible.¹⁷

That intellect is a kind different from soul is hardly surprising given that it alone is 'possibly separate'. If intellect were just one type of psychic functioning, its separability would hardly be in question. And in fact many scholars simply ignore it on the grounds that the separability of one psychic function contradicts the inseparability of soul. A better reading, one that fully acknowledges separability as a real question, would reject the assumption that intellect is a psychic function. The famous suggestion of a comparison of the soul to the sailor in the boat evidently emerges from the contrast between the soul as the actuality of a body and intellect as an actuality of a different kind.

There is another important, though frequently overlooked, comparison made between soul and intellect at the beginning of chapter two of book two. After hypothesizing a definition of soul in chapter one, Aristotle takes up another approach, this time asking what constitutes 'living' (zhē).

¹⁴ Or 'separable'. The distinction does not pertain to the present argument.

¹⁵ B 1, 413a4-9.

¹⁶ What is 'not yet clear' is how intellect is related to (1) soul and (2) composite of soul and body.

¹⁷ B 2, 413b24-27: *peri; de; tou nou kai; th- qewrhtikh- dunamew- oujden pw faneron, ajll' epike yuch- geno- eferon eihai, kai; touto monon ejdecesqai cwrizesqai, kaqaper to; ajjion tou fqartou*. I take the first *kai* as epexegetic. The words *ajll' epike yuch- geno- eferon eihai* are ambiguous and can be understood as 'a different kind of soul'. But this seems to me doubtful since it is the contrast of intellect and soul that is, and has been, at issue. If Aristotle had meant that intellect is a kind of soul, I take it that he would have used *eido* instead of *geno*. Furthermore, if intellect were a 'different kind of soul' its generic unity with 'the other kinds' would be entirely obscure, for intellect or its activity is not a specification of the actuality of a body. Aristotle has hitherto been speaking about soul in general, not a particular kind of soul; hence, if intellect is a 'different kind of soul' one might well ask, 'different from what?' I doubt that B 5, 417b7, *eferon geno- ajl oi wsew-* provides a counterexample to this. In this passage, Aristotle is arguing that the actualization of knowledge is not an alteration or if it is held to be such, it is 'an alteration of a different kind'. This could not mean that the actualization is a different species of alteration, principally because there would be no point in emphasizing that it is a species of alteration different from other species.

Let us say that a thing is living even if it has in itself only one of the following: intellect, sense-perception, motion and rest with respect to place, motion with respect to nutrition, deterioration and growth.¹⁸

It might be natural to suppose that intellect here is being counted as one form of psychic activity. But this is probably incorrect. Intellection is said to be one form of living, not one form of psychic activity. That there can be intellection or thinking apart from soul is clear from *Metaphysics* where the unmoved mover, who is *only* this activity, is said to have not just life, but the best life.¹⁹ This should not be surprising, given that Aristotle has already said that intellect is 'a kind different from soul', that it 'comes to us from outside', and that it is 'not the actuality of any body'. So, however we are to understand the nexus soul/composite/subject/intellect, we should not suppose that what is true of soul is necessarily true of intellect or that the activity of intellect is unequivocally a part or function of soul.²⁰

§2. Intellect in *De Anima*, G 3-4 .

At the beginning of chapter three, Aristotle says that 'the principal differentiae by which thinkers define the soul are two: (1) motion with respect to place and (2) 'thinking' (noeih), 'understanding' (froneih), and 'perceiving' (aijsqanesqai)'.²¹ Chapters three to eight focus on (2); chapters nine to thirteen on (1). One type of thinking is supposed to be imagination and another, 'belief (upol hyi)".²² Chapter three is largely taken up with the discussion of imagination. Chapters four to eight discuss various facets of thinking. So much is clear. How, though, is thinking supposed to be connected with intellect?

It appears that imagination is here being taken as one species of thinking. If this is so, it is puzzling since though animals have imagination, they do not have thinking owing to their lack of 'the ability to reason' (l logo)".²³ The puzzle is, I believe, removed if we interpret the passage as maintaining that, though imagination is necessary for thinking, it is not a species of thinking.²⁴ The two species of thinking are in fact

¹⁸ B 2, 413a22-25. Note that nou" is listed here alongside aijsqhsi", kinhsi" kai; stasi", fqisi", and aukhsi". All of the latter are processes or activities, which suggests that we should understand nou" here (no definite article) as something like the activity of 'intellection', not the 'thing' intellect.

¹⁹ See *Metaphysics* L 7, 1072b26-28: kai; zw; de; ge uparcei: hlgar nou e;gergeia zw; ekeino- de; h; e;gergeia: e;gergeia de; h; kaq; aulthn ekeinou zw; a;risth kai; a;idio-.

²⁰ At B 3, 414a29-32 one of the powers of the soul is listed as 'discursive thinking' (dianohtikon). Given the above contrasts, we can hypothesize that it is owing to intellect that we have this power. At 414b19, we are said to possess both this power and intellect, but evidently we do not possess them in the same way since intellect is separable from the composite whereas the power is not.

²¹ G 3, 427a17-19.

²² G 3, 427b27-29.

²³ G 3, 427b11-14; 428a21-5. Ross brackets the latter passage, but as Hicks (1907), 464, *ad loc.*, notes, the passage was read by all the ancient commentators, certainly does introduce a new point, and is paralleled elsewhere.

²⁴ On imagination as (materially) necessary for thinking see A 1, 403a9; G 7, 432a16-17: dio; ou;depote noei a;heu fantasmato- hlyuchv Cf. G 3, 427b16; G 8, 432a9-14. The lines at B 3, 427b27-8, peri; de; tou noein, epei; e;teron tou aijsqanesqai, toutou de; to; men fantasia dokei eihai to; de; upol hyi- and G 10, 433a9, ei[ti- thn fantasia;n tiqei; w- nohsin tina do not seem to me to be

'discursive thinking' (*dianoia*) and belief. This interpretation is supported by a line later in chapter four where Aristotle says

So, the part of the soul that is called 'intellect' (by 'intellect' I mean that owing to which the soul thinks discursively and believes) is none of the things in actuality before thinking occurs.²⁵

Discursive thinking is the type of thinking that leads to, but is distinct from, having some, generally propositional, belief.²⁶ Logically, discursive thinking and belief are detachable one from the other, but typically they go together in practice.

A more significant issue in this passage is the subject of *noeih* in the last line.²⁷ It can presumably either be intellect itself or the soul or the composite.²⁸ If it is the first, then we seem committed to recognizing an intellect that is different from the intellect discussed in chapter five. For in chapter five, where it is implied that intellect is *always* thinking (430a22), there would seem to be no conceptual room for there to be a time 'before' (*prin*) it is thinking. Indeed, the passage in chapter five emphasizes that temporality in thinking applies to the individual.

But this does not seem to be quite right. For one thing, it is owing to intellect *tout court* that the soul thinks and believes, not to one aspect of intellect, namely, the 'passive'. If the soul's cognitive activity were owing to intellect conceived of as just passive, then one of two things must follow, either of which are false. Either soul must use passive intellect alone to think and therefore soul (not intellect) must supply the active principle of thinking or else the active principle is irrelevant to thinking. In the former alternative, soul would be held to do what it is that the agent intellect is explicitly said to do. In the latter alternative, not only would chapter five be rendered pointless but the actuality of

counterexamples to the claim that imagination is not a form of thinking. The first line is dialectical and is followed by the analysis of imagination, concluding (429a1ff) with the claim that imagination is defined as a sort of motion produced by the actualization of sense-perception and that it is possessed by animals without intellect (429a6). The second only means to classify imagination as a type of thinking if the efficient causes of animal motion are going to be counted as two, namely, desire and thinking, rather than three, desire, thinking, and imagination. There is, however, nothing in principle against counting them as three. Imagination is here not classified with sense-perception because it can operate in the absence of sense-perception. As Aristotle explains (433a11-12), animals move by imagination without having *nohsi* or *logismoi*'. I am grateful to Victor Caston for pointing out to me these lines and their possible implication.

²⁵ G 4, 429a22-24: *oiafa kal oumeno~ th~ yuch~ nou~* (legw de; noun w/dianoieitai kai; upol ambanei hlyuch) oupen estin egergeiatwn ohtwn prin noein:

²⁶ Belief has at least three species: (1) 'knowledge' (*episthmh*); (2) 'opinion' (*doka*); and 'practical reasoning' (*fronhsi*'), and their contraries. See G 3, 427b24-26.

²⁷ Cf. the lines immediately above, 15-18: *apaqe~ afa dei eihai, dektikon de; tou eipou~ kai; dunamei toioutou a| la; mh; touto, kai; omoiw~ ekein, wšper to; a|sqhtikon pro~ ta; a|sqhta; outw ton noun pro~ ta; nohta; ajagkh afa, epei; panta noei, ajnigh eihai*. Part of the confusion is owing to the fact that Aristotle uses *to; noeih* as the generic term for 'thinking', which includes both *dianoia* and *upolhyi*'. But *noeih* is also clearly used as the verb the finite forms of which can have *nou*'', as opposed to *yuch* as subject.

²⁸ See Lowe (1983), who argues that throughout G 4, and especially in passage 429b10-22, the subject of *krinei* is *olnou*' and not, as Hicks and Hamlyn and others insist, the composite or human being or a vague 'one'.

thinking would be inexplicable. Thinking in the primary sense is *not*, according to Aristotle, the presence of intelligible form in the intellect; it is the awareness of the presence of intelligible form in the intellect by that which is identical with that in which the intelligible form is present.

The implicit subject of *noēh* is indicated more clearly a few lines later:

So, those who say that the soul is the place of forms speak well, except that it is not the whole soul but only the thinking part of it, which is not the forms in actuality but in potency.²⁹

It is the thinking part of the soul that is the 'place of forms' and none of these in actuality before thinking occurs. It is this part that is the subject of discursive thinking and belief. I am therefore inclined to see a distinction between 'the part of the soul that is called intellect' and 'intellect itself' owing to which thinking in general is possible.³⁰ It is not owing to a part of the soul that the soul thinks, but owing to something distinct from soul that is, however, able to function in relation to soul when soul accesses its activity. The phrase 'part of the soul' should thus be glossed by 'the thinking part of the soul' (*nohtikh*; [*yuchī*]) in 429a28. And that is not equivalent to intellect.

The distinction between 'the part of the soul that is called intellect' and 'intellect itself' is the distinction between intellect as it exists 'on its own' or separate and intellect as it exists in the composite individual. In the latter mode, it is accessible to the thinking individual. 'Accessible' means 'available for employment in discursive reasoning and belief' via imagination. As I shall try to explain later on in section three, accessible intellect has a further property, that of being the entity with which each individual is ideally identical. So, for a composite individual, access to intellect is possible only because that individual is ideally intellect.

In chapter four, intellect is also said to be 'unaffected' (*apqhl'*);³¹ 'unmixed' (*ajmigh*);³² and 'separable' (*cwristol'*).³³ The first two attributes follow from the exigencies of intellect's role as receiving forms and thinking them. If intellect were affected, that is, were altered in any way by the objects of thinking or were mixed (with bodily elements), it could not receive all forms. Because intellect must be unaffected, unmixed, and separate in order to do what intellect is postulated to do, it is non-bodily.³⁴ And because it is non-bodily, it is separable.

²⁹ G 4, 429a27-29: *kai; euldh; oij legonte~ thn yuchn eihai topon eijdw, plhn oti oule oi h aj l h h nohtikh; oule eijteleceia; i la; dunamei ta; eijh.*

³⁰ Hicks (1907), 480, takes the words *oiafa kal oumeno" th" yuch" nou"* as indicating Aristotle's own specification of how he proposes to use the word 'intellect'. But intellect as a 'part of the soul' cannot be identical with intellect alone or what intellect is. If it were so, then virtually none of the problems in chapters four and five would arise. Specifically, there would be no grounds for Aristotle's many assertions that intellect possesses attributes that neither soul nor composite possess.

³¹ G 4, 429a15.

³² G 4, 429a18.

³³ G 4, 429b5. Or 'separable'. The ambiguity reflects the ambiguity between intellect as distinct from soul and intellect which is in some sense a part of soul.

³⁴ G 4, 429a24-25: *dio; ouje; memicqai eulogon aujton twaswmati: Cf. 430a6-7: eij de; toi~ epcousin ulhn dunamei ekaston esti tw nohtwn. wstakeinoi~ men ouc uparxei nou~... Cf. Alexander of*

It is not obvious why the conclusion that the intellect is non-bodily differentiates it from the soul, which is, of course, *qua* form, non-bodily as well. The soul is in itself not mixed with body and is incapable of being affected, at least in the way that the body is affected, though the soul is not separate or separable.³⁵ The true explanation of why intellect must be non-bodily is broached in the following lines.

And whenever intellect becomes each [form] in the way that a scientist is said to be actually a scientist (this occurs whenever he is able to actualize [his scientific knowledge] by himself), even then [intellect] is somehow in potency, though not [in potency] in the manner it was prior to learning or discovering [the form]. And it is then that it is able to think itself.³⁶

Why is the ability to 'think itself' a guarantee of non-bodily status for intellect? If intellect were bodily in nature, then it could not think itself. Here is why. Suppose that the putative body that is intellect were to acquire a form. That is intellection in its first actuality, as the passage says, still in potency in a certain manner. The actualization of this potency will be the recognition or awareness of the presence of the form. If, however, the subject that recognizes the presence of the form is different from the subject that has acquired the form, then there could be no actual intellection by either subject. The subject that has acquired the form would have exhausted its power just in acquiring the form. That is all it is postulated to do and that is why it is unmixed and unaffected. The subject that is to be aware of the presence of the form would itself have to acquire the form prior to being aware of it. If it were not necessary for it first to acquire the form, then it would be impossible to understand why the intellect that is postulated to acquire the form in the first place would be necessary. The only way that intellection can actually occur is if that which acquires the form is identical with that which is aware of its acquisition. And this can only occur if the intellect is non-bodily. If intellect were a body, the presence of the form would be in a part of the body that is different from the part in which the awareness of the presence of the form occurs.³⁷ And because intellect is non-bodily, though the destruction of the body entails the destruction of the soul that is its actuality, it does not entail the destruction of intellect.³⁸

Aphrodisias, *De Anima*, 89, 11-12: kai; eἰ̄stin̄ ol̄toiouto- nou- cwristo- te kai; apaqh- kai; ajnigh- a| l w| a) panta a)jtwad̄ia; to; cwri- ul̄ h- eihai uparcei.

³⁵ Cf. especially B 2, 414a15-27.

³⁶ G 4, 429b5-9: oἱ̄tan̄ d̄l̄ oūtw- ekasta genhtai w- olepisthmwn̄ legetai ol̄kat̄l̄ e)ergeian (touto de; sumbainei oἱ̄tan̄ dunhtai e)ergein dīl̄ autou), eἰ̄stī men̄ kai; tote dunamei pw-, oujmh̄n̄ omoi- kai; prin̄ maqein̄ h)euhein̄: kai; a)jto- de; auton̄ tote dunatai noein. Ross (1961) accepts Bywater's emendation of the mss. from de; auton̄ to dī j autou' (b9). He was no doubt persuaded by the parallel with b6. But as is clear from subsequent texts, Aristotle's point is that actual thinking is self-thinking, which is different from the instrumental use of the self suggested by the words dī j autou'. See *infra* and G 4, 430a3-4; G 5, 430a19-20; G 6, 430b25-26; G 7, 431a1-2; G 7, 431b17; G 8, 431b20-24.

³⁷ Since a form is itself an actuality, the further actuality that is knowledge would have to occur outside of the first actuality, where 'outside of' reflects the extensiveness of bodily parts. Awareness cannot be self-awareness if that which is aware is not identical with that of which it is aware.

³⁸ Victor Caston suggests to me in private correspondence that G 2, 425b12-17 provides a counterexample to the claim that Aristotle holds that the self-reflexivity of intellection guarantees the non-bodily status of the intellect. For in this passage, Aristotle argues: Epei; d̄l̄ a)jsqanomeqa oἱ̄tī ol̄wmen̄ kai; a)koumen̄,

Even if we were to decide that in chapter five Aristotle is introducing a second intellect, the argument about the requirements for intellection would remain. Further, if one were to concede the unity of intellect over against claims for its disruption into two, its capacity for intellection could not be maintained if intellect were thereby assimilated to soul or to an unequivocal part of it. Since soul is the actuality of a body, the presence of form in the intellect could then only be the presence of form (i.e., first actualization) in a body or part thereof. That is, it could only be the actualization of a part of the body. But then the actuality of intellection (i.e., second actualization) could only be some further psychic activity consisting of a psychic actualization of a body performed on the first psychic actualization. In that case, the identity of intellect *qua* informed and intellect *qua* aware could not be maintained. The putative intellect or cognizer could never know (second actualization) what it knows (first actualization).

The problem of identifying the subject of thinking is the crux of the dispute between a functionalist and a dualist interpretation of soul and body in Aristotle. To take the functionalist line, which implicitly or explicitly treats intellection as one of soul's functions or one of the composite's functions, is to make thinking, as Aristotle understands it, impossible.³⁹ To take the dualist line, though, seems to fly in the face of Aristotle's insistence that soul is the actuality of body.⁴⁰ If dualism is the appropriate alternative to functionalism, it would in fact be more accurate to insist on the dualism of intellect and soul, which, of course, still leaves us with the problem of how soul or the composite can access the operation of intellect in its discursive thinking and other forms of cognition.

Again in chapter four, Aristotle raises two questions for intellect so conceived: (1) how can intellect think since thinking seems to be a case of being acted on by that with which it has something in common? But—and this is the implication—intellect has just been shown to be 'unmixed', that is, to have nothing in common with things other than

αἰσθητικὴ ἡ τῆς αἰσθητικῆς αἰσθητικῆς οὐκ ὁρατῆς ἡ ἐτεροαἰσθητικῆς ἐστὶ τῆς αἰσθητικῆς καὶ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου ὡς ἐστὶ τῆς αἰσθητικῆς οὐκ ὁρατῆς καὶ αἰσθητικῆς. ἐστὶ δὲ αἰσθητικῆς ἐτεροαἰσθητικῆς τῆς αἰσθητικῆς αἰσθητικῆς, ἡ ἐξ ἀπειρον εἰς τὴν αἰσθητικῆς ἐστὶ αἰσθητικῆς: ὡς τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς πρὸς τὸ πᾶν. Thus, since sense-perception does not occur only in things that are non-bodily, and since sense-perception is self-reflexive, self-reflexivity is not a guarantor of non-bodily being. In reply, I would say first, the word αἰσθητικῆς is used here to mean awareness or consciousness, not sense-perception strictly speaking. See *Nicomachean Ethics* I 9, 1170a25-b5 where it is similarly used to indicate the awareness of activities, e.g., walking and thinking, that are not sense-perceptions. This awareness is, therefore, cognitive and not perceptual and so evidently a type of thinking, and as such it does not belong to animals who are incapable of thinking. So, one reason for supposing that self-reflexivity does not entail non-bodily status, namely, that self-reflexivity can belong to animals who are not, in Aristotle's view, non-bodily is eliminated. Second, though sense-perception is bodily, and the awareness that sense-perception is occurring is a type of thinking and could only occur in that which is capable of thinking, this does not mean that thinking is bodily (or that sense-perception is not).

³⁹ See Wedin (1988), especially cc. 5-6; Wedin (1989), 67-86; Cohen (1992), 57-73 for the functionalist view. Contra, see Heinaman (1990), 100-102, who offers several cogent reasons for rejecting functionalism, all of which amount to denying that psychical activities can be attributes of bodies.

⁴⁰ See Robinson (1983), who argues for this position. Heinaman, 91, argues that Aristotle is an 'emergent dualist' with respect to the soul and body. He leaves intellect out of this account. Heinaman recognizes that emergent dualism is not incompatible with a physical account unless the soul's distinctness from the body entails that it is an incorporeal entity. Its existence as such would be entirely problematic unless it could exist on its own. Shields (1988) argues that Aristotle's view can be best described as 'supervenient dualism' but this is not a dualism of subjects and so does not address the argument why intellect must be non-bodily.

intellect. (2) Is intellect itself 'intelligible' (nohton)?⁴¹ It is clear from what Aristotle has to say in response to these questions that they are closely connected. It is generally supposed that the answers to both questions are contained in the remainder of the chapter. In fact, I shall argue that the answers to these questions include the material contained in chapter five. If this is so, then chapter five does not introduce a new topic or fit ill with what has gone before; rather, in Aristotle's mind, it contains material necessary to answer the questions fully. And these questions, I emphasize, are about the intellect whose non-bodily unity is necessary for intellection to occur.

What Aristotle has to say in response to these questions in chapter four is this. The intellect, prior to thinking, is in a way potentially the intelligible objects. It is like a blank slate. Further, the intellect is intelligible because in thinking it is identical with that which is intelligible. As for things with matter, things which are as such not intelligible and so apparently do not have anything in common with intellect, these are potentially intelligible.⁴² These claims do not quite amount to an answer to the first question: how can thinking occur given what intellect is and given that thinking is supposed to be an example of 'like acting upon like'? Even if we grant that intelligibles are like intellect and that even material objects are potentially intelligible in this way, this does not constitute an explanation of how the intellect is acted upon in order for there to be intellection. It is, of course, not sufficient to say that the acting is the writing on the 'blank slate' since once the writing has occurred this is only 'intellection in a potential way'. Actual intellection requires more. The account of this is what is contained in chapter five.

§3. *De Anima*, G 5.

I aim to show in this section that what is said about intellect in chapter five is a continuation, indeed, a crucial continuation, of what has hitherto been said about it.⁴³ No second intellect is here being introduced. In fact, there is a fairly straightforward interpretation of the so-called 'agent intellect' and 'passive intellect' which has little to do with the divine intellect and which has everything to do with Aristotle's analysis of human thinking.

I provide a translation of the text for reference, along with divisions of the main points discussed below.

[A] Since just as in everything in nature there is something which serves as the matter in each genus (this is that which is all of those things in potency), as well as something else which is the cause and is productive by making all things, as in the case of art in relation to matter, so necessarily there exists these differences in the soul. [B] And intellect is this sort of thing in one sense by becoming all things, and in another by making all things, like a sort of disposition, in the way that light does. For in a certain way light makes potential colors actual colors. [C] And this intellect is separable and unaffected, and unmixed,

⁴¹ G 4, 429b22-26.

⁴² This is a summary of the argument contained in G 4, 429b27-430a8.

⁴³ See Wedin (1988), especially 172-177, who stresses the continuity between chapters four and five, though Wedin aims to 'deflate' the status of intellect in both.

being in its essence in actuality. For that which acts is always more honorable than that which is acted upon and the principle is more honorable than the matter. [D] Actual knowledge is identical with that which is known; potential knowledge is, however, prior in time in the individual, but as a whole, it is not prior in time. [E] But [intellect] is not at one time thinking and another time not thinking. [F] Having been separated, it is just what it is, and this alone is immortal and eternal. [G] But we do not remember because while this is unaffected, the passive intellect is destructible. [H] And without this, it [i.e., the individual] thinks nothing.⁴⁴

In [A], the general principle is enunciated.⁴⁵ In everything in nature there is that which serves as matter and that which serves as productive cause, as, for example, in the art working on matter.⁴⁶ The principle is then applied to the soul. How it is to be applied is not at all clear. Just to anticipate a bit, in [F] we get a hint that intellect's role in instantiating the general principle requires intellect to operate in a way other than the way it does when it is separated, presumably, from soul. The general principle is going to be instantiated by intellect operating within the soul. The subsequent account regards thinking in the case in which the principle is instantiated.

[B] is the crux of the problem, for it has frequently been understood to indicate that there are two intellects. Yet, the contrast *olmen...olde*; in lines 14-15 is evidently meant to reflect the *to;men...eteron de*; contrast in lines 10-11, and though the general principle *may* be instantiated by two separate entities, it need not be. Indeed, since Aristotle is talking about how the general principle operates in the soul, it seems highly likely that the material and active elements of the instantiation of the principle are not, in their operation, separate from each other.⁴⁷ The words *toiouto" nou"* indicate that

⁴⁴ G 5, 430a10-25: [A] *Æpeí; d jwšper eñ apashthafusei eñsti; ti to; men ulh ekastwigenei (touto de; o)panta dunamei ekeina), eteron de; to; aition kai; poihtikon, twapoein panta, oipn hitecñh pro; thn ulh hn peponçen, apagkh kai; eñ thayuchaparcen tauta- ta; diaforav; [B] kai; eñstin ol men toiouto~ nou~ twapanta ginesqai, olde; twapanta poiein, w- eki- ti-, oipn to; fw~: tropon gar tina kai; to; fw~ poiei ta; dunamei ohta crwmata egergeia crwmata. [C] kai; outo~ ol nou- cwristo~ kai; apaqh~ kai; ajnighr, thausinaawh egergeia/ apei; gar timiwteron to; poioun tou pasconto~ kai; hlarçh; th~ ulh~. [D] to; dñ autojestin hkatñ egergeian episthmh twapragmati: hde kata; dunamin cronwoprotera eñ twaehiy ol w- de; oujde; cronwó [E] ajll ñ ouj olte; men noei olte; dñ ouj noei. [F] cwrisqei;~ dñ eñsti; monon touql oper eñstiy kai; touto monon ajpanaton kai; ajidion [G] (oujmhneoumen dey olti touto men apaqer, olde; paqtiko~ nou~ fqartov): [H] kai; aheu toutou oujen noei.*

⁴⁵ Note that the beginning of the passage *epei; d j...* suggests a continuation of the train of thinking of chapter four and not the introduction of an entirely new subject. In fact, chapter five aims to explain how thinking is possible for an individual.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Metaphysics*, Z 7, 1032a17-20; Z 8, 1033a24-31; H 6, 1045a30-33. Ross, followed by Hamlyn among others, is wrong to bracket *wšper*, as Caston (1999), 205, rightly notes. Wedin (1985), 137, thinks that the *wšper* needs to be eliminated if, as he goes on to argue, God is not alluded to by the phrase 'agent intellect'. I do not see this need since, against Wedin, I think that the references to intellect, though not references to God, are references to that which in some sense transcends nature because it is separable.

⁴⁷ Caston (1999), 206-7, denies that the principle is meant to be applied here to the individual soul. Though Caston is correct that 'in' (*eñ*) has many different senses in Aristotle, chapter five is right in the middle of the section of *De Anima* that discusses thinking in the human soul and it would be extremely odd if Aristotle were here introducing divine thinking. But more to the point, he needs to do what he does in

intellect is such as are the things that fall under the general principle. If it only indicated the material principle, then that would suggest that the reference to the active principle was in fact reference to another intellect. This, however, would make the first five lines pointless and the motive for the introduction of the second intellect unintelligible.⁴⁸

Even if we construe the line so as to indicate two intellects, the whole point of the analogy is that these intellects in concert produce intellection. And given that Aristotle has said and will say five more times by the end of chapter eight that that thinker must be identical with what is thought, postulating two intellects does not solve anything. No doubt, that is why some scholars want to excise chapter five altogether. But we have already seen that a continuation of the answer to the questions raised in four is needed. It is the duality of a single intellect that is at issue.⁴⁹

The material principle in the analogy 'becomes all things', where 'becomes' is a gloss on 'in potency'. Matter as such does not become substance except in the atemporal sense. The sense in which intellect is in potency to all things, does not, therefore, indicate that intellect undergoes a change, a change which consists in its 'acquisition' of form.⁵⁰ After all, intellect has already been claimed to be 'unaffected'. It is in potency analogous to the way that the body is in potency to the soul.⁵¹ That is why the active principle is compared with 'a disposition'. The primary meaning of $\epsilon\chi\iota$ ", Aristotle tells us, is 'a sort of actuality of that which has and that which is had, as if it were an action of a sort or a motion'.⁵²

We may well ask, 'In potency to what?' Not to another intellect, surely, but in potency to thinking, that is, actual thinking. As Caston and others have noticed, the word $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ " is used in *De Anima* both for the substance and for the activity. Thus, Aristotle can without any apparent strain speak about 'practical intellect' (praktiko " $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ ") and 'theoretical intellect' (qewrhtiko " $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ ").⁵³ Similarly, he can speak about soul as

chapter five, as I shall show. It is not a superfluous aside. Thus, $\omega\varsigma\ \text{per}$ need not be bracketed, even though what is discussed in the following is in nature, since intellect is also separate from nature.

⁴⁸ Hicks (1907), 500, suggests that on the theory that there is one and not two intellects in this chapter, we need to understand toiouto " as attributive and not predicative and $\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon$ as existential. This does not seem to me to be necessary. In effect, we can understand the second class as olde ; [toiouto " $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ "] tw / panta poieih . On the reading that has Aristotle referring to two intellects, the clause is taken as olde ; [$\nu\omicron\upsilon$ "]....

⁴⁹ See De Corte (1934), 54, who states the position as clearly as possible: '...l'intellect agent et l'intellect possible forment deux entités réellement distinctes en tant qu'ils sont agent et patient, c'est-à-dire en tant que facultés, mais ils sont intelligence. L'intellect agent n'est pas l'intellect, l'intellect possible n'est pas l'intellect, mais intellect agent et intellect possible sont l'intellect'.

⁵⁰ See B 5, 417b5-9: $\text{qewroun gar ginetai to; epon thn episthmhn, oper h|ouk estin aj| loiousqai}$ ($\text{eij- auto; gar h| epidosi- kai; eij- epteleceian}$) $\text{h|eteron geno- aj| loiwsew-}$. $\text{dio; ouk alw- epei legein to; fronoun, ostan fronh| aj| loiousqai}$.

⁵¹ Cf. B 1, 412a27-28: $\text{dio; h|yuchvestin epteleceia h|prwth swmato- fusikou dunamei zwhn epon to-}$.

⁵² See *Metaphysics* D 20, 1022b4ff. Cf. *Metaphysics* L 3, 1070a11-12 where the nature or form of a composite is said to be a $\epsilon\chi\iota$ ". Cf. *Physics* G 3, 202a13-21 where Aristotle explains the unity of the agent and patient in motion or change: $\text{mia hlajmfoih epergeia}$ (18).

⁵³ Cf. B 3, 415a11-12 where Aristotle speaks of qewrhtiko " $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ " and G 10, 433a16 where he speaks of praktiko " $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ " both of which indicate ways in which intellect functions. Practical intellect is equivalent to the type of upol hyi " that is fronhsi " and theoretical intellect is equivalent to the type of upol hyi " that is episthmh . In both cases, 'intellect' refers to that 'owing to which' the soul engages in a type of thinking. Cf. G 4, 429a23. Though Caston (1999), 203, recognizes these manners of describing intellect, he insists that the 'perishability' of 'passive intellect' entails its distinction from imperishable agent intellect.

'nutritive' (*qreptikh*), 'generative' (*gennhtikh*), 'thinking' (*nohtikh*), and 'discursive thinking' (*dianohtikh*)⁵⁴ The distinction of the two principles no more indicates two intellects than does the distinction between practical and theoretical intellect and no more than the distinction among psychic functions indicates multiple souls.

The analogy proposed in [B] is that as agent intellect is to passive intellect, so is light to colors in potency. Light actualizes the colors that are already present in potency as the agent intellect actualizes the forms already present in the passive intellect. This is a continuation of the same general point that was made in G 4, 429b5-9. First, the intellect acquires a form and then the form is actualized, in the earlier passage presumably by the intellect that actually thinks and in the present passage by the intellect that actually 'illuminates'. What is here new is that the step from 'first' to 'second' actuality is made. The light metaphor neatly indicates this.⁵⁵ Those who want to insist on two intellects in fact do not make chapter five irrelevant; they make it contradict what is said in chapter four. For the implicit step from 'first' to 'second' actuality in chapter four is within one intellect. To make this a step from what happens in one intellect to what happens in another, is not just irrelevant but incoherent as well.

If we resist the dubious attraction of postulating two intellects, then we shall not be impelled to deny that the intellect that is characterized in [C] is identical with the intellect in chapter four, characterized in the same way.⁵⁶ What [C] taken along with [F] tell us is that when separated from the soul, intellect is essentially in actuality.⁵⁷ This seems to mean the separation of the 'more honorable' active principle from matter. If there is one intellect, then how can this more honorable active principle be separated from itself, namely, from the 'passive' principle?

The answer I believe is this. Intellect is always intellect, that is, it is always engaged in self-reflexive activity. This is the case both when intellect is 'in the soul' and when intellect is separate. But when it is in the soul—when it is accessed by that which

But if the qualification 'passive' is only an attribute of intellect when, as I am arguing, it is in the embodied soul, then the fact that intellect is imperishable does not yield any contradiction at all.

⁵⁴ See B 4, 416b25; G 4, 429a28; G 7, 431a14; G 12, 434a22. Cf. B 4, 416a19 where it is the *dunami* "in the soul that is qualified as 'generative' or 'nutritive'.

⁵⁵ Frede (1996), 381-382, seems to want to deny this, arguing on the basis of G 2, 426a13-14 that the actuality of color is vision not the making of the potentially visible actually visible. I agree and that is precisely why the agent intellect is an integral part of the actuality of intellection. But we can also grant that the analogy with light is imperfect, since there is nothing that is exactly like the self-reflexivity of intellection other than it.

⁵⁶ See Nuyens (1948), 304. Hicks (1907), 502, thinks these characteristics apply differently to agent and passive intellect.

⁵⁷ Caston (1999), 207-11, translates 'when it occurs separately' arguing that Aristotle is here making a 'taxonomical point'. That is, he is referring to a type of intellect, namely, God's. The occurrence of this type in the world is just the occurrence of that which alone is immortal and eternal. I doubt that the aorist passive participle *cwr̄isq̄eii'* can be translated in this way. More importantly, *cwr̄isq̄eii'* picks up *kai' oūlto'' ol̄nou'' cwr̄istol'* in line 17 which itself refers to intellect in lines 14-15 which is said to be 'in the soul' in line 13. In addition, Caston, 211, argues that the words 'is what it is' when said of the separable intellect, refer to the activity of thinking. That is, the separable intellect 'is *nothing but activity*' (Caston's emphasis). But the majority of mss. have *epergeia*/not *epergeia*. Taken thus, the words indicate that intellect, an immaterial entity, engages in its activity essentially. They do not indicate that there is no distinction between the substance and its activity. By implicit contrast, the way its activity is employed or accessed by the soul is not essential to it.

operates in nature—that access is always via images.⁵⁸ The passive intellect is the locus of the actualization of forms in the images available originally through sense-perception. Intellect itself operates without images. That is, its self-identical activity has nothing in it that is alien. 'It is what it is' and nothing more. By contrast, when intellect is in the soul, it is employed in cognition via images that are other than it.⁵⁹ That is why in this case it is not only what it is. The obverse of cognitive identity for embodied cognizers is qualified identity of knower and known. Unqualified identity is available only for that which is cognitively identical with that which is not other than it.

There is no question that, for Aristotle, thinking does not unqualifiedly require images. God is the paradigmatic example of such thinking.⁶⁰ But God's thinking is not, as Aristotle insists, merely imageless; it is also like the thinking that is knowledge, that is, thinking in which the knower and the known are identical.⁶¹ This is exactly what is said in [D].⁶² So, though 'the soul does not think without images', thinking without images evidently does occur in a way in us. This is intellect's thinking. It is different from soul's thinking.⁶³ The thinking that is episodic, the thinking that is implicitly referred to in [E], is not intellect's thinking. It is the thinking that accesses form, that is, what is intelligible, through images. By contrast, intellect is *always* thinking. To fail to distinguish the thinking of intellect from the thinking of soul is an error analogous to failing to distinguish the subjecthood of soul from the subjecthood of the composite human being. Just as the soul can be thought of as an instrument of the composite, so intellect can be thought of as an instrument of soul.⁶⁴ Just as the instrumentality of soul does not preclude its also being the subject of mental states, so the instrumentality of intellect does not preclude *its* being a subject.

A good deal of the obscurity in this chapter is owing ultimately to the difficulty in identifying the subject of cognitive activities on the basis of the previous hylomorphic account of the human being. Is it the composite that thinks or the soul or the intellect? In my view, the key to resolving this difficulty rests upon the principle that a person is essentially a self-reflexive thinker. When disembodied, that self-reflexivity is expressed in pure imageless thinking. When embodied, that self-reflexivity is variously expressed, for example, when one says 'I am perspiring', 'I am walking', 'I am aware that I am walking', and 'I am thinking about the health benefits of my walking'. In the first case, one identifies oneself with a body; in the second, with the composite; in the third and fourth, with the soul. The identification consists in the awareness of oneself as diverse subjects. One could not identify oneself with any of these subjects unless one were essentially self-reflexive, that is, unless one were ideally an intellect. Paradoxically, the

⁵⁸ See G 7, 431a16-17: *διο; ουδεποτε νοει αφευ φαντασματο- ηλυυχη* Cf. G 8, 432a7-10.

⁵⁹ See Kosman (1992), 355-6, who in my view rightly argues that 'Νοῦς ποιητικός, therefore, does not, strictly speaking, make consciousness, by action for example upon a pathetic mind incapable of thinking by itself. It is simply νοῦς understood in its role of self-actualization in θεωρία'.

⁶⁰ Especially in *Metaphysics*, L 9.

⁶¹ See *Metaphysics*, L 9, 1074b36-1075a3.

⁶² Ross (1961) brackets the entire line. His only reason for doing this is that it is repeated at the beginning of G 7, 431a1-3.

⁶³ Cf. G 7, 431a14-15: *θαδε; dianohtikhalyuchata; fantasmata oipn aijsqhmata uparcei.*

⁶⁴ Cf. G 8, 432a1-3: *wste ηλυυχ; wσper ηλceir eσtin; kai; gar ηλceir oργanon eσtin oργanwn, kai; ol nou~ eido~ eijdw kai; ηλaiσqhsi~ eido~ aijsqhtwn.* The intellect and the soul are in reality instruments of the person, not the composite of body and soul.

dualism of intellect and soul does not preclude the subjectivity of the hylomorphic composite. It embraces it as one expression of identity.

Perhaps the best name for the thinking that consists of successful accessing of forms is 'understanding'.⁶⁵ For example, one imagines or draws a triangle in a circle and then a square in another circle, and then comes to understand (or does not; Aristotle has no perspicuous answer to the 'how' question here) that a *plane figure as such* is inscribable in a circle.⁶⁶ What one understands is a truth about what is not an image but what is imaged in the drawn triangle and the circle. What is understood is, of course, not itself an image or even how an image represents something else. What is understood is that of which the image is an image. It is, roughly, a type of mental 'seeing' which, in potency, is equivalent to the presence of the form in the intellect and, in actuality, is the awareness or accessing of that presence. Without intellect, the psychical subject could retain images but could not access the forms whose actualizations the images represent. Without soul's imagistic activity, intellect would be unusable by the soul or the composite.

That is what [F] implies. The main reason for holding that separated intellect is not identical with the thinking that is the unmoved mover is that for the latter, there is no distinction between substance and activity, no distinction between intellect and thinking whereas a separated intellect would still be in potency to its thinking.⁶⁷ Another subsidiary reason is that, as Aristotle argues earlier in *Metaphysics*, the perfect actuality that turns out to be 'thinking thinking about thinking' must be unique.⁶⁸ The immortality of the intellect without which any particular human being cannot think at all is not in question. What is supremely questionable is whether that separate intellect is continuous with me.⁶⁹

[G] implies that if there is continuity, it is not the continuity of memory. Generally, if memory is a function of the image-making power, there is no continuity between intellect when it is 'just what it is' and the embodied person whether this be the intellect prior to or posterior to its association with the embodied person.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ See Burnyeat (1981).

⁶⁶ See the remarks of Kahn (1992), 361, who finds in Aristotle no resolution of the tension between the accounts of separable intellect and soul as the actualization of a body. Yet, as Kahn goes on to argue, Aristotle accepts the tension in his desire to do justice to the 'split nature of human beings'.

⁶⁷ *Metaphysics*, L 9, 1074a33-35, which is the culmination of several arguments to the effect that God cannot be in potency to his thinking. But an intellect is in potency to its thinking. In general, any substance is in potency to its activities. So, God cannot be an intellect. God must be thinking thinking about thinking.

⁶⁸ See *Metaphysics*, L 8, 1074a31-38. This passage is actually an argument for the uniqueness of heaven. But this is shown by showing that the unmoved mover must be one in number as well as in formula: $\epsilon\eta$ $\alpha\lambda\alpha$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$; $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\kappa\alpha\iota$; $\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\omega\tau\omicron$; $\rho\omega\tau\omicron\kappa\iota\omicron\nu\alpha\iota$ $\alpha\kappa\iota\eta\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron\iota$.

⁶⁹ See Wedin (1988), ch. 6, who maintains the difference between divine and human intellect by arguing that the immortality of chapter five is 'something like an "as-if" immortality...' (210) and only 'an analogue to the unmoved mover' (217). I suspect that Wedin's reluctance to take Aristotle at his word in regard to the immortality of intellect is that he assumes this means 'personal immortality'. Perhaps it does, but not likely in a sense of 'personal' that Aristotle would share with Wedin.

⁷⁰ See Nuyens (1948), 307-8, on the evidence that in Aristotle the word $\alpha\lambda\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$ always indicates existence without beginning or end. Caston (1999), 213-5, argues that we translate: 'We do not remember that while this cannot be affected, the intellect that can be is perishable', which he characterizes as Aristotle's 'philosophical and urbane' use of 'we do not remember' invoking 'our vulnerability and mortality'. Such a use seems entirely out of place here and in this translation the first $\delta\epsilon$ is pointless. Wedin (1988), 179-81,

The mistake that is usually made at this point in the exegesis is to identify the 'passive intellect' that is said to be 'destructible' with an intellect in chapter four supposed different from the intellect oddly introduced in chapter five.⁷¹ Aristotle, however, consistently says that intellect *simpliciter* is 'unaffected' and 'immortal' while 'passive intellect' is 'destructible'. There is no reason to suppose that this 'passive intellect' refers to anything but the manner in which intellect is accessed by the soul, that is, to νοητικὴν ψυχὴν. The point of entrée to intellect is via its reception of images. As I argued above, the phrase 'passive intellect' does not indicate a type of intellect, but an attribute of intellect possessed by it when it is 'in the soul'. That attribute is not essential to intellect. That is why, when separate, intellect is 'just what it is'.⁷²

The primary contrast in [G] is between intellect first mentioned in line 14 (τοῖουτο" nou"), then picked up again in line 17 (καὶ οὐτο" οἰnou"), then again mentioned in line 24 (τοῦτο μὲν ἀπαρεῖ) and 'the passive intellect' (οἰδε; παθητικὸν nou") in line 24-25. One thing that is certain from this contrast is that the property of intellect mentioned in lines 14-15 ([B]), namely 'becoming all things' (τὴν πάντα γίνεσθαι) belongs to intellect in contrast with 'passive intellect'.⁷³ It is, therefore, not plausible that 'becoming all things' be glossed as 'being passive'. On the contrary, intellect, that in one aspect 'becomes all things', is 'unaffected'.

The line contained in [H] is radically ambiguous, as all the commentators have noted.⁷⁴ Grammatically, the most plausible referent of τούτου is the 'passive intellect'. Assuming this, we might suppose that the subject of νοεῖ is just intellect. But it is simply false that intellect does not think without 'passive intellect'. When separated, that is, when there is no passive intellect, intellect is 'just what it is', that is, it is thinking unmediated by images. So, it is not plausible that intellect is the subject. The two circumstances in which it would be correct to say that thinking does not occur are either when the individual is not actually thinking or when the individual is bereft of images for one reason or another. The first possibility is implicit in lines 21-22, where the continuous activity of intellect is contrasted with the episodic thinking of the individual. I believe that the second possibility is what is being alluded to in the last line of the chapter and that the grammatical subject of νοεῖ is 'the individual' in line 21. This grammatical subject is extensionally equivalent to 'the composite' or, more accurately,

holds that we do not remember the thinking that occurred in past experiences, as opposed to the things then thought. Thus, we do not remember the activity of productive (agent) mind alone, because without content there is no memory. But on this view remembering would be impossible, not just something that we do not do. See Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Republic* II 349, 13-26, for the fragment of Aristotle's dialogue *Eudemus* in which Aristotle offers an explanation for why we do not remember our life prior to embodiment. See Berti (1962), 421-3, on the authenticity of this fragment and its implications for Aristotle's early philosophy. We do not need to deny that the account of soul in *De Anima* represents a development in Aristotle's thinking in order to assert the relevance of the *Eudemus* passage. Even if soul is the actuality of a body, (1) the career of intellect is another story and (2) our identity with intellect is puzzling, though there is no question that we are in some sense identical with it if we are able to think.

⁷¹ See Caston (1999), 203, who draws the conclusion that there are two intellects in chapter five because '[the passive intellect] is perishable, while [the agent intellect] is immortal and eternal'.

⁷² On any interpretation of intellect that takes its 'separation' to indicate that its status within soul is different from its status outside of soul, the change from not being separate to being separate is bound to be some sort of 'Cambridge change'. That is, after all, what 'unaffected' must imply.

⁷³ Cf. A 4, 409b29.

⁷⁴ See especially Hicks (1907), 509.

'the soul' as subject of embodied discursive thinking and believing.⁷⁵ It is also equivalent to the passive intellect if we understand that as *nohtikh; yuchw*

In further defense of this interpretation, recall that the entire theme of this chapter is how the principles of matter and agency operate *in the soul*. The soul does not think without images and it does not think without intellect. Having images alone is not enough for thinking; otherwise, animals, which have images, would think.⁷⁶ What 'having intellect' amounts to for soul is being able to access the activity of intellect. This activity is accessed every time the soul is actually thinking, that is, every time the soul is self-reflexively aware of the presence of intelligible form in intellect via the soul's images.⁷⁷ The activity to which the soul has access is the awareness of being cognitively identical with all that is intelligible. The images that soul acquires and manipulates are like a partial template held up to intellect by soul. By these images, the soul is able to understand episodically, and therefore be in a way self-reflexively aware of what it is that intellect is eternally identical with. It is also, again episodically, able to identify itself with the activity of intellect.

The idea that when soul thinks (always with images) it identifies itself with intellect (which is essentially imageless thinking) is most famously alluded to by Aristotle at the end of *Nicomachean Ethics* where Aristotle extols the contemplative life.⁷⁸ Among other things, Aristotle there says that the activity of intellect is the divine part of the soul.⁷⁹ In engaging in this activity, we 'immortalize' (*apanatizein*) ourselves.⁸⁰ And each human being is this part 'especially' (*malista*).⁸¹ In thinking, we access a divine activity but we do not become God. Those who think that the agent intellect in chapter five is God, must suppose that we access this activity when we think without actually becoming God. But in that case, it is unclear what relevance God has to the argument. Presumably, we would access divine thinking 'through the back door', that is, by using or gazing upon the passive intellect in a way different from the way that the agent intellect acts upon the passive intellect. I cannot imagine what this is. More importantly, this view falsely supposes that there is some way actually to think about intelligible form without being cognitively identical with that form, that is, without engaging in intellect's activity. Aristotle, though, repeatedly insists that thinking is cognitive identity.

Intellect is available as an instrument for soul because we are able to identify ourselves with intellect's activity. This identification is what the exhortation by Aristotle to 'live according to the best part of the soul in us' amounts to.⁸² It is not an exhortation to live according to the passive intellect, whatever that might mean. It is

⁷⁵ See 429a22-24 where the subject is the same.

⁷⁶ Cf. *Posterior Analytics* B 99b37-100a3, where animals without *logos* are said to have no type of cognition or *gnōsi* apart from sense-perception.

⁷⁷ It is important to emphasize that the awareness of intelligible form is necessary for thinking. Otherwise, a parrot would be thinking when it accesses its own images.

⁷⁸ *Nicomachean Ethics*, K 7.

⁷⁹ K 7, 1177b26-31.

⁸⁰ K 7, 1177b33.

⁸¹ K 7, 1178a2, 7. See also I 5, 1166a22; I 8, 1169a2 which make the identical claim. See Plato, *Timaeus* A-D; *Theaetetus* 172B-177C for the root of the idea of self-divinization and identification with the divine. See especially Sedley (1997) and (1999) for an argument for the basic identity of the claims made in *Nicomachean Ethics* K and the *Theaetetus* and *Timaeus* passages.

⁸² K 7, 1177b34.

straightforwardly an exhortation to theoretical thinking, to identify with the activity of intellect, an activity that is unmixed with matter and unaffected by anything that happens in imagination or sense-perception, and separable from the composite. But even when soul is not engaged in the best kind of thinking—theoretical thinking—soul accesses intellect when it is engaged in any type of thinking. When, for example, soul has an occurrent belief, it must be self-reflexively aware of having this belief, that is, self-reflexively aware of the mental state it is in which includes the presence of representational images. Intellect's activity is the activity of what we are 'especially'. Because we are intellect 'especially' and intellect is essentially self-reflexive, we are capable of identifying ourselves variously and at different times as the subject of the composite's activities, or soul's activities, or intellect's.

According to this interpretation, the dualism of intellect and soul is most perspicuous if seen as a development of the same dualism in Plato. It is generally agreed that in *Timaeus*, Plato maintains the immortality of intellect alone. But intellect, when embodied, is represented as a rational soul. Intellect's essential self-reflexivity is manifested by the embodied soul variously in cognitive activity, including the having of rational desires regarding one's own 'first-order' desires. For Plato, embodied cognition is no less dependent upon images than for Aristotle.

I do not think, however, that either Plato or Aristotle has a clear explanation of how the intellect, when separated, can be held to be identical with the embodied person. But I also do not suppose that they must have understood embodied or potentially disembodied persons in a way that modern philosophers do. To strive to identify with the 'best that is in us' or something that is divine, is not, after all, necessarily equivalent to striving to attain anything that can be characterized as idiosyncratic. Granted that the immortality of intellect in Aristotle is not personal immortality in this sense, one may suppose that Plato's *arguments* do not lead to any other conclusion.