

CLAUDIU MESAROȘ

MEMORY, IMAGINARY AND ARISTOTELIAN EPISTEMOLOGY.
ON THE NATURE OF “APTEROUS FLY”

Claudiu Mesaroș

Department of Philosophy and Communication Sciences, University of the West Timișoara, Romania. He is author of *Filosofii cerului. O introducere critică în gândirea Evului mediu* (2005).

Email: claudiumesaros@gmail.com

Abstract: Ioan Petru Culianu has written a book about the emergence of modern science and religious behavior starting from the Aristotelian concept of *phantasia*. An essential premise for discussing problems of modern cultural and religious importance is the proper understanding of memory and philosophical grounds for such concepts as memory and recollection. Aristotelianism has been repeatedly mentioned as a main source of memory concepts, along with Plato, later Roman tradition and then mediaeval reconsiderations of Aristotelian texts.

In my study I am following in parallel both Aristotle's theory of memory and imagination and modern theories concerning Aristotelian epistemology and build arguments for the thesis that modern theories concerning the importance of induction in Aristotle's epistemology miss an important link, namely, the key function of memory techniques for understanding the whole of Aristotle's theory of knowledge. Memory is the domain of technique or art (*techne*) but not the grounding site for science.

Truth and false are not an issue for Aristotle's theory of knowledge because sensibility and theoretical intellect cannot be false. Memory, imagination and recollection as functions of an intermediary link are the most fluid and uncontrollable parts of the cognitive psyche, as they function as necessary bridges from corporeal sensitive knowledge to intellectual formal understanding. Memory is still corporeal as a function but delivers images for the intellectual activity. The whole process of knowledge depends on such a fluid and non rigorous function. Aristotle suggests natural memory can be pointed as the very cause for imperfection of knowledge. Human being is thus an insolvable epistemic duality since science needs memory but memory itself is rather the object of custom, art and technique. Science and religion have, according to such Aristotelian premise, a necessary common imaginary.

Key Words: memory, recollection, imagination, epistemology, mnemonic techniques, Aristotle, judgments, intellect

Memory and recollection have been pointed as important acts of religious belief ever since Mircea Eliade's concept of *myth of eternal return* was forged and there is an affinity with the *Lost Paradise* theme as well; both have profound grounding on some concept of memory and imagination. But whereas ancient and primordial myths have been deposited within some social or trans-individual imaginary, there is an increasing interest in exploring the importance of personal or *individual imaginary* for religious belief. Far from thinking to any regress to the psychoanalytic views, I suggest actually that individual memory and imagination, explored mainly from epistemological perspective in philosophy, have an important role in religion and could reveal illuminating conclusions for the researcher of religions. I totally agree that memory and imagination are not only factors of cohesion or religious communication but also individual ferments for structuring one's religious views, far from reducing the complexity of religion to superfluous affections but orienting and grounding authentic religious belief on one's life. One may notice the interesting approach of systematic interpretation of some contemporary authors' life focused on memory as restorative, integrative and redemptive¹.

The *individual memory and recollection* in religion has been the starting point of Ioan Petru Culianu's book about Eros and magic in the Renaissance². His main idea is that the Aristotelian *phantasma* or faculty of imagination has been for centuries understood as the "place" of mental images that populated the imaginary world of religion. Modern censorship applied to the imaginary by the Reformation created modernity as an effort to adapt to an imaginary vacuum that had to be replaced by the techniques and sciences³. The concept of *phantasma* discussed there is the Aristotelian individual imagery grounded more on epistemological and psychological insights. But the religious individuals assumed and connected to that concept of *psyche* thus resulting a culturally determined societal functioning.

We intend to develop the discussion on the problem of memory and imagination in Aristotle as an endeavor to develop this direction and give a more precise philosophical frame for this context. We debate aspects concerning the epistemological status of memory, and, from an historical point of view, throw some light on Aristotle's interest for this subject.

However, Aristotle described *imaginary* as an area of techniques instead of science. Translation from Aristotelian science grounded on *phanasmata* to the modern sciences as adaptation to the missing *phantasmata* remains to be discussed. As a corollary, there is also a religious translation, from Medieval religion of imaginary to Modern religion of the vacuum. How do we understand that? Is it possible to gain a deeper insight from discussing more on Aristotle's theory of memory and imagination?

The epistemological role of memory is a subject of maximum importance since questions referring to the materialism-idealism debate⁴, questions regarding realism, issues concerning the history of religions depend on it. Is memory a mere material container for certain information, which probably completely disappears with the individual's death? Is memory an autonomous function of the human intellect, possibly with consequences on human culture, if this function somehow transcends the individual? Does memory depend on the individual? Is memory a good of the individual or of the entire species? Is memory something essential for us?

I believe that a fundamental premise for this discussion can be given by clarifying the epistemological status of memory, an extremely interesting topic in Aristotle's biological treatises. There are authors, such as Janet Coleman⁵, who argue the idea that Aristotle was undoubtedly influenced by the medical-empirical doctrine, since he gives an important role to memory and the technique of memorizing: not only does he explicitly preoccupy himself with memory as faculty of the psyche (for instance in *On Memory and Recollection* and in *On the Soul*), but he even recommends to his students practices of memory techniques.

Memory as semantic and somatic function

What is kept in memory is extremely diverse: things that are learnt, contemplated, heard, seen, objects of scientific and logical knowledge, actions, names, experiences and temporal intervals, mathematical entities, abstract objects, thoughts. All these fall under the distinction between the *recollection act*, an action that occurs at a certain moment, and the *disposition or tendency to recollect*, (*hexis* or *pathos*, namely a state or an affection), which is the continuation of the action of perception, understanding, experimenting or learning⁶.

Still, how is the recollection possible or how can affection persist in our mind in the absence of its agent? This is the question that generates one definition of recollection: it occurs due to sensation that is *possessed* in the mind as *image* (impression) and that possession is called *recollection*; it occurs in that part of the body that holds it. The exterior movement is imprinted in the psyche just like a seal is made by a ring.

Memory is properly activated when the subject is in a receptive state of mind, proper for learning or scientific investigation. In an active state ("agitation") the memory weakens. Aristotle compares the second state with old age or with disease: the movement or seal is applied in these cases as on watery surface. There is also the case when the psyche that perceives is "eroded", unable to receive other "seals". They do not have memory because of the thinness of the psyche's "substratum" capable of this operation. In consistency with this analogy, Aristotle also imagines

the case of a substratum that is too dry - in this case the “seal” does not hold; or when it is too humid - when it does not remain.

Another form of the question and thus the next step in the discussion is *what do we recall* during the act or bringing something from memory in front of the conscience: is it the “imprint” (the “seal” or image), or the object from which it derives? If we recall the image, then there is no ground for its assimilation with exterior things, and if we remember the exterior things, how is recollection possible in their absence?⁷ The matter becomes somehow circular giving rise to the difficulty of self-reference: if the “imprint” in the psyche is, in fact, recollected, for what reason should it refer to something else and not to itself? This fragment relates to the first chapter of *Categories*, where Aristotle gives the example of the similitude between the real man and the painted man in order to illustrate the case of homonymy. In the same way, here too, we are told that the image in the memory is a sort of “painting” of the real thing; a relation of signification occurs between the two. In itself, the image is vision or representation, but because it refers to something different, it is similar to an icon. If we consider the mental image as object in itself, it is self-referential (or may have a random reference if the initial relation with the agent is lost) and the notion recalls it in an homonymic way. However, if we consider the image as *image*, maintaining its quality of *sign*, then it loses its self-reference remaining what it should be: an object with two dimensions, one present and another absent, a “trace”, a symbol in a relation of synonymy with its reference.

Cognitive faculties have two types of semiotic behavior in this context: a spontaneous one, in which the objects of knowledge stand for themselves, maintaining self-reference and rendering impossible the signifying relation (the case of perception, but also of unclear memories, that no longer keep the reference to objects that caused them, remaining simple “thoughts”, about which we cannot decide whether they occurred or not, an aberrant case of “multiplication of entities”), respectively the case when the image is in fact an “icon”, a *part* of a reality constituted as semantic relation. This second case is recollection. Scientific research and learning must rely on memory as recollection, i.e. consider image as *image of something*, not as object in itself. It is concluded then that memory is possession of the image (representation) of a thing in the sensitive psyche.

Recollection is neither a *repetition* of the act of memorizing, nor its achievement, but an *activation* of something that already exists in ourselves, namely the image (“imprint”) of the thing perceived in the past, as it was perceived (with its qualities and especially with its *movement*) because memory keeps a *complete* image of the perceived event. It is exactly the mechanism of the recollection outset: a reactivation of the entire event, in its real succession, as image in the psyche. Aristotle argues that it is in the nature of things for a certain movement to occur after

another, so that the reactivation of the entire image occurs spontaneously if it started correctly from the cause of the entire chain of successions.

An interesting argument for a gnoseological optimism is encountered here, namely that the exterior world can be known in principle as the sensitive forms are perfectly similar to the images within the memory (according to “the nature of things”) and further on with objects; they are in fact the *objects themselves*, only lacking their material dimension. The simultaneous capacity to recognize the existence of a time interval passed between experience and its recollection helps to avoid confusion between mental images and memory.

The problem of identifying a *place* for memory and recollection is a difficult one. On the one hand, Aristotle argues for the presence of images in the psyche, but their *conditions of possibility* and even their limits belong to the somatic determinations. Memory and other mental affections such as dreams belong to the perceptive faculties and are ascribed both to the psyche and the body. It does not seem to be the case, in a strict sense, that a “level” or a special psychic faculty exists for this. Animals and people, as living beings, perceive, recall, and dream. Aristotle speaks about these activities as belonging to *substance*, namely to that *composite* that includes both the psyche and the body. Because of that, it is true to say that the images in the psyche are also in the body. First of all, because the psyche is “in the body”, and likewise because the elementary functions of the psyche (perception, imagination) only occur through corporal activity.

Sensible form and memory

A more ample discussion about the way in which the external reality interacts with the human being can be found in the second and the third book of *De anima*. Starting from the idea that perception represents the affection of a sense organ by the exterior things, Aristotle shows how the sense organ receives the form of the object without matter and after that describes this process in terms of actuality and potentiality.

The object actualizes in the sense organ a potency in order to perceive so that formally speaking the sensorial organ *becomes what the object is*. Before the moment of perception, the sense organ is pure potentiality regarding forms of external objects. It is an extremely interesting situation: the sense organ seems to undertake exactly the role of the matter of the external object, assuming its *form* on a new substratum given by the human body itself. A *synthesis* of a special sort occurs, a *transfer of form* from a substratum on another one. It is not without interest to notice that also the definition of matter as pure potentiality seems to match with the definition of the sensorial organ; the later has, in the perceiving process, the same function as the notion of matter: the sense organ is in a potential way what the form of the body is

in an actual way. As a consequence of perception, the form actualizes itself in the psyche.

The psyche is understood as entelechy of the body. Hence, it is a potency (purpose) which actualizes by practicing knowledge and contemplation; the achievement of this purpose is a noetic state. However, the human being is not its entelechy *in act*, but in potency, namely the matter of the body. Nothing else but matter (term that can be changed with “potency”, in the sense of the direct proportionality between the *lack* of act and matter) represents the condition of possibility of knowledge understood as movement towards entelechy. The substance called human being must, by practicing knowledge, *actualize* the proportion of form that it lacks, which means that a *substitution* of matter with form occur, an *informing*.

The potentiality (lack of form or distance from entelechy) of the human being turns into a process of movement towards the act. Perception is the only method for the cognitive faculties to be moved and the way for this dynamics consists of the “infusion” of form from the external things. Our own materiality is exactly the potency we have at our disposal to “undertake” form from the objects, *becoming what we perceive*. The process of the sensorial experience is, in this sense, one of *modifying* the relation between *form* and *lack of form* existing in ourselves, nonetheless, a process of transforming a relation with the external objects into a relation with internal forms.

*

I would try to make a first stop here and notice that the memory and imagination begins as a process of undertaking sensible forms. Meaningful as it may seem, *phantasia* as Culianu uses it is not a “creative” therefore unacceptably unpredictable random “subjective” activity as some moderns will understand. *Proton organon*, it seems, is *constituted* by experience itself. What *imagination* does as religious representation should mean, for the Aristotelian Medieval believer, nothing less than a legitimate way of interiorization sensible qualities and it is also legitimate I think to consider the same theory as a possible basis for understanding the cult of icons in the traditional Christian churches. As we shall see further, an adequate use of *phantasia* is required.

Memory and imagination

A challenging matter in Aristotle’s theory of knowledge refers to the character of imagination. If perception is understood as a process connecting the sense organs and the perceived thing it means that it cannot be at any time passive; being the result of an encounter, sensations are always understood as act and not passion. The intellectual activity has as object the intelligible form, thus its actual character (the phenomenon

called “active intellect”) derives directly from the intelligible character of known forms.

The problem of mediating between the sensorial and intellectual level is one of the most intriguing ones because it involves identifying the cause of uncertainty of knowledge and the grounds of the distinction between “knowledge in itself” and “knowledge for us”. In a classical study on this matter, Malcolm Schofield⁸ notices that the most significant Aristotelian thesis on imagination is the rejection of the true character of sensation. He says it is not sensation that is deceiving but only representation, because it does not coincide with sensation. In *Metaphysics*, 1010b 1-14, Aristotle argues for this while directly aiming at Protagoras’ doctrine that states all phenomena (appearances) is true. Still it is not only a contextual intervention, because there are many other passages where Aristotle refers to imagination or representation⁹ arguing for the same thesis.

Imagination is a “border” or a territory of encounter for sensation and intellect, an uncertain area on which thinking depends but it can not rigorously be founded. On the one hand, sensation is true because it has an active and present character. On the other hand, thinking as act is also true as it aims at the intelligible, namely non-material (non-“possible”), eliminating the possibility of formal error. What we must understand is that the source of errors is neither sensation nor the intellect, but actually this *phantasia* which is not one of them, but which cannot be considered separately either. By investigating several occurrences of the term, M. Schofield concludes that imagination is equally similar to both the intellectual and the sensorial activity.

The same vague character of imagination in Aristotle’s works is noticed by others as well. Discussing the meanings of the usage of the term, Dorothea Frede¹⁰ argues three main uses: i) the capacity to experiment an appearance; ii) appearance as phenomenon; iii) that which appears; the result of experience. Aristotle uses *phantasia* in all these senses and there is no reason to separate them or to try a unifying definition. Firstly, from an Aristotelian perspective, the edification of a definition of something non-substantial is not possible, as is the case with imagination. Not being a substance, it is not a form in itself either, having an instable character and functioning only as a dynamics or alteration of sensorial perception. Taking into account the purely intermediary character of imagination between senses and intellect, we cannot disregard this status of “passing” area between the sensitive and intelligible.

Is it then legitimate to question the existence of a “superior limit” of perception, namely of a border between sensitivity and imagination? Imagination seems to be common both to people and animals; therefore it seems it should not have anything in common with the intellect but only with perception. The sensible is both proper and common, thus animals

can perceive elementary features (“proper sensible”), but also movement, size, number, configuration (“common sensible”)¹¹.

In Aristotle’s classification of the sensible there is also the “accidental sensible”, namely that consciousness of the identity of the perceived substance. It is obvious that, since the human being shares with animals this faculty of sensation, it is impossible that sensorial data be so “explicit”, that is why the accidental sensible is not in fact a sensible, but an opinion, an intervention of thinking on sensation because for animals it is impossible to identify “the white one” with “Diores’ son”. Due to the same reason the accidental sensible does not depend on imagination either. The existence of a limit between the sensorial activity and imagination is hard to determine exactly because imagination is defective of definition. It is rather a “trace” of the senses in the passive psyche, as visual memory or, in the terms of the Aristotelian analogy, an “imprint” of sensations in the psyche similar to prints on wax. The difference between the *act* of printing and its *result* is only a difference *agent - patient*, and due to this reason it becomes clear that the “trace” or the “effect” of sensation can not be isolated from its cause, the sensation itself. Hence, imagination is the same as sensation to the extent to which it exists only as its effect, it does not have subsistence; it is a process.

Conversely, because it is not an intelligible (subsistent without a substratum), mental image must have a reality similar to sensible things, namely to be a form-matter (or act-potency) compound. There is no other “form” for imaginary things than the sensible one given by the senses. However, appealing to the same analogy of the wax we cannot name another “matter” for mental images than the “wax” itself, namely the psyche, not active (as this refers separately to the intelligible), but passive.

Then, if *phantasiai* do not represent in themselves a semantic diagnosis for reality (of the type “the white one is Diores’s son”), what kind of relation do they have with the intellect? Aristotle says that without *phantasia* no supposition can exist, regardless of their forms (science, opinion, judgment, their opposites as well)¹². In other words, without imagination there can not be any *presupposition about a state of things*.

The intellect as activity is not conditioned by imagination but its suppositions are, e.g. the premises of thinking. So imagination establishes a connection between the senses and the intellect because it offers the intellect sensible forms, not as present perceptions, but as images. In this sense, a mental image is a compound of sensible form and psychic “matter”, naming thus the psyche as substratum of the sensible form.

*

When we imagine objects we “create”, I would suggest to think a special kind of substantial entity that has our own passive mind as *matter* and external objects’ sensible forms as *form*. This *phantasma* comes from perception, has some kind of special existence within the psyche and then

will constitute the prime mater of intellect's notions. But what happens with the *phantasmai* as long as they subsist within the psyche? Are they independent or not? How much control we can exercise over them? Is it like in Cuiianu's projection, namely that *phantasmai* can gain autonomy and *affect* religious views? Is *phantasma* an *activity*, for that reason?

Thinking from images. The true, the false and the image

Thinking can be considered as analogous to perception, since it is described as a process through which the intellect *becomes* what it understands¹³. Intellect means the activity of the psyche as it judges and thinks, as a state different from its "natural" inheritance of potentiality. We can notice again the terminological similarity concerning intellect and matter: the *potency* must be understood as a lack of form that needs to be actualized, therefore, in the psyche, the *passive state* has the same function as *matter*. The passive psyche can undertake (by its nature) the form of things it knows. In the same way as matter is nothing present and only *substance* understood as *compound* of matter and form (or potency and act) *is* something (has being), the potential psyche is nothing before thinking, more exactly before becoming what it thinks. In other words, the intellect is a "place" of potential forms.

Contrary to the sense organs that are not different from the body (this being their matter), the intellect is separated by nature, although still potential as a matter of fact. Its potentiality is the condition for the intellect's understanding of essential forms, namely of determinations that stand under categories different from substance (spatial phenomena, temporality, qualitative, quantitative, etc.). If the intellect had materiality (it would be "mixed"), it would *become some quality*, it could be cold or hot, it could even be some sensitive organ (see *De anima*, 429a 15-26). It is entirely definite then that intellect has no relation ("mixture") with the body. The potential intellect is more like a non-activated faculty, like the intellect before knowing something. It is *momentary* because its nature is to *become* active: the *inactivated function* and the *activated function* work as a succession of states in which the second replaces the first.

When active, the intellect is *all things*. After the passive one *becomes* all things that it knows (it is a process of self-fulfillment), the active one *produces* all things, being their agent. Thus the intellect must be understood through analogy with a substance in its becoming.

But what is the role of *memory* in the intellectual process? Since the psyche does not think without images, it behaves as a gradual movement of sensorial images towards mental images and then towards notions of intellect. Each of these is a "copy" of the exterior object that activates different parts of the psyche, making them *become*, in a specific way to each of them, identical with the object. At each level we can find such corresponding similarities so that any cognition movement, at each level

(from sensation to even the most abstract reasoning) has an object residing in the previous level.

Knowledge is for Aristotle exactly this possibility of the *psyche* to undertake the external world. It is a specific activity of the human intellect and without it thinking would be impossible. The thinking of essences is true and unitary because universals are exactly what the active intellect *produces* (and) as a result of contemplating the images from memory. The universal is the *object itself*, unitary and complete, as it is depicted by the definition of the active intellect that disposes of the images in memory.

The false judgment arises when there is an inadequate relation of the intellect to the object of knowledge, either of a semantic or of a volitional nature. The volition seems to be sufficiently influent on the intellect when it imposes itself as principle of mobility *independently* from the judgment of the intellect:

“Thus there is one single moving cause, the appetitive faculty. For, had there been two, intelligence and appetency, which moved the action, still they would have done so in virtue of some character common to both. But, as a matter of fact, intellect is not found to cause motion apart from appetency. For rational wish is appetency; and, when anyone is moved in accordance with reason, he is also moved according to rational wish. But appetency may move a man in opposition to reason, for concupiscence is a species of appetency. While, however, intellect is always right, appetency and imagination may be right or wrong. Hence it is always the object of appetency which causes motion, but this object may be either the good or the apparent good...”¹⁴.

Judgments that are false have as *source* not the activity of the theoretic intellect, but exactly its founding on imagination, respectively its usage by will and desire. The function of images is similar to the function of words: if in relation to these later ones Aristotle imposed the rule of *synonymy* for the relation with things (namely they do not contain semantic abuses as in the case of the “painted man” example – see *Categories*. 1.a), as far as images are concerned we must be sure there are no abuses of the imagination; judgments founded on images taken *in themselves* (like in the case of *paronymy* for words) without considering their signification.

Certainly, these abuses can have multiple causes, their source being the *will to use signs incorrectly*¹⁵. Considered in themselves, as copies of the

perceived objects, they satisfactorily correspond to the reality. If they are used abusively breaking the status of *copies*, a sophistical usage occurs.

In any case, Aristotle speaks about *recollection* as a sort of secondary memory. It is problematic since it can not be identified either with imagination or with memory. Memory is a function that naturally occurs and has as result the “copies” or “effigies” of the form of things in the *psyche*. However recollection is a volitional act, a sort of process of thinking, described as a process of *search* having as a starting point thinking instead of perception¹⁶.

“We can now understand why it is that sometimes ... we do not know whether this really implies our having had perceptions corresponding to them, and we doubt whether the case is or is not one of memory. But occasionally it happens that (while thus doubting) we get a sudden idea and recollect that we heard or saw something formerly. This (occurrence of the 'sudden idea') happens whenever, from contemplating a mental object as absolute, one changes his point of view, and regards it as relative to something else. The opposite (sc. to the case of those who at first *do not recognize their phantasms as mnemonic*) also occurs, as happened in the cases of Antipheron of Oreus and others suffering from mental derangement; for they were *accustomed to speak of their mere phantasms as facts of their past experience*, and as if remembering them. This takes place whenever one contemplates what is not a likeness as if it were a likeness.”

It is a deliberated action which involves a succession of associated ideas, a “recuperation” of ideas in the absence of the perceived things, as when subjects such as equality, good, beauty are discussed, which implies the recollection of certain relevant data. Practically, any dialectical discussion starts such a mental process. Instead of having as starting point a perception or a present image, the dialectical reasoning starts from the *recollection* of an image that has an imprecise connection with things: concerning goodness it is judged on the base of a *good thing*, or, reversely, it is judged about *good things* on the basis of a representation in itself, dissociated from its semantic function. Still the authentic study is the one that considers the image as *image of something*, not as object-image.

The judgment that uses images as such contains the error of not taking into account the fact that images are *in the mind* and that the substantial matter of perceived things was replaced by the passive *psyche*. Thus, images are *copies* in the sense that the matter-form composition of the prime substance initially perceived is now a *psyche-form* composition.

This means that the exterior “thing” does no longer exist for the intellect: the intellect itself, was activated through the “undertaking” of the form of the thing. The reasoning with the help of the recalled images is not, in fact, a judgment about *external things*, but one about “internal things”, about the intellect-as-known-things.

The *succession* of the stages of the argument maintains a natural order because the isomorphism with the succession from the exterior is maintained as well. The mental image is as complex as it does not contain only the “signs” of things but also the connections between them, namely the categorical accidental determinations such as temporality, space, qualities, and so on. However there is an invalid intervention of the practical intellect or the will which depicts images as if they were real in themselves. The active intellect judges about images in the manner: “The *image* is about the world”, while the volitional act considers the image alone: “the *image* exists”. This process does not lack connection with corporality. Aristotle defines recollection as a search of something corporal for an image¹⁷, especially for people who possess a volitive activity, because the volitive activity is a *kind of syllogism*¹⁸. A “syllogism” somatically determined, we say, a sort of perpetual “fight” with our own images, in an obsessive way, for instance in the case of melancholic people. Because of having certain qualities psychical-corporeal (humidity or moisture around the sensitive region) they are the most affected ones by images and they are in the situation of permanently remembering them, in an agitation without control. Reversely, the ones that

“Those whose upper parts are abnormally large, as is the case with dwarfs, have abnormally weak memory, as compared with their opposites, because of the great weight which they have resting upon the organ of perception, and because their mnemonic movements are, from the very first, not able to keep true to a course, but are dispersed, and because, in the effort at recollection, these movements do not easily find a direct onward path. Infants and very old persons have bad memories, owing to the amount of movement going on within them; for the latter are in process of rapid decay, the former in process of vigorous growth; and we may add that children, until considerably advanced in years, are dwarf-like in their bodily structure. Such then is our theory as regards memory and remembering their nature, and the particular organ of the soul by which animals remember; also as regards recollection, its formal definition, and the manner and causes-of its performance.”¹⁹

The psyche as a formal cause (entelechy) of the body is still a material cause for *noesis*, a potential principle, because the psyche works as a *purpose* for the body but then *noesis* is the *purpose* for the psyche. The psyche is substantially dependent upon the body as noetic activity is substantially dependent upon the psyche. Because of this, remembering and recollection can not be independent of their somatic determinations. On the other side, intellect is not responsible for psychical functions such as remembering and forgetting. There is also love, hate, memory, discursive thinking, all understood as “affections”, hence mainly foreign for the noetic activity. These are activities of the human being as a matter-form compound, which is a sort of common result of the intellect, psyche and body²⁰.

*

Our insight started from the necessity to sharpen the Aristotelian meaning of the mental image (*phantasma*) in religious representation and arrived at this point to reflect upon the somatic particularities that differentiate human persons when using imagination. *Phantasma* is not universal but on the contrary, unique and personal by nature (human person’s nature). Psychologically the *phantasma* functions like a subjective substitute for the sensorial encounter of the object.

Mental images and rhetoric

Because of this difference between people with more ability to remember and the ones with less, Aristotle recommends repetition as means to avoid the dysfunctions of memory. *Mnemonic* exercises and tokens can be useful in this sense, for instance in the dialectical debate, when someone recollects *common places* of argumentation instead of images of things, common places presented in detail in a work such as *Topics* (especially chapter VIII), but also suggested schematically in *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 452 a17. The failing of recollection, namely the inability to reconstruct the succession of things only through images justifies the need to prescribe certain “artificial images”, unaffected by arbitrary and determinations, in the sense of certain fixed logical structures. These are “common places”, used by the ones that can not reconstruct in memory the structure of reality.

In a study on *Rhetoric*, Larry Arnhart inquires: “what bearing, we might ask, has his understanding of men’s sensual experience of the world through representative images on what he has to say about ordinary discourse?²¹” It is an appropriate question that leads to the crucial point of the issue of historicity. In common speech there are fundamental consequences upon the manner in which recollection is or is not capable to reflect the physical reality. Digressions from the phenomena occur in speech, differences appear from the experience of the one who recalls. And if a dialectical speech means the presence of a *transmitter* and a

receiver, between the two there is a permanent exchange of words, images, recollections. Firstly, words can be understood *homonymic*, *synonymic* or *paronymic* (*Categories*, 1a). Secondly, words activate *images* in each of the two “psyches”, images that can be taken differently: in themselves or as signs. Thirdly there are somatic determinations of each individual that contribute to the weakening of memory.

The existence of a unitary “common ground” for images, accepted by everyone, would be desirable (socially homogenous) because it could facilitate both the dialectical speech and the political decisions process. The state of “unity of thoughts” (*homonoia*) can be a projection in this sense. However not an utopia or an ideal state as in Plato’s *Republic*, but a continuously improved state, a continuous “negotiation” to which all the citizens take part. If wise is the man “capable of deliberation²²”, the appropriate mental state for deliberation must be searched in the perfect control of recollection, understanding by this an adequate semantics of images, because, we can read next, “no one deliberates about things that are invariable, or about things that are impossible for him to do” (*Nichomachean Ethics*, sq). The meaning of this passage is that deliberation always aims at the *possible*, things in their becoming, and never the *necessary* or *the impossible*. Knowledge of the things in their becoming is a process of the passive psyche, having as starting point the recollected images. Conversely, notions and definitions (the “necessary” or the universal) do not require deliberation, but they do not depend on the resources of memory either.

The community of thought is nevertheless a community of sensorial experiences, of actions, a permanent self-adjusting reality. The Aristotelian works on rhetoric show exactly the need to explore an intermediary social area with undecided status, situated between demonstrative sciences and sophistic, meant to intermediate or facilitate the participation of all types of experience, memory, recollection, to the social life. If it is possible that all the individual varieties of recollection of exterior reality reach an exact signification in reality, this could be obtained through an instrument at the same time theoretical (for the correctness of the argumentation), practical (aiming at the conformity of desire and will with the rationality of the decisions) and psychological (facing the precariousness of recalled images, affected as they are by corporality, i.e. by individual weaknesses, but especially by particularities arising from *habitus* – a term for states of the psyche). This field can only belong to *Rhetoric*, understood as *antistrophe* – analogous, “mirrored image” of dialectics²³.

If dialectics establishes the rules of argumentation starting from premises, *Rhetoric* offers rules for establishing correct premises, this being the essential issue of the functioning of a community. Indeed, if the correctness of premises depends of the way *recollection* functions, it means that *Rhetoric* must be understood as an *instrument that optimizes imagination*

and memory, so that the confusion between images and perceived things or the “mixture” of their succession is avoided. It is a technique or a method to correct the will, to restate the “starting point”.

It is plain that rhetorical persuasion is not sufficient to make human beings virtuous. An orator appeals to that part of the psyche that can be rationally influenced but only after the psyche has been “configured” by the rules, traditions and customs of the community. This is precisely the utility of rhetoric: to influence a psyche as configured by opinions and not as structured by scientific demonstration.

Practical life is a movement from a confuse set of appearances towards the rational order and it consists of the ability to control present and past experience. We experience before thinking and speaking, hence any logical argument must start from phenomena. The rhetoric exercise proceeds with the help of its persuasive instruments precisely in this way: reconsidering what we think and imagine about phenomena as regarding their ordering and status. Due to the fact that Aristotle believes that truth exists in all signs but ambiguity springs from their wrong usage, the fundamental problem of any systematic activity is not primarily the formal validity of syllogistic argumentation, as it will be definitely assured after an adequate *starting point*. In science, it is not the correctness of the arguments that is hard to obtain, but the acceptance of the premises. In the same way, in practical life, the major difficulty arises from establishing the premises. They have not been previously proven and it is impossible to demonstrate them because the audience of the orator has a deficient (or culturally altered) representation of sensorial experience in the psyche.

Rhetoric is then an ability to communicate with the human being as a compound of body and psyche, with the person’s memories, not with his/her intellect. The probable character of the rhetorical enthymemes is sufficient for such an intention because they address an intermediary function of the psyche, the level that refers to images. In psychological terms, the probable enthymeme has the purpose to consolidate weak memories or, reversely to weaken settled and *homonymic* consolidated memories (seen as objects as such). In Aristotelian terms, this includes *ethos* and *pathos* though I would say the specific problem of homonymy belongs to *ethos*²⁴. Giordano Bruno was one of the important Renaissance writers to endeavor an exploitation of *phantasmatic* relations between many psyches (*vincula*) in order to establish magic techniques for manipulation²⁵. It is still an active subject for the researchers of manipulation nowadays; Aurel Codoban is one of the first in Romania to point that

“a correct contemporary representation of magic (...) would link it directly as origin of psychological and social sciences of today. Magic is the ancestor psychoanalysis but especially of applied psychology

and psychology of masses, respectively general psychosociology”²⁶

Phantasms are also unique by culture as a part of *ethos*²⁷. *Rhetoric* seems to function as a proper instrument for reducing differences to a common ground that is needed for a functional common mental representation. We can ask a simple inquisitive question to Culianu’s hypothesis at this stage. If our Aristotelian point stands so far, is it a fact that Renaissance censorship of *phantasmata* came out also from a lack of rhetorical good sense? Or was it that too many social and political purposes interfered with different rhetorical tools turning the final outcome into a general massacre of *phantasmata*?

Memory and epistemology

The next charming question arises by necessity: is the weakness of imagination and memory so significant as to influence even a community of philosophers? Every time Aristotle speaks about memory and recollection, he specifies that systematic study (that refers to natural science) must start from an adequate representation and especially from “presentation as an image of a presented object” not as image in itself²⁸. It is absolutely necessary that the philosopher, when he reflects on non-separated substances (the object of *Physics*) takes into account the fact that recollection of their determiners is a corporal process having as initiator not the intellect but a psycho-somatic complex: recollection stands for “searching the image in the body”. The psyche, as presented in the third book of *De anima*, is defined by two different functions: on the one hand movement in the space, and on the other hand judgment, analyzing and feeling²⁹.

There is a fundamental difference between sensation and the other “corporal” processes connected to it, such as representation, memory and recollection. Sensation is “always an act”, while representation is not. Sensation does not depend on the corporal particularities of the knowing subject, it always illustrates instantaneously the features of the perceived external substances, that is why it does not depend on will and it is not absent in animals. Representation is of another type: its status is that of *internal* reconstruction of the perceived substance, but only as *sensitive form*, its matter (“substratum”) being substituted by the material psyche of the knower. In this sense, a difference or at least a dependence of the represented object intervenes, its sensitive “infestation” with the corporeal reality of the knower. Thus, being always present, sensation depicts an isomorphic form of the perceived substances, while representation alters it.

Aristotle enumerates three causes for this phenomenon: first, the sensation of the specific features (“the proper sensible”) may contain errors, but to the smallest degree – in fact insignificant³⁰ – which makes

the other two causes become significant; secondly, an error or uncertainty in identifying a sensation with the perceived object intervenes (“But at any rate each judges about these, and it is not deceived as to the fact that there is colour or sound, but rather as to what or where the coloured thing is or as to what or where the object which sounds is” – 418a 11). Thirdly, the synthetic faculty of sensitivity intervenes, which is not a “sixth sense” but a synthesis of the others, determinations we can access through it (such as movement, size) being accidental in relation to objects in themselves.

What constitutes the substance of representation (its content) originates in a significant amount from this synthetic function of sensitivity, which explains by itself the altered character of representations. A genuine question is: How is it possible to obtain a correct relation between sensible objects and representation? – since sensibility (through the intervention of its synthetic function) does not provide it and hence *memory* can contain, because of this, uncertain images. The mnemonic tokens can not intervene at this level because they are situated at the next level of *recollection*. It is necessary here that repetition of sensation, mentioned by Aristotle several times, as a periodic recurrence of the same perceptive experience, must be *in act* in order for the representation to occur adequately. This means nothing else than that representation is directly dependent on sensation and its fixation in memory is – due to the repetition of sensation – a corrigible process. The explanation is to be found in the definition of representation: “a movement taking place as a result of actual sense-perception.”³¹ It is useful to continue this quotation:

“And since sight is sense-perception *par excellence*, the name for imagination (*phantasia*) is taken from light (*phaos*), because without light it is not possible to see. And because imaginations persist and are similar to perceptions, animals do many things in accordance with them, some because they lack reason, viz. beasts, and others because their reason is sometimes obscured by passion, disease, or sleep, viz. men”

There is a similitude between *phantasia* and *light* of some importance to Aristotle. We know that light (*phaos*) plays a crucial role for sight as its *medium*. Aristotle himself compares productive intellect with light saying that intellect produces all things just as light produces colors (*De anima*, 430a 18 26). Is *phantasia* according to this analogy a kind of *producer* – perhaps the producer of images? Very tricky problem in Aristotle because, just as about active intellect we cannot say anything – as it is the producer but we do not remember with it, so it is an agent we use without having a memory of that act – it is similar with *phantasia*. It is a holder (and

producer in the same sense as light produces colors) of images but does not hold an image of itself. And it is nothing without sensation. This is why censorship of sensitive images is the only and very “switch” that can “turn off” any *phantasmata*. Conversely, exposure to sensitive experience will turn it on and maintain it.

Mnemonic tokens predecessor of scientific experiment

Immediately understood is the fact that the role played by rhetoric to straighten the collective memory is replaced, in the case of scientific research, by the systematic return to the sensation that generated representation. Therefore, the experiment that will become basis for modern science was, in Aristotle, successfully practiced under the form of *repetition* and *conservation* of sensation through descriptions, sketches and collections. Thus, Aristotelian Physics does not have as direct object the *motion* of substances but the moving *substances*; not the *features* of material substances (non-subsistent as they are), but *substances* in themselves, as *subject* or substratum (*hypokeimenon*). In this circumstance, an *experiment* would only repeat the dynamic sensation equally unclear, indefinitely confirming the same spontaneous representation (and, due to spontaneity, uncertain) without offering the possibility of control over it.

Still an establishment of sensorial experience in a different way must be possible so that representation can benefit from a systemized source as well. Only sensorial experience is an act, representation being a *passion* (“influence”), which means that, in fact, its conscious control would transform it in an *act*. Knowledge as *hexis* or state of the psyche represents the transformation, little by little, of passions *into actions* at each specific level. Aristotle is more explicit when he speaks about the intellect, although in the chapter on “active intellect” he proceeds by speaking in the same terms about the psyche as whole:

“since just as in the whole nature there is something which is matter to each kind of thing (and this is what is potentially all of them), while on the other hand there is something else which is their cause and is productive by producing them all – these being related as an art to its material – so there must also be these differences in the soul”³².

Each cognitive level is constituted analogously, as a passive reproduction of the immediate anterior moment, understood as “act. Thus, at sensorial level, the exterior object and the sensation as such represents an *act* that imprints a representation in the psyche. Representation is the *pathema* or the corresponding passion which occurs in the psyche.

Naturally, *memory* as imprinting of representation under the form of images is, at its turn, a *passion*, its cause being representation, this time

understood as act. This is exactly the phenomenon that alters, in an unpredictable way, the correctness of representation, because representation understood as the effect of the sensation spontaneously becomes *cause* of images in the memory, passing from the status of *patient* to *agent*. However it is an agent or activity that occurs without alteration if the psyche would not be affected by the body. The corporeal character of the human being is the source of imperfection of representation. The psyche “becomes what it knows” at each level, still, the *corporeal* psyche suffers, in a natural way a double influence (*pathema*) at each level: from the external sensible form, on the one hand, and from its own corporeality, on the other hand. Therefore any *act* of the psyche will be one that “adds” to the *exterior cause* a second, interior cause, because before being “what it knows” the psyche is still a *form of the body*. In this way, the psyche itself is a “formal cause” with a richer content than the one resulted from representations. If the finality is knowledge of external substances, this formal “enriching” functions as an alteration, the influences resulted due to one’s own corporeality further affecting (undesirably) the images in the memory. In this context, the question Aristotle raises in the treatise on memory and recollection is natural and suitable:

“...when one remembers, is it this impressed affection that he remembers, or is it the objective thing from which this was derived? If the former, it would follow that we remember nothing which is absent”³³.

On the one hand, knowing the way in which human beings’ corporeality can influence the scientific knowledge becomes a theoretical necessity and we deal with a somehow medical issue; Aristotle’s knowledge of the field proved of great help:

“That the affection is corporeal, i.e. that recollection is a searching for an ‘image’ in a corporeal substrate, is proved by the fact that in some persons, when, despite the most strenuous application of thought, they have been unable to recollect, it (viz. the anamnesis = the effort at recollection) excites a feeling of discomfort, which, even though they abandon the effort at recollection, persists in them none the less; and especially in persons of melancholic temperament. For these are most powerfully moved by presentations. The reason why the effort of recollection is not under the control of their will is that, as those who throw a stone cannot stop it at their will when thrown, so he who tries to recollect

and 'hunts' (after an idea) sets up a process in a material part, (that) in which resides the affection. Those who have moisture around that part which is the centre of sense-perception suffer most discomfort of this kind. (...) The affection resembles also that in the case of words, tunes, or sayings, whenever one of them has become inveterate on the lips. People give them up and resolve to avoid them; yet again they find themselves humming the forbidden air, or using the prohibited word. (...) Infants and very old persons have bad memories, owing to the amount of movement going on within them; for the latter are in process of rapid decay, the former in process of vigorous growth; and we may add that children, until considerably advanced in years, are dwarf-like in their bodily structure”³⁴.

So forth.

In the second case, we face an issue of methodology of research. The initial step of any cognitive endeavor will be the isolation of its sensorial object at representation level. The natural question will be: “how can we *visually* isolate the object of our research, since its representations (images fixed in my memory) are in fact a *compound* of two types of influence?

The first answer would be that natural research must not be founded on mental images (understood as *pathemata* therefore *passions* of the psyche) but firstly on *agent* images and secondly as close as possible to sensations from the point of view of accuracy. These two conditions are actually interdependent because, to the extent to which a process of the psyche is *act* and not *passion*, its isomorphism with exterior realities can be controlled.

How can this distinction of genuine sensation from one’s own corporality involved in *phantasma* be realized? This fundamental issue of empirical research is explicitly expressed by Aristotle at the beginning of *On The Parts of Animals* and specifically mentioned every time Aristotle reminds readers to revise anatomic sketches and consult *The History of Animals*. He argues that in investigating nature there must be certain “canons” or *procedures (horous)* based on which the form of the demonstration can be anticipated³⁵.

With this we reach a matter of importance that entered the attention of philosophical and scientific community only in the modern age: empirical investigation must take into account the limits and weaknesses of cognitive faculties; in Aristotle’s terms, “influences” (*pathemata*) exercised on the psyche of the knower by one’s own corporality, due to the indissoluble unity psyche-body or, in other words, the *potential* character of the substantial form called human. In fact, in the Aristotelian context, the impossibility to epistemologically value memory as human

cognitive function seems justified. Hence an alternative must be found or the replacement of memory by an artificial instrument. The author of knowledge imposes an epistemic rupture which arises from human nature; an identifiable rupture but impossible to replace. Thus memory is the “place” where the subject “breaks”, being transformed, due to an internal environment (one’s own corporality) in an unsolvable epistemic duality.

*

The “vacuum” had existed by nature, we see, under an epistemic form, given by the impossibility to rely on an intermediary area of *psyche* that behaves like body: too dry or too humid, according to individual determinations of the epistemic subject. Culianu’s mentioned “censorship” of *phantasmata* did replace, we notice at this ending, an epistemic vacuum with an anthropological one, a different and objective kind. It may be true to say that drawings and sketches played for Aristotle a function of externalized *phantasmata*, since the internal natural memory function was seen to be so unsecure for the epistemic use. Aristotle’s mnemonic tokens functioned indeed like sunglasses but then what Reformation’s winds facilitating the adaptation of apterous fly did was without precedent: throw glasses away and give up any mental representation at all. Techniques and experimental tools of modernity, like Baconian induction (a very complex tool of capitalizing experience in an epistemological useful manner) came out as totally artificial externalized memory tokens. Their meaning could be that of our chronologically first artificial intelligence tokens as long as, for instance, Bacon’s tables of induction were designed to be independent of “idols”, namely human natural mind.

It is possible to conclude that Renaissance operated one of the most spectacular de-structuration of human person, and it was made possible by some unsuccessful debate of Aristotelianism. After that, mind has fewer rooms and *phantasmata* can inhabit only external mediums, with entirely different semiotic behavior. Their initial reference from inside mind to outside (like in the case of icons for instance) is prohibited by our own structure. That was perhaps the true moment of iconoclasm.

Aristotle’s concept of memory and imagination was developed mainly for epistemological and psychological reasons; the religious role of the imaginary that Culianu rooted in Aristotle was actually a Christian Medieval construction that got to a salient influence during Renaissance. But there is also an important difference between the Aristotelian concept of imagination and memory that Culianu refers to³⁶ and most of the esthetically based stereotypes that rely on agent-like understanding of imagination, with an accent on creativity³⁷, which is not the case with neither Aristotelian nor Renaissance function of *phantasma*.

* Acknowledgments: This paper is an outcome of the CNCSIS research project “Istoriografie filosofică. Platon și Aristotel în filosofia românească”, Project manager Daniela Maci, code 37, Oradea University.

Notes:

¹ Such a contemporary contextualisation of imagination and recollection that bear a religious significance may be seen in Sandu Frunză, “Elie Wiesel and Nostalgia for a Lost Paradise”, *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XVIII, No. 2 (Summer 2009): 101-105. Memory is protective as antidote to melancholy and despair. Also, Sandu Frunză, „Ethics, Religion and Memory in Elie Wiesel’s Night”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 9, No. 26 (2010): 94-113.

² Ioan Petru Culianu, *Eros și magie în Renaștere. 1484*, (București: Nemira, 1994), especially pp. 23-34.

³ For a comprehensive introduction to Culianu’s works see Nicu Gavriluță, *Culianu, jocurile minții și lumile multidimensionale* (Iași: Polirom, 2000).

⁴ I use here the interpretation of Janet Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories. Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

⁵ Coleman, 15-16.

⁶ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 449b 24a25, 451a 23-24, 451a 27-28.

⁷ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 450b 14-19.

⁸ Malcolm Schofield „Aristotle on the imagination”, in G.E.R Lloyd. and G.E.L Owens. (eds.), *Aristotle on Mind and the senses: Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium Aristotelicum*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) 99-130. The paper was also published in J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji, (eds.), *Articles on Aristotle, IV: Psychology and Aesthetics*, (London: Duckworth, 1979), 103-132. As well as in: M. C. Nussbaum, A. O. Rorty, (eds.), *Essays on Aristotle’s De Anima*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). 249-277. Malcolm Schofield’s classical article has been discussed by several authors such as Watson, Modrak, Wedin, as one can find in Dorothea Frede’s article, synthetically and critically approach: „The Cognitive Role of *Phantasia* in Aristotle”, in M. C. Nussbaum, A. O. Rorty, (eds.), 279-295.

⁹ The term *phantasia* can be translated both as *mental image* and as *representation*, „appearance”, „that what appears” (v. M. Schofield, *loc. cit.*) Strictly speaking, a mental image which is not autonomous: it depends on senses. Therefore *phantasia* must be understood as a *result* of the encounter between sensation and mind, a „*confinio intellectus et sensus*”, a passive phenomenon (thus uncertain) of the psyche. The Aristotelian text from *Metaphysics*, 1010b 1-14 confirms this duality of representation.

¹⁰ Dorothea Frede, „The Cognitive Role of *Phantasia* in Aristotle”, in M. C. Nussbaum, A. O. Rorty (eds.), *Essays on Aristotle’s De Anima*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) 279-295.

¹¹ See *De anima*, 418a 6-25

¹² Aristotle, *De anima*, 427b 25.

¹³ See Aristotle, *De anima*, 429a 13. Further, 429a 18-29.

¹⁴ Aristotle, *De anima*, 433a 20-31.

¹⁵ Cf. Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations*, 165a, *Rhetoric*, 1357a.

¹⁶ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 451a 18.

¹⁷ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 453a 14.

¹⁸ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, but also in *On the Motion of Animals*, 701a 32.

¹⁹ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 453a-b.

²⁰ Aristotle, *De anima*, 408a 30 – b24.

²¹ Larry Arnhart, *Aristotle on Political Reasoning, A commentary on the „Rhetoric”*, (Illinois: Dekalb, 1981). Apud. Janet Coleman, 28

²² Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1140a 31-34.

²³ Cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1354a 1-7.

²⁴ An interesting conference on manipulation held some years before by Aurel Codoban places *ethos and logos* under the contemporary problem of *seduction*. It is a persuasive way Codoban found in order to point the contemporary importance of Aristotelian concept of Rhetoric. Cf. Aurel Codoban, “Manipulare, seducție și ideologie ostensivă”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 2 No. 4 (2003): 122-138. Also a good contribution: Daiana Dragus, “Despre discurs, putere... și imaginar religios”, *Caietele Echinoc*, vol. 8/82005, 95-99.

²⁵ Cf. Culiianu, 133.

²⁶ Aurel Codoban, „Ioan Petru Culiianu, sau filosoful (religiilor) ca ‚magician””, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. No. 1 (Spring 2002): 91-104.

²⁷ Cultural determinations of *phantasmata* as *ethos* is shown directly by Aristotle in *Rhetorics*, III, 1. I may mention Jose M. Gonzalez, “The Meaning and Function of *Phantasia* in Aristotle's Rhetoric III.1”, in *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Volume 136, Number 1, Spring 2006, 99-131, where it is argued that *phantasia* “stands for the psychological function that mediates between sense perception and man's higher intellectual faculties”. *Phantasia* is Aristotle's starting concept mediating the rhetorical task and “entrusted with turning the orator's subject matter into such *phantasmata* as will successfully shape the opinion of the listeners and gain their *pistis*”. One of the greatest theorists of *phantasma* in Romania is Corin Braga. See Corin Braga, “Imagination’, ‘imaginaire’, ‘imaginal’. Three concepts for defining creative fantasy”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 6 No. 16 (2007): 59-68.

²⁸ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 451a.

²⁹ Aristotle, *De anima*, 427a 18-21.

³⁰ In fact, Aristotle says that *sense as such*, specific or proper can not be deceived (*De anima*, 418a 10-25), only the *common* or synthetic, to the extent in which motion or size are „accidentally” attributed to the objects of perception, which means that, actually, common sensibility already represents a first level in which an activity of the psyche arises.

³¹ Aristotle, *De anima*, 429a 1-2.

³² Aristotle, *De anima*, 430a 10-14.

³³ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 450b.

³⁴ Aristotle, *On Memory and Reminiscence*, 453a-b.

³⁵ Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, 639a 1-15.

³⁶ One may also notice that an entire issue of *Chora. Revue des études anciennes et médiévales*, Polirom, 3-4/2005-2006 has been dedicated to the subject of imagination in Antiquity.

³⁷ See Corin Braga, for a discussion on how religion got attacked as too imaginative due to this very confusion between Greek meaning of *phantasia* or *eikasia* and Romantic overemphasis on *Mundus imaginalis*.

References:

Aristotle. *The works of Aristotle translated into English*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1912.

Barnes J., Schofield M., Sorabji R. (eds.). *Articles on Aristotle, IV: Psychology and Aesthetics*. London: Duckworth, 1979, 103-132.

Bolton, Robert. "Aristotle's Method in Natural Science: *Physics I*". In: Judson, L., *Aristotle's Physics: A Collection of Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, 1-30.

Braga Corin. "'Imagination', 'imaginaire', 'imaginal'. Three concepts for defining creative fantasy". In: *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*. Vol. 6, No. 16 (2007): 59-68.

Brunschwig, J., "Les multiples chemins aristotéliens de la sensation commune", *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*. no. 4. 1991, 464.

Codoban, Aurel. "Manipulare, seductie si ideologie ostensivă". In: *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*. Vol. 2, No. 4 (2003): 122-138.

Codoban, Aurel. „Ioan Petru Culianu, sau filosoful (religiilor) ca, magician”. In: *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*. Vol. 1 No. 1 (Spring 2002): 91-104.

Coleman, Janet. *Ancient and Medieval Memories. Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past*. Cambridge: University Press.

Culianu, Ioan Petru. *Eros și magie în Renașterea. 1484*. București: Nemira, 1994.

Drăguș, Daiana. "Despre discurs, putere... și imaginar religios". In: *Caietele Echinox*, vol. 8/2005, 95-99.

Frede, Dorothea. "The Cognitive Role of *Phantasia* in Aristotle". In: M. C. Nussbaum, A. O. Rorty (eds.). *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, 279-295.

Frunză, Sandu. "Elie Wiesel and Nostalgia for a Lost Paradise". In: *Transylvanian Review*. vol. XVIII, No. 2, Summer 2009, 101-105.

Frunză, Sandu. „Ethics, Religion and Memory in Elie Wiesel's Night". In: *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*. Vol. 9, No. 26 (2010): 94-113.

Gavriliuță, Nicu. *Culianu jocurile minții și lumile multidimensionale*. Iași: Polirom, 2000.

Gonzalez, Jose M. "The Meaning and Function of *Phantasia* in Aristotle's Rhetoric III.1". *Transactions of the American Philological Association*. Volume 136, No. 1, Spring 2006, 99-131.

Irwin, Terence (ed.). *Classical Philosophy Collected papers. Vol. 7: Aristotle: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Natural Philosophy*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1995.

Nussbaum, Martha, and Rorty, Oksenberg Amelie. *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Olivo-Poindron, Isabelle. "L' *aistheton*: peut-il être une chose sensible? Sensible et senti dans le *De anima* d'Aristote". In: *Les Études philosophiques*. No. 3/1997, 341-362.

Owen, G.E.L. "Tithenai ta Phainomena". In: J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji (eds.). *Articles on Aristotle, 1. Science*. London: Duckworth, 1975.

Ryan, E.E. *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation*. Montreal-Bellarmin, 1984.

Schofield, Malcolm. "Aristotle on the imagination". In: Lloyd, G.E.R. and Owens, G.E.L. (eds.). *Aristotle on Mind and the senses: Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium Aristotelicum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, 99-130.

von Fritz, K., and Kapp, E.. "The Development of Aristotle's Political Philosophy and the Concept of Nature". In: Barnes, J., Schofield, M., Sorabji, R. (eds.). *Articles on Aristotle, 2. Ethics and Politics*. London: Duckworth, 1977, 113-135.

von Fritz, Kurt. "Aristotle's Contribution to the Practice and Theory of Historiography". In: *Beitrage zu Aristoteles*. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1984.

Williams, C.J.F. "Introduction" to *Aristotle's De generatione et corruptione*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

*** *Chora. Revue des études anciennes et médiévales*. Polirom, 3-4/2005-2006