

***ANTHRÔPOS AS "AITIA" AND "ARCHÊ" OF THE PRACTICAL HORIZON IN THE NE***

***ANTHRÔPOS COMO "AITIA" E "ARCHÊ" DO HORIZONTE PRÁTICO NA ÉTICA A NICÔMACO***

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**ABSTRACT**

This article focuses on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* to clarify the way the human being is cause and principle of acting, in practical situations wherein *logos* deals with desiring and feeling in the task of finding practical truth. That leads us to understand the one who acts and decides (the *anthropos*) in his humanity, and how deciding and acting make him a human being (and why he is an always "still yet to come" being).

**Keywords:** Aristotle. Nicomachean Ethics. Practical reason. *Phronesis* Deliberation. Action.

**RESUMO**

O artigo dedica-se à interpretação da *Ética a Nicômaco*, de Aristóteles, para esclarecer como o homem, marcado pelo *logos* e assim desafiado pela procura da verdade prática – em seu diálogo com paixões e desejos, tudo quanto o singulariza enquanto humano – é causa e princípio do agir. Nesta procura, compreende-se o homem em sua humanidade, revelando-se em seu insuperável vir-a-ser.

**Palavras-chave:** Aristóteles. *Ética a Nicômaco*. Razão prática. *Phronesis*. Deliberação. Ação.

*Anthrôpos as "aitia" and "archê" of the practical horizon in the NE*

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πράξεως μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ προαίρεσις—ὅθεν ἡ κίνησις ἀλλ’ οὐχ οὗ ἕνεκα—προαιρέσεως δὲ ὄρεξις καὶ λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος. διὸ οὐτ’ ἄνευ νοῦ καὶ διανοίας οὐτ’ ἄνευ ἠθικῆς ἐστὶν ἕξεως ἢ προαίρεσις· εὐπραξία γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἐν πράξει ἄνευ διανοίας καὶ ἠθους οὐκ ἔστιν. διάνοια δ’ αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ’ ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτικῆ· (1139b.) αὕτη γὰρ καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄρχει· ἕνεκα γὰρ του ποιεῖ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν, καὶ οὐ τέλος ἀπλῶς (ἀλλὰ πρὸς τι καὶ τινός) τὸ ποιητόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πρακτόν· ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ἡ δ’ ὄρεξις τούτου. διὸ ἡ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἢ προαίρεσις ἢ ὄρεξις διανοητικῆ, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἀνθρώπου.

The cause to come into being (the beginning sc. origin, *arche*) of human agency (*praxis*) is preferential anticipated choice (*proairesis*)— the ground whence [comes] the change (*hōthen hē archē tēs kinēseōs, causa efficiens*), not the ground for the sake of which (*to hou heneka, causa finalis*) +— the cause to come into being (the beginning sc. origin, *arche*) of preferential anticipated choice is a stretching intention (*orexis*) and the grounded account (*logos*) of the forecasted purpose for the sake of which [action is caused to come into being]. This is the reason why there is no preferential anticipated choice without insight (*nous*) nor without the capacity for understanding the insight (*dianoia*) nor is there preferential anticipated choice without having acquired an ethical disposition (*ēthike hexis*). For doing/existing well and the opposite in the practical horizon do not come into being without the capacity of understanding the insight (*dianoia*) nor without the human capacity for shaping features and ways of being (*ethos*). Now the capacity for understanding the insight alone doesn’t move towards any change, unless it is a practical one and stretches intentionally towards the purpose for the sake of which [*praxis* takes place]. This same capacity for understanding insights causes to come into being (*archei + gen.*) the productive disposition. The maker makes [anything] for the sake of a purpose, indeed the makeable and the product made (*to poiēton*) has not ended when it is finished without any further ado (it is there available to be used in relation to open possible uses and indeed it is there also available as a mean that can be used for the sake of anything else), but this is not how the *doable* and what is *practically* done (*to prakton*) comes into being. Doing well/existing well (*eupraxia*) is already the perfect fulfilment without further ado, and the stretching intention aims at it as his purpose. This

is the reason why the preferential anticipated choice is either an intentional insight or an intention capable of understanding the insight. Therefore such a cause to come into being is the human being, *anthropos*. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, NE, 1139a31-1139b5)

## 1. INTRODUÇÃO

How are we to understand this very last sentence: the *anthropos* is such a *cause to come into being*. We will try to get a clear picture of the problems here at stake, by rising the questions that immediately follows the reading of this possible problematic equation:— *anthropos* = *archê* sc. *aition*? For we can formally expand the equation, focusing on the predicate. The *archê*, origin, beginning, cause into being, features two main causal shapes: traditionally translated: *causa efficiens* and *causa finalis*. How are we to understand the complex relation between these two main etiological features as appropriate grounding the *praxis* horizon in Aristotle's analyses? We will follow some hermeneutical hypothesis leaved by Aristotle himself than by some ancient and contemporary commentators. To sum up: The decisive even if not exclusive ontological grounding roll of *praxis* played by the *causa finalis*. *To telos, to agathon, to ameionon, to aristonis* atomically constituted by three main shapes. The *telos* is both: *to hou heneka, that for the sake of which*, and *to hoi heneka* that for whose sake, for whose advantage, an action or a move takes place. The third element being that to *telos* is efficient, is already somehow letting its effects get felt. The *to hou heneka* is an efficient cause: *hothen hê archê tês kinêseôs?*

How are these two *aitiai* connected in *anthropos* so that he becomes the effective ground for the origin of its most appropriate horizon, the *praxis*? Expanding the passage quoted, what is at stake in this peculiar way of thinking the *anthropos* as *archê* when he lets or gets it for him both *aitiai* to coincide, thereby projecting actions, moves, programs? How are *orexis* and *dianoia* so intrinsically organized as essential constituents of the preferential anticipated choice, *prohairesis*? This is the peculiar sort of causation belonging to the human being, acting upon the *praxis* horizon. There are of course other

horizons than *praxis*, where speaking of man as causes of their beings is either remote or at least only analogical (*technê*, *episteme*, *anankê*, *tuchê*). But even in the practical horizon, the situations we get in, the way we are and how we live, can be absolutely alien to our sphere of influence. Things happen to us even because we felt like doing them and we didn't have to put up with their consequences, if only they had been avoided.

We can still understand us being the cause or responsible for what we do. But this is alien to Aristotle's formulation: *anthropos* equals *archê*. Being but the consequences and effects caused by alien, external causes, even if emerging from our psychology, moods and emotions, is one extreme possibility of being in the practical horizon, but eccentric and extravagant to it, out of configuration: unethical. So we can do things because we felt like to do them, because they've crossed our, had us being *out of our minds* or blow our minds way.

The last set of problems concerns the ontological articulation and inner organization of the elements adduced by Aristotle at work to explain how practical beings come into being. We are to become *archê* only if and only if we fulfill certain requirements. First comes *proairesis*, then *praxis*. The *proairesis* is a kind of *hothen hê tês kinêseôs archê*. Without *proairesis*, no *praxis*. From then on, we expect to attain our ends ultimate or scheduled. But the arc drawn from the past of our *proaireseôs* passing through the decisive moment of action, ending in the future when the goals we aimed at is only apparent. The solution lies not in reverting the order, beginning by the end and ending in the beginning so that what first had us motivated to action were the specific goal we aim at. But goals and purposes don't exist at least during the time when we are aiming at them, otherwise we wouldn't move towards them, we already had them. Neither does Aristotle had it that way. He says that there's another force causing us first to *proairesis: orexis*, pursuing the promise of pleasure and avoiding the menace of pain, avoiding taking action when we feel outraged or exploding.

The *orexis* exerts pressure upon *proairesis*, has us breaking through in action. The first

tendency of *orexis* is to become true. Now *orexis* could have only eyes for what randomly creates pressure, wherever pressure comes forth. Every other thing is absorbed to a blinding spot or a black hole, as if everything were simply obliterated, switched off. This is why the other element connects us with the *telos*: we need to understand in a concrete way that we can be leading to nowhere, living with no limit. Not being able to see this, is the cause of everything else being switched off. These problematic questions leave open whether we get to the ultimate *for the sake of which we go through life* or not, i.e., whether we fall continuously down riding on an empty and useless intention proceeding without any limit: *κενή καὶ ματαία ὄρεξις πρόεισι εἰς ἄπειρον* (*NE*, 1094a20-21). In both cases it seems that we have been caught in a sort of throw already unleashed ever since, hurled so to speak in a *kinesis* even if we don't know the *whence comes change, what is its arche, first beginning or origin*. We are ever since caught in an *oregesthai*, having us stretching, longing for, striving for whatever may be the case. Either tighten or loosened up we experience this *ephiesthai* at the *ariston*. The complex multiple orientations and directions of these striving for fetching whatever may be the case is puzzling. We tend to understand the efficient cause somehow in the past when we first were driven by what we felt like to do. Some how it pushes us as from our backs towards the future we face. On the other hand the final cause is understood as something that will ontically happen in a near or distant future. We feel like being drawing to it.

All these elements are the bedrock of the human situation, of *praxis*, broadly speaking and are some how synchronized on an ontological level shaping the ontic phases, not coinciding chronologically with it, though? For how could we understand the *telos* unleashing impacts over us coming from the future? Or are we already in the present subjected and submitted to the future, affected by its impact? How come? The teleology is the appropriate way of how *logos* gives us grounded transparent account of the ends we are pursuing or avoiding, thereupon correcting our striving intention towards them. This *dynamis pronoetike*, a potency that has a beforehand insight, measures the consequences of what we want. The *legesthai, phanai, menuein, nouthetein, epitiman, parakalein* is the way the *logos* struggles to give us an lucid transparent account of the

*telos*. Only in articulation with the *logos* understanding account is the *orexis* capable of influencing the *proairesis*, thus moving us into action, leaving us free leeway or room to move.

## 2. LOGOS, ALOGON, PARA TON LOGON

The *logos* here at stake opens up to the practical *telos*, grounds *proairesis*, and ends up expressed in breakthrough *praxeis*. There are many ways in which the *logos* unfolds his grounding tasks. We need now to identify and isolate the peculiar way the *logos* operates in the *praxis strictu sensu*, for the *legein* here at stake has the *onus* of giving account or justifying the factual purposes presented to us. This aims at giving transparent account of the limit, *revealing the telos, making sense out of* what we are about to do, where are we heading to, when and how, is it to come about. Aristotle describes this grounding thinking process in critical situations, when we do not fully get where are we heading to, what's the purpose for what we are aiming at, when we aren't able of making any sense of where are we shooting at, when eventually we will be heading to nowhere. The *logos* gives an account of the purpose and shapes the orrectical move: orientates it or does away with it. How the *logos* operates in the *praxis* in general as our human atmosphere is a problem of another sort. The *logos* has as its *hylê hedonai* and *lypai*. We naturally react by pursuing pleasure and escaping pain. By those reactions we can become *phayloi*. Only when our *kinêseis*, *phygai* and *lypai* are delimited or defined by *logos*, we do understand, have an account, define, delimit the *atelê* situations we are thus constituting.

δι' ἡδονὰς δὲ καὶ λύπας φαῦλοι γίνονται, τῷ διώκειν ταύτας καὶ φεύγειν, ἢ ἅς μὴ δεῖ ἢ ὅτε οὐ δεῖ ἢ ὅσαχῶς ἄλλως ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου διορίζεται τὰ τοιαῦτα. II. iii. 5, 1104b21 or ἔστιν ἄρα ἡ ἀρετὴ ἐξίς προαιρετικὴ, ἐν μεσότητι οὕσα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὠρισμένη λόγῳ καὶ ὡς ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ὀρίσειεν. II. vi. 15 1106b36.

The *logos* is an authority: “that which directs the impulses aright in excellence”

as an entity in us that speaks (*legein, phanai*, issues commands, *tattei, prostattei*), which we obey (*peitharchein*) or disobey and even resist (*antiteinein, enantiousthai* etc.).

*Politics* 1253a8-9: reads λόγον δὲ μόνον ἄνθρωπος ἔχει τῶν ζώων. Is a kind of voice, ἡ μὲν οὖν φωνὴ τοῦ *Pol.* 1253a8-9. Once we combine the formulae: *anthrôpos zoion logon echon/alogon or logon ouk echon, para ton logon echon*, we can draw horizontal distinctions with qualitative different employments of *logos*. The epistêmonikon horizon allows a fully formal and universal application, for ta onta that occur there *mê endechetai allôs echein*. The kind of reasoning, thinking way of *logos*, in that horizon has its most extreme radical way of getting access to truth: *nous* and *sophia*. Therefore, the *zoikal* element of man his somehow neutralized and his disposition has *logos* through and through: *hexis logou* applied to *the me endechetai allosechein* as a formal defined horizon of beings. Not having *logos* means that we do not get any access to mathematical, arithmetical or geometrical truths. We would not give any account on such matters. This distinction applies to theoretical epistemological horizons as are defined, for instance in *Metaphysics, Epsilon*.

On the other hand, the opposition *logon echein/alogon, logon ouk echein* or *para tòn logon echein* can be drawn in the practical horizon. The extreme way of being *alogon* equals being invaded and getting controlled by anger or desire. We loose control of our selves. This is pathological aggressive situation. *Alogon* means loosing the contact with *logos* to pathos. The *oregesthai* is fully determined by *orektika* completely determined by *epithymia* and *thymos*. We loose therefore any capacity to distinguish between *to hou heneka* and the *heneka tou*. The *telos* is reduced ontologically to the means structure. Once in a pathological situation we don't have any limits, everything is as if we hadn't any future. This doesn't do away with the kinetic structure of the *orexis*, simply the *orexis* becomes *kene* and *mataia* driving us simply to where there's no limit: *eis to apeiron*.

Now we can face two possibilities: either we let our minds sleep away into madness, driven to the point of no return or we get in touch with *logos*, having a glimpse of a way out, listening to what the *logos* says despite all sound and fury. This *legein* or

*legesthai* doesn't proceed as the epistemological one. We aren't in a theoretical cognitive situation. When we try to come to our senses, be aware of what is going on where are we heading to, we already are in a logical tendency or disposition that lets us understand we are facing ruin or proceed by destructive patterns of behavior.

In the practical horizon *logos* lets us understand or see the useless endeavors of our ways of being. *Logos* lets us see by *nouthetesis*, *epitimêsis* and *paraklêsis*.

We can thereby changing from an *alogon*, *para ton logon*, *pathetike* situation to a situation made minimally transparent through *logos*.

We could then say: we listen to the *logos* (*hypêkooi*), when the way we are pathological affected by the *alogon* is convinced by/is obedient to the *logos* (*hypo logou peithetai*). We would shift from an uncontrollable situation provoked by *thymos andepithymia* to a controllable situation, measuring up the destructive consequences of what might happen if action took place. We deactivate the explosive power of lust and anger, as if they were unaccountable entities, even damaging.

Somehow the interpretation of the *oregesthai* and *ephiesthai* depends upon our understanding of the meaning of getting already caught up in ways of exerting ourselves, stretching out, seeking or looking for, trying to get, aiming at. The complex elementary and structural constitution of the relation between humans and *orexeis* broadly speaking is what interest us. We may isolate and recognize our situation as ongoing *orexis* with different *praxeis* or as *praxis* with different horizons: *praxisaletheia*, *techne*, *poiesis*, *episteme*. Aristotle defines the *orexis* with and without *logos*. With *logos* as the understanding what is that for the sake of which we are exerting ourselves in order to get that. The *orexis* with *logos* has the insight and the drive started off once one is in contact with what one wants: object of desire or object of thought broadly speaking. *Orexis* is specifically as *logosheneka tinos* the *archê* of the *praxis* as the teleological one. It is on the other hand the *archê* of *proairesis* as the source of motion and of change that

constitutes the agency that pushes us from the state of inertia, not trying to get anything to the process of being in the process, starting off trying to get what one wants.

### 3. EXPANDING THE NOTION OF TO TELOS

The *telosis* said in a threefold way. (1) the *for the sake of which* is the concrete aim, *to hou* [genitive object]’ and (2) the *for the sake of which* is the *for whom, to hōi* [*dativus commodi*], for whose sake action is taking place. The way of saying the τὸ οὐ ἕνεκα is glossed by Ross’s distinction between ‘to attain which’ and ‘in whose interests’. [...] The *for the sake of which*, i.e. *the end*, is the “*of which*”, of which may be achieved, the other “*for which*”, for which it comes to be and to participate.” We will come to this shape later. Enlightening is the background for this exegesis.

Already Themistius, *In Aristotelis libros de anima paraphrasis*, p. 50, 11-16, commenting on *De anima* 415b2: τὸ δ’ οὐ ἕνεκα διττόν, τὸ μὲν οὐ, τὸ δὲ ᾧ says that if, for instance, τὸ οὐ is εὐδαιμονία in the ethical/practical horizon as in healthcare τὸ οὐ is ἡ υἰγία. Τὸ ᾧ in the practical horizon is each and every singular man doing what he does for himself αὐτὸς ἕκαστος αὐτῷ (*dativus commodi*) as in health care τὸ ᾧ who is ill. Simplicius expands to different ways of reading the same distinction considering our living: it is the shaping form and what is being shaped by that form, τὸ ᾧ ζῶμεν διττόν, τὸ μὲν ὡς τὸ εἶδος (*nomen agentis*), τὸ δὲ ὡς τὸ εἶδος πεποιημένον (*nomen rei actae*).

Most interesting is the exegesis of Joannes Philoponus. Commenting on that same passage in *de anima* 415b2, he connects explicitly with the generation of *ta physei onta*. Τὸ γεννᾶν οἶον αὐτό is the most natural and essential element of life: heading towards the future, each living being generating another living being of its species, shifting from the past through present towards the future. The whole of nature and all natural things yearn for the first beginning and its eternity because of their being reminded by the ultimate cause, διὰ τὸ πάντα τοῦ πρώτου ὀρέγεσθαι καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου ἀδιότῆτος, ἐπειδὴ ὅλως ἐμνήσθη τελικοῦ αἰτίου, 269, 26. Philoponus tests and applies

this distinction to structurally distinct horizons of beings. The house builder has a house as its *telos* τὸ ποιῆσαι σκέπασμα as a protection, κωλυτικόν, against ὄμβρων καὶ καυμάτων. This τέλος is τὸ οὗ ἕνεκά ἐστιν p. 269, 30, it is for the sake of protection that he makes the house, ἕνεκα γὰρ σκέπης ποιεῖ τὴν οἰκίαν, 269, 31. Τὸ ᾧ ἕνεκα is a different kind of τέλος: ourselves, ἔχει δὲ καὶ ἄλλο τέλος ἡμῶν, for the house as protections are made for the sake of ourselves: τὸ γὰρ σκέπασμα τοῦτο ἡμῖν ποιεῖ. We ourselves are also therefore the τέλος of the house builder for he makes houses for the sake of ourselves, for our own sakes: ἐσμὲν οὖν καὶ ἡμεῖς τοῦ οἰκοδόμου τέλος τὸ ὡς ᾧ, 270, 1. We cannot go into the details of the hermeneutical consequences Philoponus draws. But there's still a further development we want to stress. He reminds us that τέλος can signify also σκοπός, aim, the specific τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα of the ἔφεσις: throwing, hurling at, shooting at. A kind of ὄρεξις. And if we can authoritatively say that there's no stretching intention where there is no sense perception as in the case of vegetables, Aristotle identifies an ὄρεξις φυσική constituting things so that one says that fire hurls up and so on. Everything that is naturally and essentially constituted with a drive and an intention gets itself thrown into the first eternal beginning.

The (3) *telos*, as *to hou heneka*, both as *to hou heneka* and *to hōi henekais* said in a further way: it is a kind of *archê tês kinêseôs*. This is an ontological identification, both causes being structuring principles.

On the *ontic* level we could never let coincide starting point and goal, past and future time. The beginning is dated in the past, pushing us from the past towards the future through present. The goal is in the end drawing us towards a near or far remote future. Ontically goals are the futures of the beginnings. But how are these chronological *data* to be related? Both causes must be synchronized and be diachronically effective: The goal we aim at looks back from the future, is retroactive so to speak, influencing as potentiality all the moments way back before any start has begun. At the starting point the first beginning looks forward into the future, having an impact all the way through at the future. Action has its future as its beginning.

#### 4. ANTHROPOS

We become essentially humans by letting the *logos* be the authoritative, authentic principal origin and source of our own actions (letting it be and making it happen through deeds, actions, words, thoughts and omissions). The situation formally defines the utmost radical possibility of being configured as both the terminus a quo and the terminus ad quem, the *othen hê tês kinêseôsarchê* and the *to hou heneka*, both as the *tinos heneka* and as the *tini heneka* of what is exclusively dependent upon his existence: *ta eph' heautu, ta eph' hemîn, tà eph' emoi*.

At stake is no less than the intrinsically constituted relatedness of the human being with everything that is, whether natural beings, *ta physei onta*, stars, elements, plants, animals, humans, cities, *tàapo technês onta*, as equipment, tools, furniture, instruments, or what is also produced *kata poiêsin*, as also and most decisively for us *ta praxeî onta*. The *praxis* horizon is our most proper atmosphere, our element, even though we hardly recognize this.

Recognizing the most proper horizon we exist in, doesn't mean that we are the lords of our destiny, that we get into grips of everything, that we are in charge or control of what ever happen to us. Being configured by the *zôê praktikê* means that everything that happens is somehow related to us. It is this particular way we relate to what ever is that has reacting or acting proactively or in anticipation beforehand towards the beings that are. This peculiar understanding the truth of the situation, thus obtaining transparency, forecasts, projects, anticipates beforehand not only what (*quid*) we are about to do: the way a solution can be implemented, but it is the way that quid is made concrete that constitutes it as fundamentally and principally grounded in us.

In the *NE* iii,3. Aristotle issues a catalogue of the various *aitiai* of beings that can happen, and really can happen also to men and mankind: *physis, anankê, tychê*, on the other hand nous and in general everything that can come into being through man, *eti de*

*nous kai pan to di' anthrôpou*. Aristotle draws here a first distinction between *aitiai* that lie completely outside human authority, and they are specifically understood as such when man is facing nature, the inevitable, or what happens by chance, and on the other hand what happens *di' anthrôpou*. Aristotle says what happens because of and through the human being, but doesn't say what is constituted through and through genuinely dependent upon him: *tà eph' hemin*. And he does proceed so for different reasons.

On the one hand what happens in human existence can be described as conditioned by nature, both from the outside external world of others or of things. It can be inevitable either because of necessary conditions imposed upon us by. But indeed what is necessary can the way mathematics are apodictically demonstrated or of what one feels like to do. On the other hand what happens to us through ourselves can have harmful consequences. We can indeed act against ourselves. The opposition between *hekousion* and *akousion* and their different combinations, what happens to us through compulsion or through ignorance and what happens resisting compulsion and in full knowledge, the opposition between the *onta en proairesei*, 1097a21, *ek proairesêôs*, 1135b35, *meta proairesêôs*, 1157b30, *ouk aneu proairêseôs* [1106a4], and the *onta* constituted *aproairetôs*, 1106a3, or what is aproaireta as being *aprobouleta*, 1135b10-11, and the more special opposition between *enkratia* and *akrasia*, or what happens through *kakia* and what happens through *arête*.

Through logical engineering we identify all levels both descriptive and normative of the peculiar *aitia* sc. *archê* of the human being. The prerequisites for human beings to be human beings depend upon the identification, recognition of what happen to and through him being determined by him as *aitia*, on one way. On the other way, he need to act getting transparency of what is *hekousion*, against compulsion and in full possession of his or hers cognitive capacities, he's or her's acts had to get their origin in the leeway that sees beyond the present situations, are forecast and projected *ek proaireseôs*, he or she acts in full control of the situation, *enkratia*. On the contrary: the man as man denies and rejects the opposite options: the *akousion*, acting under

compulsion and through ignorance, the *aproairetôs* parttein and the *akrasia*.

All these elements adduced need a wide broad picture in order to be comprehensible situated in the program of Aristotle's philosophy. Each issue Aristotle addresses here has been singled out of the multiple different circumstances and situations we are in life. Each one of them raises questions and problems we need to solve while at the same time living in having to put up with that situation.

In the *NE* Zeta, Aristotle recovers his inceptive but basic analysis of the different ways *logos* operates in different horizons: *technê*, *episteme*, *phronesis*, *sophía*, *nous* (VI.iii, 1139b16-17). The second grammatical period expresses explicitly what we've been saying. The stress is there been given to the way we can have *logos* in the *practical* horizon, specifically, but generally what is at stake is the way we can constitute *hexeis*, or havings, or *logos* acquisitions: He first starts out speaking of the *pasai hai eirêmenai hexeis*, adding: *kathaper kai epi tôn allôn*. Then he moves on to saying that the one who is having *logos* or simply *with logos*, translating with *with* the present participle of attendant circumstance, has an aim in view, *esti tis skopos pros hon apoblepôn*, and thereby stretches or loosens his tension towards that aim, or purpose, or objective. Thus, only when configured by or conformed to *logos*, *kata ton logon*, he can be *orthos*, and so we get an orientation or a direction to aim at, to shoot so to speak our project: avoiding excess and defect, choosing to what is the *horos tôn mesotêtôn*, to that structural leeway of options, not the geometrical centre of the aim.

That said, we can interpret that we can have an aim, without having *logos*. We can throw ourselves in any direction, without orientation, precipitate the moment of action without any opportunity, to tighten or as if we have nothing to do with what we are doing, heading to, moving to. Not having *logos* means not seeing or understanding the aim, the instrument of action, the possible errors. We are doomed to shoot or to thrown ourselves, but fail, either by excess or defect, shooting beyond the marks or not even getting near them.

This is the particular way we deal with the *alogon* trying to understand where we are heading to, what's there upon to what we do? The *alogon*, *epythymia*, *thymos*, and their features can be interpreted as his displaying horizon the *psyche*, has its share of and partakes in lucidity (*alle tis physis tês psyches alogoseinai, metechousa mentoi pēi logou*, I, xiii, 1102b11-14). How come? Besides feeling formally the tension between to *logon echon* and the *alogon*, what is here at stake. We will come soon back to this again.

So to *logon echon* has two main developments and ways of displaying its functioning and operations. In one sense, to *logon echon* is displayed in the epistemological sphere. The second way of having *logos* is peculiar to the ethical situations in a strict sense. But we could broaden that application and say it applies to the horizon where humans as humans can exist. So in Book VI, ii, 1138b35 and sq., having divided the *psyches aretai in aretai tou ethous* and *aretai tês dianoias*, he goes on to say that the *logos* appropriate to each arête has two different horizons as their application platforms. One *logos*, *episptemonikos*, deals with beings that do not admit of variation: *me endechetai allos echein*, VI, ii, 1139a13. The other *logon echon* applies to beings that admit of variation, can be otherwise: *endechetai allos echein*. Therefore there may be situations we are in without *logos* or constituted against *logos*. Through the action of the *hexis tou logou* we can change that situation so as to getting an active connection to *logos*, *logon echon*. Now how can that happen in the human horizon. We can understand that when we don't know that the sum of the internal angles of a triangle equals 180 degrees, or the theorem of Pitagoras, or haven't solve a theoretical problem we are struggling and making efforts to understand the meaning of those sentences. Once we understand them with full evidence we can say that we shifted from a not intelligible situation to an intelligible one, from *toalogon* to a *logon echon*.

But how does it happen, if ever, in the ethical, practical or human horizon that we can produce sense and understand what's going on, what's up so that we can shift from a nonsense irrational situation to a situation fully understood? How can we change

our relation to the *logos* so that we *see* the aim sketched and projected enabling us therefore to stretching and striving for it? There is a way of *logon echon* with which we have in view (*hôi theôroumen*, 39a6-8) even those beings existing in a horizon whose *archai* admit of variation (*endechomena allos echein*). There is a congenial gnosis, mode of recognition, rooted in the psyche that belong to that kind of beings, according to a certain similitude and appropriateness, *kath' homoitêta tina kai oikeiôtêta hê gnosis huparchei autois* (39a8-11). Therefore, the *logos* operates by: *apoblepein*, *theorein*, *gnorizein*.

So even the extremely aggressive *alogon* situations (*hormai*, assaults, attacks, of the *epithymia* and *thymos*), described as *para ton logon pephykai*, combating the *logos*, *machetai tôi logoi* (102b18), *atechnôs* (a18), having us move in the opposite direction, *kinêsai touantion*, of what we've decided or have chosen, *proairoumenoi*, both in the somatic level as in the psychic, (102b19-20), even this *IT* resisting against the *logos* in our *psyche esti ti en têi psychêi para tôn logon*, *enantioumenontoutôi kaiantibaînon*, 102b18-20, takes part in the *logos*.

But how is it that the extreme radical experiences of being bereft of *logos* can still be changed by *logos*? How can we shift from an unintelligible to an intelligible one, recover the full control of the situation when we had apparently lost it?

The *logos* can *peitharchein*, as in the case of the *enkrates*. We can try to be actively exposed to the *nouthetêsis*, *epitimêsis* and *parâklêsis* of *logos*, in the way that we listen to it as we listen to a father. In this sense to *alogon* has a share in the *logos*, by way of persuasion, can become convinced, or be obedient to the *logos*, let it self be driven, oriented, directed through *logos*. *To alogon peithetai pôs hypo lôgou*, 102b33, the *logos* reveals, *menuei* (b34), the way we can change from one situation to the other, thereby constituting the grounds upon which we understand where are we heading to. Only occurring such a metamorphosis are we able to become beginnings and the causes into being expressed in action.

## 5. OXYMOROI

It is the corrective *logos* that lets us understand what/where/when/how is the mean. When Aristotle talks about the means of the psyche to discover truth he talks specifically in the possible ways of *logosapophantikos* (ἔστω δὴ οἷς ἀληθεύει ἡ ψυχὴ τῷ καταφάναι ἢ ἀποφάναι). But the text we've read in the first place draws parallels between affirmation as saying yes (cf.: *NE* III, v, 1113b8) to something and to pursue sth. or someone and between negation as saying no to something or to somebody as getting way from there. Not only that. The linguist formulations are on one hand *oxymoroi*: *nous orectikos*, *orexis dianoetike*. However saying yes or no can make perfectly sense in a practical or orectical situation as an explicit way of assuming an attitude or behave distinctively.

For sure we can adduce examples of situations where and when we are going for or getting away from whatever may be the case without noticing it. When talking with somebody in the playground under the heat of the sun we move without noticing it towards the shadow, we accommodate ourselves the best we can after two or three hours in the chair we are sitting in. There are levels in life where blind *orexeis* are taken place and we do not have any relation to it. But the kind of *orexis*, *ephiesis*, *oregesthai*, *ephiesthai* that Aristotle has in view s. s. or l. s., as in the passages read, has always intrinsically a relation towards truth either dependent upon truth as its object or as the action of truth itself.

Aristotle had said earlier that in the *psyche*, lucidity and human existence, there are three constitutive intervening elements accessing *praxis* and *alêtheias*.s.: perception insight and intention. He further adds that perception is not the cause into being of any action. [...] On the other hand our capacity of understanding insights only admits of negative or affirmative statements, as if we were referees left untouched by whatever might happen to us. The *dianoia* can describe actions taking place but not emotionally

affecting us, not having any impact in us. We wouldn't get whether something is harmful or damaging if our access to action or human agency were strictly based upon a cognitive theoretical comprehensive insight.

On the other hand and on the contrary, it is the stretching intention that lets us pursuit, strive for something and avoid, flee or get away from something. Pursuit and flight are extreme reactions moving us in different opposite directions. *Diôxeis* and *Phygai* are *kinêseis* symptomatically expressing and denoting the striving stretching intention driving us towards to or away from some purpose, aim, end. *Diôxis* has pleasure as promising and *phugê* has pain as menace. These elemental structures: *kinesis*, *diôxis*, *telos*, *hedonê* and *kinesis*, *phugê*, *telos lupê* are different aspects of an atmosphere, are not properties of objects so to speak. In order to automatically gladly react towards the promise of pleasure or regrettably react against pain depends upon an understanding of the pathological affectedness we are ever since we were born implied in. The specific *aletheyein* here at stake is absolutely different from that one operating at the aesthetic, *dianoetical* or even noetical level when configured by the cognitive theoretical *philosophein*.

Aristotle distinguishes *orexis* and *dianoia* here *stricto sensu*, reducing one to practical philosophy aiming at the revealing moment of action and the other to theoretical philosophy aiming at the discovery of truth. So in *MF* II, 993b20 *et sq*: But φιλοσοφία is ἐπιστήμη τῆς ἀληθείας, 993b20, having two dimensions with two different τέλη. The θεωρητικὴ ἐπιστήμη or φιλοσοφία has the ἀλήθεια strictu sensu as its τέλος. The πρακτικὴ ἐπιστήμη or πρακτικὴ φιλοσοφία has action, τὸ ἔργον, as its τέλος. This doesn't mean that ἀλήθεια lies outside its scope, for practical science as philosophy must somehow have truth as its aim. Both φιλοσοφίαι seek ἀλήθεια and are somehow activities while both aim at the discovery of the ground without which we don't come to know the element of truth: οὐκ ἴσμεν δὲ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἄνευ τῆς αἰτίας, 993b23-24. The difference lies in their different approaches towards truth. The practical philosophers consider the how τὸ πῶς ἔχει σκοπῶσιν, 22, they have in view, θεωροῦσι, not the way of beings that are

always the same way, not admitting of exceptions or being differently: οὐ τὸ ἄδιον, but the way of beings that exist intrinsically in relation to other beings and depending upon the now, οὐ τὸ ἄδιον ἀλλ' ὁ πρὸς τι καὶ νῦν, 22. It is upon the now that the circumstances and the situations come into being, evolve, and come to an end. : things happen is it self relative to time, space, agent, patient, etc., and depends upon what happens now: in view way the search for the ground in their specific fields.

The decisive move is made when we understand the take of Aristotle on what comes into being in psyche as it is described in *NE* II, v, 1105b19. The *ginόμενα en têi psychei* under consideration for the purpose of defining excellence are affects or emotions, *pathê*, potentialities, *dynameis* and havings, *hexeis*. These *phaenomena* are not like boxes one inside the others but differently ontological structured *phaenomena*. As example of emotions of affects Aristotle lists: desire, anger, fear, audacity, envy, joy, friendship, hate, longing, jealousy, pity, and the essential formal feature is that all these pathological *phaenomena* followed or accompanied by pleasure and pain. The possibilities are what has as configured to be affected or get emotional by some emotions or affects in a minimum degree and not by others even in a maximum degree, *kath' has pathetikoi toutôn legómetha, hoion kath' has dunatoi orgisthênai ê luphthenai h elehsai*. The most decisive ones are the havings, or acquired dispositions: according go which we behave well or badly towards what we have the capacity to feel or towards what one feels. The *hexeis* are ways of being. They are expressed through *echein* + adverb: *eu ê kakôs*. We say that according to *pathê* we are changed/moved, but according to dispositions we are not only changed or moved we are so constituted, so disposed, we are the way we are (*NE*, II, v, 1106a4-6). What determines not only the *dynameis* but the *pathe* is ὁ πῶς (1106a1).

So we are changed by what ever formally brings pleasure and causes pain not in a theoretically cognitive impermeable point of view but by getting moved in pursuit of pleasure or avoiding pain, whatever the *pathos* content may be. The way Aristotle describes *pathe* is as if they were *nomina agentis*: he needs an infinitive passive to

describe the way we are when impressed by them, feeling their emotional impact: we get angry or we can be angry, we feel pain or are in pain, we feel pity or we pity. Nothing of this kind is avoidable even if we understand that for different persons the same emotion can be differently sensed causing damage, be pleasant or as if never took place. Still, when it happens we suffer passively its impact. It is then the way we interpret what happens there, the way we relate to that impact that adverbially constitutes those objects. When one is angry he can behave vehemently or easy going as if nothing happened towards the feeling angry, the object of anger, the cause of anger, whom is angry at, the time when and the place where he is angry. It is the way he interprets that not only reacts to the impact but allows him to open up to the future consequences of what may happen if he intervenes, what's the course of action he is heading to.

The way the psyche understands what's going on, discovers the truth of action and the cognitive truth has in itself several ways of getting in touch with differently structured *phaenomena*. The most radical difference is that the *dynameis* allow us to encounter emotions, one more sensitive to some than to others or even totally insensitive to pain or pleasure. But the havings or acquired dispositions structure the *dynameis* and the *pathe* in such a way that we can anticipate, we can preferential choose not what we feel or what we are capable of but formally the way we better interpret and cause ourselves to act accordingly.

We can be determined and defined by *archai* exterior to our determination, *archê exôthen*, when we act through the *akousion* element through compulsion or ignorance, the facts of our lives: τὰ γινόμενα exist βία ἢ δι' ἄγνοιαν (1110a1-2) so that the ἀρχή is such that, τοιαύτη οὖσα, humans μηδὲν συμβάλλεται ὁ πράττων ἢ ὁ πάσχων (1102a2-3). On the contrary we can act contributing to the solution of a problematic situation either actively or passively constituting us as the intrinsic principle of action doing away with compulsion or ignorance, thereby becoming the ἀρχή and the γεννητής τῶν πράξεων ὡς περ τέκνων (1113b18-20). Therefore we can reduce the *akousia* to the *archai* in us, as long as we have in us the principles determining the situations we can fall

in and therefore create our own agenda producing the *praxeis* depending exclusively upon our being: ἔχομεν εἰς ἄλλας ἀρχὰς ἀναγαγεῖν παρὰ τὰς ἐν ἡμῖν, ὧν καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ ἐκούσια, transforming the living being in a human being as the principle and the responsible fundament of his actions, deeds. This is the appropriate peculiar *hexis* of the human being, a *hexis* that is a *nomen actionis* standing for the having *logos*. Producing such a *hexis* means not only to actualize our potentiality, it means fulfil our most inner way of being: *entelecheia*. We read in 1106a22 and sq καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρετὴ εἶη ἂν ἡ ἕξις ἀφ' ἧς ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος γίνεται καὶ ἀφ' ἧς εὖ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἔργον ἀποδώσει. The way we act means that we understand what is possible for us to make happen: δυνατὰ δὲ ἅ δι' ἡμῶν γένοιντ' ἂν, 1112b27, whose principle is in us, ἡ γὰρ ἀρχὴ ἐν ἡμῖν, εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον ἢ μὴ ἄνευ λόγου, 1098a7.

The decisive move is for us getting the *logical understanding and interpretation of the insight of our structurally constitutive purpose*. The truth would have as its discovery the *logosho heneka tinos*, as the upcoming orientation towards the aim directing the *orexis* or the *orexeis* hierarchical organized towards that end. It is the *telos* as *logosho heneka* and as *to hou heneka* and as *to hoiheneka* that structurally transforms the *orexis* and our understanding of both pleasure and pain, it is the *orexis* that projects with *logos* the preferential anticipated decision, not a reaction but an action taken before hand in anticipation rejecting options, only choosing solutions, and therefore it is this kind of *proairesis* that causes us to come into being the cause of our actions, that causes us to coincide with the arche.

We would excellently coming near and getting at our innermost possibility, *apotelein*. It would allow the adding of an exuberance in our lives: a *prostithesthai* of a *hyperochêpros to ergon: kata ten aristen kai teleiotaten areten*. Only then does he exist perfectly, although he has been living already: *en toi bioi teleio*.

As corollary we are open to a possible way of getting access to what is good or bad to the *anthropoi* (as a *dativus commodi*) as such so that the good and bad is not reducible to pleasure and pain, nor to advantageous or harmful, good and bad are not

values or appendices to objects, but depend exclusively in order to be upon the *orexis physike* transformed in an *orexis praktike*, constituted by a having the truth of the practical horizon constituted through and through by the *logos*. What brings to perfection humans is nothing except being, not making or producing the *telos*: that's the Aristotle's understanding of *eupraxia* opened up by *phronesis*. This may proceed by guessing, is tentative, has set backs and ways out, it depends upon the situation: *kat' eschaton, kath' hekasta*, ὁ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἀνθρώπου τῶν πρακτῶν στοχαστικὸς κατὰ τὸν λογισμὸν. οὐδ' ἐστὶν ἡ φρόνησις τῶν καθόλου μόνον, ἀλλὰ δεῖ καὶ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα γνωρίζειν· (15) πρακτικὴ γάρ, ἡ δὲ πρᾶξις περὶ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα, 1141b13 et sq..

Being the *arche* both as the source of change that causes anything to come into being through us as a *praxeis* on and as the aim or purpose that fulfils our intrinsic possibility as our only expectation stretches us not only between different *termini aquibus* and *termini ad quos*, perhaps between a single *terminus a quo* and a *terminus ad quem kat'exochên*. The *terminus a quo* strangely enough has its urgent character coming from the future, so to speak. The *telos*, the *agathon*, *ameinon*, *Ariston*, *to houheneka* produce their effects retroactively looks upon us retrospectively from the future, even when, perhaps specially when it isn't apparent in the horizon, as the form of an horizon not as a thing in the horizon. So we are stretched as the *oregesthai* caused into being to change, having the for the sake of which as our shaping limit. We are already there as a sheer possibility, even if not present and forgotten.

On the other hand we can point out that what we are on the move, as an ongoing process not having obtained what we were looking for, or lost it somehow. We can never alter the structure of *orexis* as that of our life. The *cinetic* constitution of our being is comprehended even when there were only false starts and the fulfilment is only the finishing end not the coming true of a dream. Still more, to be the *arche* and the *aitia* of our being would be the self fulfilment of an activity, the performing of actions not the deeds already achieved or the jobs done, or technical products made not even if skilfully. Whatever that might be would only get its existence by being the active unfolding

possibility letting life be possible.

This possibility is the very constitution of the practical horizon, not available in the physis, not being made by any art skill, *techne* or production, actually not being anything except when, if and only if, we are already made by our future being the for the sake of which we are what we are. This doesn't mean that other ways of being should be uprooted. This can can us letting understand that the way we read, interpret and comprehend a work, a product, a job, whatever lies outside the activities involved in the production of it, whatever has an existence alien and outside any act or chain of production is not a *praxeî* on and has not the human as it's cause or fundament. Being the *arche* and *aitia* of our being means precisely discovering that what we are is always still yet to come and to be and depends fully on the *logos* of the double *telos* as to *hou heneka* and as to *anthropoi heneka*, or as to *emoi heneka*.

This is how Aristotle defines humans as what they are. One first conclusion is that we are humans if and only if we let ourselves be the fundamental principally ground of ta *praxeî onta*. Meaning we are the *aitiai* both othen hê tês kinêseôs *archê* and to hou heneka as *telos* and as the hôi who benefits from our actions. Only if we are metamorphosed into the pros ti as the eph' hemin, are we able, can we get dings *practically* done. So we can interpret the technical expression ta eph' hemin not only as the what is exclusively dependent upon us, but as the how, the manner in which, the way we project us through our understanding of the situation and can act accordingly, i.e., being the *archê* and the *aitiai* of whatever we do while acting.

On the other hand, all other *onta*, *ginomena*, *esomena*, structured in different kinds: natural, technical, productive, have their appropriate *archai* and *aitiai* but aren't practically constituted. Still further, we can for sure make and produce things, we can even act inside the practical horizon but what's done can stay absolutely outside our determination, even when we are held accountable of being responsible for them.

There is therefore an inversion of the naturally organized sequence: *othen hê tês kineseôs archê*, *proairesis*, *praxis*, to *hou heneka* or *telos*. The result is not another

sequence beginning with *telos*, going through *praxis*, the *proairesis*, the *orexis* and the *archê kineseôs*. This change is ontologically constituted and have no land marks signaling time schedules, having reports with results, etc. This change could mean that to *telos* is not only twofold as the *to hou heneka* and *to hoi heneka*, but is also the cause into be whence comes the change. The object of choice is not what happened in the past, nobody would deliberate about what has already pass way: the object of choice is what is still to come and admits of possibility. οὐκ (5) ἔστι δὲ προαιρετὸν οὐδὲν γεγονὸς, οἷον οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται Ἴλιον πεπορθηκέναι· οὐδὲ γὰρ βουλευέται περὶ τοῦ γεγονότος ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ἐσομένου καὶ ἐνδεχομένου, τὸ δὲ γεγονὸς οὐκ ἐνδέχεται μὴ γενέσθαι· διὸ ὀρθῶς Ἀγαθῶν μόνου γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ θεὸς στερίσκεται, (10) ἀγένητα ποιεῖν ἅσ' ἂν ἦ πεπραγμένα. @1 ἀμφοτέρων δὴ τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον. καθ' ἃς οὖν μάλιστα ἔξεις ἀληθεύσει ἐκάτερον, αὐτὰ ἀρετὰ ἀμφοῖν.

## 6. WHAT THAT FUTURE MAY BE

*Oregesthai* and *ephiesthai* are said to be in many ways. They are even at the bottom of the theoretical point of view or the cognitive attitude. There's no *phronêsis* as philosophical way of thinking without *rhastône* and *diagogê*. There's no looking forward to see anything without *oregesthai*. There's no fulfillment for any shape of action, or failing for that matter, without *ephiesthai*. But this is take is quite puzzling, for there the orectical practical situation is prior the cognitive theoretical one. Theôria or any other way we can relate to truth is not intrinsically motivated by practical *orexis*. How are we to understand *praxis as* the human horizon kat'exochên. As Sir David Ross simply puts it: “θεωρία is a kind of *πρᾶξις*”.

In the very opening sentence of the Nicomachean Ethics every human structural behaviour, every technique or art, every way of proceeding, likewise every single action and every preferential anticipated choice aims at, strives for, while stretching towards a good, 1094a1 e sq. In the opining sentence of the *Metaphysics* we read: *pantes anthrôpoi toy eidenai oregontai physei*, 980a21, every single man without exception stretches him

self by his own nature towards seeing. But later on we can in the same first book read that the kind of philosophical thinking, *phronesis*, emerged first when life was easy, *rhastônê*, and to spend time, *diagôgê*, either by pleasure or to avoid boredom, *σχεδὸν γὰρ πάντων ὑπαρχόντων τῶν ἀναγκαίων καὶ πρὸς ῥαστώνην καὶ διαγωγὴν ἢ τοιαύτη φρόνησις ἤρξατο ζητεῖσθαι*. and that in 982b19, people began to philosophize for the first time to escape ignorance or opacity and because they wanted to see (*eidenai*) the pursuit for knowledge:

ὥστ' εἶπερ διὰ τὸ φεύγειν τὴν ἄγνοιαν ἐφιλοσόφησαν, φανερόν ὅτι διὰ τὸ εἰδέναι τὸ ἐπίστασθαι ἐδίωκον καὶ οὐ χρήσεώς τινος ἔνεκεν, so that philosophy has been caused to being for the sake of man not for the sake of anything else, as philosophy is a kind thinking free from any consequences and to philosophize is not for the sake of anything else except as an intending, as a striving, as a stretching unfolding, expanding, deploying, being simply what it is. δῆλον οὖν ὡς δι' οὐδεμίαν αὐτὴν ζητοῦμεν χρεῖαν ἑτέραν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἄνθρωπος, φάμεν, ἐλεύθερος ὁ αὐτοῦ ἔνεκα καὶ μὴ ἄλλου ὄν, οὕτω καὶ αὐτὴν ὡς μόνην οὖσαν ἐλευθέραν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν.