

DE ANIMA 73.14-80.15: THE IMPULSIVE FACULTY OF THE SOUL

GENERAL OVERVIEW

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74.13-75.24: Distinctions among the faculties of the soul

The faculties of the soul discussed so far – the nutritive and the perceptual – are distinct not only from the impulsive, but also from one another

1. the perceptual faculty – the nutritive faculty

- (i) because plants have the nutritive faculty, but do not have the perceptual
- (ii) because the nutritive faculty is present from the initial formation of an animal, whereas the perceptual occurs after birth
 - + motions of the limbs in the womb are not caused by fetus's own perception, but insofar as they are parts of an animate being (?)
- (iii) the nutritive faculty is always active, whereas the perceptual is not
 - + the nutritive faculty is especially active in sleep
- (iv) the nutritive is productive, the perceptual is discriminative and cognitive
- (v) all parts of the animal take part in the nutritive faculty, whereas some do not take part in the perceptual faculty, e.g. hair and nails

So, the nutritive and the perceptual differ:

- (a) in definition: what it is to be the nutritive faculty is different from what it is to be the perceptual faculty
- (b) in activity: when the nutritive faculty is active, the perceptual need not be (as in sleep)
- (c) in subject: (α) the nutritive faculty is present in all parts, whereas the perceptual is not (e.g. in hair and nails); (β) the nutritive faculty is present in all living beings, whereas the perceptual is not (in plants)

2. the impulsive faculty – the nutritive faculty

- (i) in almost the same respects as the perceptual faculty
 - + the exception is this: the perceptual faculty differs from the nutritive in that it is discriminative whereas the nutritive is productive; the impulsive is also productive, namely productive of action (*poiêtikon kai praktikon*)

3. the impulsive faculty – the perceptual faculty

- (i) in order: activities of perception and the ensuing activities of phantasia are prior to the activities of impulse
 - + activities of impulse supervene on and follow upon those of perception and phantasia
- (ii) in time of their activities: perception always occurs before desire, whereas desire does not always occur after perception
- (iii) perceptual faculty is the cause of discrimination, the impulsive faculty is the cause of action
- (iv) perceptual faculty is passive, the impulsive faculty is active and productive

75.24-76.17: Relations among the faculties of the soul

Two types of relations considered among the faculties of the soul discussed so far

- (1) 75.24-76.6: teleological relations: prior faculties are for the sake of posterior ones and contribute something towards them (*pros tautas suntelein ti*)
 - + much like parts of living bodies: one comes to be and exists for the sake of some other (and also for the sake of the activities of the soul)

(2) 76.6-17: The ruling-subservient relation among faculties of the soul

- between the discriminative faculties one is subservient (perception and phantasia) and the other is ruling (the rational, *to logistikon*) which is able to reason and to understand (*to dianoêtikon kai noêtikon*)
- as between the discriminative faculties, so within the faculty responsible for action (*en tōi praktikōi*), one part is ruling and the other subservient:
 - (i) the ruling part: *to hormêtikon te kai orektikon*
 - (ii) the subservient part: “something in the sinews”, for there is a capacity in the sinews too <viz. *hê neurospastikê dunamis*>, in virtue of which the body subserves the impulse-related activities

76.17-78.2: How the impulsive faculty moves the body

Given that actions in accordance with desire are executed once a certain kind of *pathos* takes place inside...
 ...and some of these *pathê* relax the body and produce expansion in them <sinews?> to due to temperate heat, whereas others cool down and contract <sinews?>...
 (for, phantasiai, perceptions and thoughts of things, because they occur in virtue of a certain likeness to the things, either relax the body or make it contract and shudder, just as when the things are present)
 ...when these contractions and extensions occur around the connate pneuma, and are transmitted from there to the sinews...
 ...these can be moved by activities in accordance with impulse, as they receive the origin of motion from desire.

For, when a small change occurs at the origin, it becomes the cause of many large differences, e.g. a tiny motion of the rudder causes a large shift in the bow.

“So around the heart and the *pneuma* inside it, when some alterations occur through perceptions or thoughts of certain things, when these alterations are followed by certain change and *pathos*, even though these occur in an imperceptible part inside the heart, since it is the origin of the animal, they produce large differences in the whole body: blushing, blanching, heating, cooling, shudders and shakes.” (77.10-15)
 καὶ περὶ τὴν καρδίαν ἤδη καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ, ὅταν ἀλλοιώσις τις γένηται διὰ αἰσθήσεις τινῶν ἢ νοήσεις, αἷς ἔπεται κινήσις τις καὶ πάθος, εἰ καὶ ἐν ἀναισθητῷ μορίῳ γένοιτο ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ τοιαύτη τροπή, τῷ ἀρχὴν τοῦ ζώου τὴν καρδίαν εἶναι πολλὴν ποιεῖ τοῦ σώματος παντὸς διαφορὰν ἐρυθθήμασιν, ὠχρότησιν, θερμότησιν, ψύξεσιν, φρίκαις τε καὶ τρόμοις.

The origin/principle of locomotion is that which is to be pursued and avoided in the domain of what can be done (*ἀρχὴ μὲν οὖν τῆς κινήσεως τὸ ἐν τῷ πρακτῷ διωκτὸν τε καὶ φευκτὸν*)

Impulse is motion of the living being which occurs in accordance with phantasia of what is to be pursued or avoided (*ἔστι γὰρ ὁρμὴ κίνησις ἐμψύχου γινομένη κατὰ φαντασίαν διωκτοῦ τινος ἢ φευκτοῦ.*)

- thought and phantasia of such things are necessarily accompanied by heat and chilling, since almost all painful and pleasant things come with chilling and heat
- and when this chilling and heat occurs in us, we observe that some parts of us move, as in wet dreams, and sometimes the whole body moves
 - + when these affections occur around the origin of the organic parts (*περὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς τῶν ὀργανικῶν μορίων*), they lead them towards the activities and tasks of the impulsive power, from which they initially arise, for all such actions are executed through the activity of the bodily parts.

