

**There is more to Perceiving than Meets the Eye:  
Aristotle's Conception of Consciousness**

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## ***Abstract***

In *De Anima* 3.2 Aristotle presents an account of perceptual consciousness in his theory of *perceiving that we perceive*. The aim of this dissertation is to determine whether Aristotle's account in this chapter can be understood comparatively to contemporary intuitions about consciousness. My thesis deals with the issue of how we perceive that we see and hear, including discussions of other special senses. The issues of what Aristotle means by perceiving that we see by sight, and whether it is the faculty or the activity of sight that is perceived are under scrutiny in this chapter. The second chapter is concerned with how we perceive the special sensibles, and includes an investigation of the problem Aristotle poses: that perceiving that we see by sight entails the colouration of the perception of sight by the special sense object. The third and final chapter is concerned with the discussion of perceiving the common sensibles and the debates surrounding this, for instance the nature of the common sense and its power to perceive unitary moments of perception. Each of these issues in *De Anima* 3.2 is discussed with reference to the texts; some of which are included in Appendices for the benefit of the reader; while also taking the debates by modern scholars in to account to gauge the fullest understanding of the importance of Aristotle's issues in contemporary thought.

## ***Introduction: Is ‘perceiving that we perceive’ consciousness?***

In *De Anima* 3.2, Aristotle claims that “*since we can perceive that we see and hear, it must either be by sight that we perceive that we see, or by another sense.*” In this single sentence he makes an assumption that we have the ability to be reflexively aware of our perceptions of sensible objects.<sup>1</sup> The existence of this ability is not an issue for Aristotle, who seems to take this awareness for granted. The problem for Aristotle is how this is possible, and indeed this is a problem for students of Aristotle. ‘Consciousness’ in this essay will be understood as the general common-sense contemporary notion of the term. Rather than a philosophical - neurobiological comparison I am interested in whether Aristotle’s thinking can help everyday thought and philosophy. Consciousness can be defined from a general perspective as full activity of mind and senses in waking life; in a more specific account as awareness of one’s existence, sensations, thoughts, surroundings, and relation to these; and even more specifically defined as giving particular attention to an immediate object of concentration.<sup>2</sup> The definition and understanding of perceiving that we perceive will form the majority of the discussion of this piece of writing as I will be trying to determine whether Aristotle’s conception of this ability can amount to an understanding of consciousness as is commonly understood today. A modern problem which may arise from Aristotle’s assumption that we can perceive that we see and hear is the way in which we should examine this issue. Whether ‘how we perceive that we see and hear’ is to be understood as a metaphysical question of *how* this happens, an epistemological question of how we *know* that this happens, or a phenomenological question of what it is *like* for this to happen. I propose to deal with the metaphysical and only touch on the phenomenological and epistemological questions as they are discussed by other commentators as connections to modern debates.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 3.2, 425b12 - See Appendix 1, t1

<sup>2</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary* 2004: 303; Shields *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*: Consciousness 2010, 3-4

<sup>3</sup> References to all articles and books will be given first by the author’s full name, the title of the piece of work, the date published and the page number; then each citation following the first, by author’s name and page number only.

Understanding Aristotle's theory of perception in its wider context of the rest of the *De Anima* as well as other relevant works throughout the Aristotelian corpus is an important part of interpreting Aristotle's meaning accurately. Aristotle's discussion of perceiving that we perceive encompasses being aware of one's environment through perception; however, it is not clear that his account, at least of perceptual awareness, includes being aware of your thoughts and feelings concerning these perceptions. Since I am interested in comparing consciousness to Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive I will concentrate my discussion on the theory of conscious perception in *De Anima* 3.2 and leave a discussion of the theories connecting to this for another time.<sup>4</sup>

It will be helpful to explain Aristotle's theory of the potential and the actual before examining the problems of his use of it in relation to his account of the processes involved in perception in more detail.<sup>5</sup> In *De Anima* 2.5 Aristotle theorises that the faculty of perception has no actual, but only potential existence. He gives the example of fuel not being able to set itself alight unaided by a spark, to exemplify how perception cannot perceive unassisted by the presence of an actual perceptible object. Aristotle's theory of perception works on the premise that everything is acted upon by something which produces an effect and actually exists.<sup>6</sup> For Aristotle what actually exists in the world are the perceptible objects.<sup>7</sup> Aristotle distinguishes between the potentiality and the actuality of sensing by comparing it to the possession of knowledge and the exercise of it. Within this distinction Aristotle clarifies that there are two senses in which we speak of something as potential; as consisting of the right kind of matter to make actual knowledge (or sensing) possible, and as already in possession of the knowledge (or sensing ability) in a state of availability for use. The difference between the example Aristotle is using and the sensing which he is describing through this example is that knowledge of this second potentiality is available for use whenever one wishes, while perception is available for use only when a perceptible object is present.<sup>8</sup> The difference between these two processes, Aristotle says, is that one becomes its actuality through qualitative alteration by

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 5- on the connection between consciousness in the perceptual and intellectual faculties.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2

<sup>6</sup> Appendix 2, t4, 417a17-19

<sup>7</sup> Appendix 2, t9, 417b25-6

<sup>8</sup> Appendix 2, t3, 417a3-10

means of learning and after frequent changes from a contrary state, whereas the other kind passes by a different process from the inactive possession of sensation or grammar to its exercise. Aristotle explains further, that even the term 'being acted upon' has more than one meaning.<sup>9</sup> The process of the action of the sensible object on the sense, then, sometimes means a kind of destruction of sensing by its contrary; which is the usual meaning of being affected; and sometimes it means rather a preservation of that which is potentially like by something actual that is like it. Aristotle says that this latter process can be described as either not an alteration at all, for the development is into its real self or actuality, or else is a unique kind of alteration.<sup>10</sup> As a means of clarifying this Aristotle says that *that which thinks is not altered when it thinks* and reinforces his theory on the role of the actual and the potential in sensation in his repetition, *again, actual sensation corresponds to the exercise of knowledge*, to claim that *that which senses is not altered when it senses*. This will be discussed in chapter two.

The continued use of such terms as 'being acted upon' and 'altered' is explained in the existence of no words to describe the distinction which Aristotle has just made. However he does advise us to bear in mind the difference between the potentialities and the processes they undergo in discussions following on from this. So when Aristotle says in this chapter, *assume that being acted upon is the same as exercising the function*, he means that the exercising of perception is caused by the process of being acted upon by the sense-object such that perception is moved from a second potentiality to a first actuality. This process of the actualisation of sensation explains perception as one process connecting the perceiver and the perceived in a single episode as a single thing in a particular moment. When *De Anima* 2.5 is taken into consideration when one examines the following discussion in *De Anima* 3.2 on how we perceive these moments of perception, one can see how Aristotle provides a unitary theory of perception and perceptual consciousness. The 'alteration' in first-order perception is a move from second potentiality to first actuality, whereas the move from first actuality to second actuality is what characterises perception of perception; resulting in this unifying multi-way dependence for actualisation.

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<sup>9</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>10</sup> Appendix 2, t7, 417b7-10

Commentators have put forward differing views on whether there is a concept of consciousness present in Aristotle. Myles Burnyeat dedicated a whole paper to the problem whether Aristotle's theory of mind is relevant in modern philosophy of mind, claiming that Aristotelian philosophy of mind is no longer credible because Aristotelian physiology is no longer so.<sup>11</sup> The reason for Burnyeat's belief in the irrelevance of Aristotle to contemporary thinking about the mind is that since Descartes people have been aware of the problem of the connection of our *mind*, or our conscious thinking selves, to our *body* and to the *world* outside our body, and hence have been trying to solve this separation. Burnyeat's claim is that current worries about the connection between the body and the mind are problems faced by all thoughtful philosophers today.<sup>12</sup> My problem with this is that I prefer Aristotle's unification of the mental faculties with the functions of the body and the environment to any theory which separates these things. So where Burnyeat considers Descartes' revelation about the issue of the relation of body to mind, I find Aristotle's lack of preoccupation over this issue refreshing. What Burnyeat names Descartes' "demolition of Aristotelian philosophy"<sup>13</sup> I view rather as an obstacle in Aristotle's way to helping us achieve an understanding of *mind*, (or soul), *body*, and the *world* in which these things share existence. Though Aristotle was mistaken about the action of the perceptual object, he was right about the necessity of the presence of a perceptual object for actual perception to take place and I think he was right to reject the kind of consciousness which Descartes postulated, which was originated by his mentor, Plato.

Richard Sorabji, who opposes Burnyeat's interpretation of Aristotle, explains that the reason why Burnyeat thinks that an Aristotelian philosophy of mind is no longer credible because it turns the matter of animal bodies into something pregnant with consciousness, whereas we are wedded to Descartes' conception of matter as distinct from awareness, hence the awareness requires explanation.<sup>14</sup> I would like to propose however that our conception of consciousness be prised away from Descartes' legacy, to enable us to rethink the nature of our awareness in a more Aristotelian manner. Michael Frede appears to think that we have already established

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<sup>11</sup> Burnyeat, M. *Is an Aristotelian Is an Aristotelian Philosophy of Mind Still Credible? A Draft*, in *Essays on Aristotle's 'De Anima'* 1992: 16

<sup>12</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 16

<sup>13</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 16

<sup>14</sup> Sorabji *Aristotle's Theory of Sense Perception*, in *Essays on Aristotle's 'De Anima'* 1992: 211

our separation from thinking in line with Descartes, so far as to support the opinion that Aristotle's view, indirectly, has considerable bearing on our notion of the mind, to the extent that our notion of the mind is utterly opposed to the kind of notion Descartes has.<sup>15</sup> In this way, Aristotle is in a much better position to reject Platonist, and through their connection, Cartesian, dualism, by resisting Plato's narrow conception of the physical. It is Aristotle's illustration of the importance of the physical for the actual existence of anything other which provides the unity to his view of perceptual consciousness.

Kathy Wilkes propounds Aristotle's theory of *psuche* to be a far better term to discuss these issues than the concept of the *mind* in current debates concerning that area.<sup>16</sup> This appears to be precisely because of the connection with Descartes' conception of the mind still held as a concern simply by using that word. Wilkes prefers *psuche* to *mind* in the context of contemporary scientific psychology and philosophy partly because it is her opinion that Aristotle paid no attention to consciousness *per se*,<sup>17</sup> meaning he paid no attention to any *Cartesian* concept of consciousness. Hamlyn, whom Wilkes cites as critical support for this claim, differed from her in that he deplored the lack of a theory of consciousness as we know it now in Aristotle's psychological theory.<sup>18</sup> Hamlyn claims that Aristotle begins and ends *De Anima* 3.2 with an account of perceptual self-consciousness, describing the philosopher as seeking something like the notion of a unity of consciousness but not achieving one comparable to the contemporary notion.<sup>19</sup> I disagree, finding Wilkes' view more compelling, and I gladly accept Everson's statement that it would be senseless to acknowledge that Aristotle created an analysis of cognition and desire as part of an attempt to explain human behaviour and doubt whether he offers a theory of the mind which we can relate to now.<sup>20</sup> However, I unassumingly claim that Aristotle's theory of mind can meet the objectives of the contemporary concerns in that area at least in some respects.

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<sup>15</sup> Frede, M. *On Aristotle's Conception of the Soul*, in *Essays on Aristotle's 'De Anima'* 1992: 94

<sup>16</sup> Wilkes *Psuche vs. the Mind*, in *Essays on Aristotle's 'De Anima'* 1992: 109

<sup>17</sup> Wilkes 1992: 109; 122

<sup>18</sup> Hamlyn *Aristotle's De Anima* 1968: xiii

<sup>19</sup> Hamlyn 1968: 121

<sup>20</sup> Everson *Aristotle's Psychology*, in *the Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, 1995: 169-70

Caston explains commentators' denial of the existence of a concept of consciousness in Aristotle by the difficulty of the fact that Aristotle uses many words to explain the phenomena, while we use one word to illustrate many phenomena.<sup>21</sup> Kahn argues that Aristotle's Greek has no term which corresponds to the modern notion of consciousness for the process or condition of awareness as such.<sup>22</sup> Yet Hardie criticises Kahn for his unhelpfulness. The modern notion of consciousness for Kahn means 'the peculiar quality of mental existence' with reference to Descartes, on the understanding that *consciousness* is synonymous with *awareness* in his claim that *aisthesis* provides a close parallel.<sup>23</sup> Kahn's claim is highly anachronistic, and Hardie reacts to this by specifying a general sense of consciousness, consciousness(g) and proposing to defend a more definitively affirmative answer to Kahn's question of whether Aristotle has a notion of such a thing by comparing his theory to this more general understanding. By means of this generalisation and his contextualisation of Aristotle's theory next to his contemporaries Hardie theorises that Aristotle affirms in his own idioms that animal behaviour is accompanied by consciousness(g).<sup>24</sup> He was the first psychologist, and for him psychology without the conscious *psuche* would have been Hamlet without the Prince.<sup>25</sup> Hardie goes further though, and states his opinion that since the 'psycho-' in 'psychology' 'psychosomatic' 'psychophysical' has the desired positive albeit neutral and generic implication, Greek philosophers, said to lack the concept, have in fact given us the words which best express it;<sup>26</sup> a view which I agree with.

The connection between body, consciousness and external environment is fascinating to me. Aristotle joins these together into a single unifying theory, combining faculties and activities into a coherent illustration of his theory of mind. It will hopefully become clear from this discussion that we can still learn from his philosophy, especially in his approach to philosophical study, research and theory, which is exemplified in his analysis of perceptual consciousness in the *De Anima*.

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<sup>21</sup> Caston *Aristotle on Consciousness*, 2002: 752

<sup>22</sup> Kahn *Sensation and Consciousness in Aristotle's Psychology*, 1966; 1978: 21

<sup>23</sup> Hardie *Concepts of Consciousness in Aristotle*, 1976: 71

<sup>24</sup> Hardie 1976: 394

<sup>25</sup> Hardie 1976: 405

<sup>26</sup> Hardie 1976: 397

Having introduced this piece of writing with my aim of elucidating Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we see and hear and comparing it to current conceptions of consciousness I will proceed to analyse in more detail his main chapter on this topic, *De Anima* 3.2. My following chapters will discuss the themes of *perceiving that we perceive*, *perceiving the special sensibles*, and *perceiving the common sensibles*. These chapters will cover Aristotle's main worries about his theory of perceiving that we perceive and the ability to do this, as well as the ability to perceive differences between the objects of perception simultaneously with the ability to perceive the individual sense-objects. Some of the most important and widely agreed upon characteristics of human consciousness are unity, self-awareness, intentionality (consciousness of something) and recognition between cognitive objects.<sup>27</sup> Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive connects with all four of these intuitions in some way. In the next three chapters I will investigate the nature of this connection, and then conclude on the matter of whether or not Aristotle truly has a notion of consciousness that can in any way match up with ours in the present day.

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<sup>27</sup> Modrak *Aristotle: The Power of Perception* 1981: 163-4

## ***Chapter One: Perceiving that we Perceive***

Aristotle's concern at the beginning of *De Anima* 3.2 is *how* perceiving that we see and hear is possible. Aristotle's central worries are firstly, whether we perceive *that* something is red *at the same time* as we perceive the red<sup>28</sup> and how this can be possible, and secondly whether we perceive this by the same token as that by which we perceive the red.<sup>29</sup> Aristotle states that we must perceive that we see by sight, rather than by any other sense. To answer the question of whether perceiving that we perceive is consciousness we must ascertain what Aristotle means by perceiving that we see *by sight*.<sup>30</sup> If by, *by sight* Aristotle means the process of sight, then this is an intuitive choice, for to see we must be aware that we are seeing, otherwise how would it count as *seeing*? In modern findings there are examples of perception that is not always accompanied by perceptual consciousness,<sup>31</sup> but Aristotle did not know of these, hence he makes perceptual consciousness necessary to perception.<sup>32</sup> This view is supported by Victor Caston, who similarly sees in Aristotle's theory the essential nature of consciousness in the perceptual faculty.<sup>33</sup> Aristotle's conclusion presents a difficulty, and Aristotle proceeds to lay out an *aporia*: *here is a difficulty: for if seeing is perceiving by sight, and what is seen is colour or has colour, then if one is to see that which sees, that which primarily sees will also have colour*.<sup>34</sup> The way in which this happens is the subject of an important debate where commentators are trying to determine how Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive works. Since I will be discussing this debate in my second chapter the focus in this chapter will be on the problem of how we perceive that we see by sight.

In Aristotle's discussion of perception generally in *De Anima* 2.5 he questions why we do not perceive the senses themselves separately from the sense-objects.<sup>35</sup> His answer to this question is exemplified by the similarity of the sense faculty to fuel, which is unable to produce an effect in itself without a spark to assist it. This

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<sup>28</sup> 'but then the same [sense] will be of sight and of colour, the object of sight' – See Appendix 1, t2

<sup>29</sup> 'So that either two [senses] are of the same [object] or [sight] is of itself' – See Appendix 1, t3

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix 1, t1

<sup>31</sup> Armstrong, David *What is Consciousness?* 1999: 725- In his example of the truck driver lacking introspective awareness

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix 1, t1

<sup>33</sup> Victor Caston *Aristotle on Consciousness* 2002: 786

<sup>34</sup> See Appendix 1, t6

<sup>35</sup> See Appendix 2, t3, 417a3-4

illustrates the potentiality of the faculty until a perceptual object is present to be perceived,<sup>36</sup> but through this explanation raises another question; how it can be possible that we are able to perceive our perceptual ability in states of darkness. Where there is no perceptible object to see,<sup>37</sup> perception must remain in a state of potentiality. This example Aristotle uses to answer to his second worry: whether we perceive that we see by the same token as that by which we perceive the red, in an attempt to illustrate the multiplicity of meanings which *to perceive by sight* carries. His answer is an exposition of his theory of the potential and the actual.<sup>38</sup>

Through the reference to the theory of the actual and potential Aristotle indicates which of the multiple meanings of ‘perceiving that we see by sight’ he intends to use here. By placing *De Anima* 3.2 in the context of Aristotle’s description of general perception in *De Anima* 2.5 Aristotle shows that our ability to perceive our lack of perception must also depend on the presence of a perceptible object. It is not clear though, how Aristotle thought that this was possible, since in darkness there seems to be no directly perceptible object for sight to perceive. I will offer three possible interpretations. Firstly, darkness could be seen to be perceptible in Aristotle’s theory because *it* in a way is coloured; for Aristotle says that *the same conditions which in air produce light and darkness, in bodies produce white and black*.<sup>39</sup> Air and water have colour in *On Sense*, for *their brightness is the nature of colour*<sup>40</sup>; the proper objects of sight are colours, and shiny things.<sup>41</sup> There is no question of there being perceiving without a perceptible object because perception does not exist without something for it to perceive.<sup>42</sup> Even in the case of incidental perceptibles this is so, for they must accompany actual perceptible objects. Alternatively, we could be said to be able to be aware of our potential for sight despite the lack of a perceptible object through our memories of past perceptual experiences. This would connect *De Anima* 3.2 with 3.3 and Aristotle’s treatise in the *Parva Naturalia*, *On Memory*. This connection however is not explicit, and is only one of the possible interpretations of

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<sup>36</sup> See Appendix 2, *De Anima* 2.5, and my introduction explaining the nature of the different senses of the potential and the actual.

<sup>37</sup> See Appendix 1, t7

<sup>38</sup> See Appendix 1, t10

<sup>39</sup> Aristotle *On Sense and Sensible Objects*, 439b18-20

<sup>40</sup> *On Sense*, 439b1-2

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Everson, *Aristotle on Perception*, 1987: 283

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix 2, t3, 417a3-10

this statement that we perceive that we see by sight. Although Aristotle does not mention *phantasia* or memory here, he could be anticipating his students' further reading of connecting themes in the psycho-biological corpus.<sup>43</sup> Contrary to this, it could be possible that Aristotle is simply attributing additional powers to the perceptual faculty as he does in the case of the power by what perceives that we perceive to perceive common sensibles, also by sight. The power to perceive that we can see in light and in darkness could be a theory that since we are aware of the actuality of the rest of our senses, we are aware that we are not asleep, and that possibly, when once more in suitable conditions for seeing, our sight will still be functional. In this case, it seems it can be possible for us to be aware of the potentiality of one of our senses, because of the activity of other senses; perceiving that we still have the ability to see, by our lack of sight. Whether perception alone is enough to account for the phenomenon of perceiving that we can see by sight when in darkness is unclear, and whether any of these interpretations are taken or not it is certainly clear that 'to perceive that we see by sight' has a multitude of meanings. In this example however, Aristotle connects essentially the perceiver, the conditions necessary for perception to occur, and the object of perception in one single moment, one action which has not yet happened but is perfectly possible to happen once we are in the presence of an actual object and in a condition of enough light to be able to see and be aware of the object acting on us.<sup>44</sup>

An example of how unclear Aristotle's assumption that we perceive that we can see by sight is, is the rise of the debate over whether he is saying that we perceive that we see by the *faculty* of sight, or by the *means* of sight. For each of the three occurrences at 425b19 and b22, commentators have argued over whether the text should read *to horōn* or *to horan*.<sup>45</sup> The third occurrence must read *to horōn* as this is immediately afterwards identified with the sense-organ. Hence the second occurrence must also read *to horōn* otherwise the third instance of this term, at b22, would have no point. So it is the first instance of the occurrence that is under dispute. The phrase can be read either in a capacity reading, where the perceptual capacity or sense organ is the thing being seen; or with an activity reading, where the activity of seeing is that

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<sup>43</sup> See Appendix 5- On the connection between consciousness in Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive, and his other psychological theories.

<sup>44</sup> Appendix 1, t10

<sup>45</sup> See Appendix 1, t8

which is being seen. The way this phrase is translated determines the interpretation on which the whole of Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive will rest on. The interpretation assumed concerning this debate will also influence interpretations of how Aristotle's claim that perception is coloured during the process of being acted upon by the sense-object<sup>46</sup>; which for the instances of sight rather than any other sense, is colour. The stance taken in this debate reflects on whether Aristotle has a theory of consciousness that is comparable to the contemporary conception of such, it will become clearer how as the discussion develops.

Victor Caston and Thomas Johansen are at the forefront of this debate. Caston supports the view that perceiving that we perceive is an instance of the perception of the activity of an episode of perception,<sup>47</sup> whereas Johansen supports an opposing view claiming that what is perceived is the faculty of perception, the sense-organ being acted upon by the sense-object.<sup>48</sup> Johansen's view, where the capacity perceives the faculty as it itself perceives the sense-object, appears to place the perceiving of perception at a slight distance from the process, interpreting the act of perceiving this as performed *through* sight, *by* the faculty of the 'common sense.' Caston's activity reading on the other hand, suggests that it is the whole process of perception that perceives and hence this that is 'coloured' during the process. Since an activity cannot become coloured *per se*, this view seems to support the idea that instead of actually becoming coloured, the act of perception is coloured in a unique way, by becoming aware of the colours of the perceived object.<sup>49</sup> Aristotle's explanation for why what perceives the perceiving of colour must also see colour, and by inference become coloured itself, is that colour is the active part of this process.<sup>50</sup> Therefore the object must act on the entire process for the simultaneity of this phenomenon to occur. Since the sense-object cannot act on the sense-organ alone because they are joined in their dependence on the sense-object, it must act on the activity of sight which includes the perceptual organ, and therefore the whole perceptual faculty. Hence the object of whichever perception is involved must therefore act on all factors involved in the perception.

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<sup>46</sup> See Appendix 1, t6, t8

<sup>47</sup> Victor Caston 2002: 769; 762-3

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Johansen *In Defense of Inner Sense: Aristotle on perceiving that one sees*, 2005: 241

<sup>49</sup> See Appendix 2, t7; cf. Myles Burnyeat 1992: 21, 22

<sup>50</sup> See Appendix 1, t11, t12

It will be enlightening for the question being discussed to investigate the implications which the differing sides of this debate have on Aristotle's further remarks in *De Anima* 3.2. Caston states that Aristotle can contribute to two modern philosophical debates, on whether consciousness is an intrinsic feature of mental states or a higher order thought or perception; and on the debate concerning the qualitative nature of experience.<sup>51</sup> His claim is that Aristotle's theory is intuitive in both ways and capable of avoiding difficulties which are presented to both sides of each debate.<sup>52</sup> It may be that Aristotle's theory helps us better understand these issues, or it may be that by seeming to be useful to both views his theory is helpful to neither. The first debate which Aristotle has been discussed as useful to, for the purposes of this discussion, is the debate between those who take Aristotle to be an inner sense theorist, claiming that such perceiving that we see or hear is a second-order perception; and those who think that perceiving that we perceive for Aristotle is an intrinsic feature of first-order perception. Exemplifying the two sides of the debates are Thomas Johansen, who is an inner-sense theorist concerning interpretations of Aristotle, and Victor Caston, who supports the higher-order, intrinsic interpretation of Aristotle's theory.

Caston's claim is that Aristotle theorises that any token perception instantiates two types of mental content: first-order, the intake of the sensible object and second-order the perceiving of that sensible object.<sup>53</sup> He declares the higher-order content and first-order content to be instantiated together in a perception and the consciousness involved to stand in a reflexive relation to itself.<sup>54</sup> This reflexive awareness can be explained informatively because of its articulated structural form of intentionality. Caston asserts that Aristotle's theory is an improvement on contemporary higher-order theorists' because he is able to elucidate consciousness in terms of intentionality while preserving the intuition that consciousness is intrinsic to mental states.<sup>55</sup> This, Caston says, is the extent to which Aristotle's theory of consciousness can be relevant today. Johansen on the other hand claims that Aristotle postulates an 'inner sense'

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<sup>51</sup> Caston 2002: 752

<sup>52</sup> Caston 2002: 752

<sup>53</sup> Caston 2002: 753-4

<sup>54</sup> Caston 2002: 757

<sup>55</sup> Caston 2002: 755, 758

which perceives perception.<sup>56</sup> This sense is internally connected to the perceptual states themselves through the ‘common sense.’<sup>57</sup> He stresses the importance of considering how the five senses are related such that they can perceive objects beyond those available to them as special senses, and attempts to answer the problem of how we perceive that we perceive by signifying the uniting of the five special senses by the ‘common sense.’<sup>58</sup> By claiming that the faculty responsible for second-order perception is itself perceptual, Johansen claims, there is no need to postulate another sense faculty, or attribute second-order powers to perception because this ‘inner-sense’ has as its objects its own perceptual states.<sup>59</sup>

My difficulty with this is that Aristotle says that the faculty, or ability, of perceiving that we see does not only have as its objects its own perceptual *states* but everything involved in a particular perceptual process, including the objects of first order perception.<sup>60</sup> Caston’s interpretation on the other hand has the advantage of showing how Aristotle incorporates the common sense into the ability which enables us to be reflexively aware through perception itself without the possibility that any other sense, inside or outside perception, is needed. I am inclined to support *to horan*, and Caston’s activity reading, which fits best with Aristotle’s explanation of why perceptual consciousness, as a part of the perceptual faculty which includes the sense-organ, becomes coloured when the sense organ does. This interpretation is supported by instances in Aristotle’s text where he refers us to his theory of actuality and potentiality to explain his complicated meaning. In the theory of actual and potential stated in *De Anima* 2.5, as exemplified by the fuel metaphor, the reaction of the faculty of perception depends on the action of the perceptible object.<sup>61</sup> The relation between the theory of the acting object and the claim that we perceive that we see and hear indicates that Aristotle thought our ability to perceive that we *can* see and hear does not involve the *sense* generating this perception. This is because perception is potential until a sense-object is present,<sup>62</sup> so it seems that this perception of our perceptions must be produced by the sense-object also. Following on this, it appears

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<sup>56</sup> Johansen 2005: 235

<sup>57</sup> Johansen 2005: 236

<sup>58</sup> Johansen 2005: 236

<sup>59</sup> Johansen 2005: 235

<sup>60</sup> Appendix 1, t22, 426b35-432a

<sup>61</sup> Appendix 2, t3

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix 2, t3, 417a3-10

that on Aristotle's account we do not perceive the senses themselves, but rather the individual episodes of perception of the sense-objects. This provides support for Caston's activity reading.<sup>63</sup> The inner-sense conception appears to intuitively remove consciousness from our processes and actions by attributing the powers of perception to a 'common sense' faculty as a power held over and above the special sensibles. Theories which place consciousness as a pervasive presence in all our perceptual acts however, fulfil the intuitions present in contemporary thought about the intrinsic nature of consciousness. Aristotle commits himself to the latter option, in many ways, but most simply, by making consciousness necessarily present in all perceptions.

The second debate to which Aristotle has been said to lend assistance is to the debate concerning the nature of *qualia*, or conscious experience. Caston says that Aristotle's account of what makes our first-order perceptions perceptible cuts down the middle of the two sides of this debate.<sup>64</sup> He explains Aristotle's contributions to each side: as support for modern day intentionalists, that for Aristotle, first-order experience does not possess the same perceptible qualities as the object of perception, colour, who claim that only perceptible objects literally have first-order perceptible qualities.<sup>65</sup> Aristotle also shows support for the proponents of *qualia* according to Caston, whereby experience in Aristotle's theory has some characteristic which makes it *about* perceptible qualities, and this characteristic is itself an object of awareness, which shows that the phenomenal character of our experience is not exhausted by its intentional properties.<sup>66</sup>

John Sisko however disagrees with Caston, putting forth the view that Aristotle in fact means that in any token perception the organ of perception literally acquires the perceptible qualities of its objects and claiming that this makes Aristotle's view irrelevant to the contemporary debate over *qualia*.<sup>67</sup> This adjoins with the debate concerning what Aristotle means when he says that perception is coloured by the perceptual object of sight when we perceive that we see. I will discuss this in more detail in the next chapter, for now I am concerned with its link to how we perceive by

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<sup>63</sup> Appendix 1, t4

<sup>64</sup> Caston 2002: 752

<sup>65</sup> Caston 2002: 791

<sup>66</sup> Caston 2002: 752, 759

<sup>67</sup> Sisko *Reflexive Awareness Does Belong to the Main Function of Perception: Reply to Victor Caston*, 2002: 514

sight. In *De Anima* 2.5 Aristotle says that perception is held to be a change of state<sup>68</sup> and then refers us to his defence of like and unlike equally being able to affect like.<sup>69</sup> With this reference Aristotle is trying to explain to us why the kind of change occurring in perception is not like material change, of quality, quantity, substance or place, which are the usual kinds of change involving material alteration described in the *Physics*.<sup>70</sup> Through this discussion it is clear that perception, which is potentially like the sense-object, fulfils its true nature by becoming like it in actuality. This is the view that Myles Burnyeat purports in opposition to Richard Sorabji's claim that perception is not a different kind of alteration, but similarly to others it is a replacement of one sensible quality by another.<sup>71</sup> One can see Sorabji's support for this literal interpretation in the discussion of how one thing becomes like something else from being unlike it. This passage seems to imply a stronger meaning of change than Burnyeat's interpretation allows, however I have explained why the contrary interpretation, supported by Burnyeat is more faithful to Aristotle's theory. Burnyeat claims that the reason that Sorabji's interpretation is even available to us is because of our modern scientific advancement on the age Aristotle lived in.<sup>72</sup> When compared with Aristotle's explanation of the kind of change undergone in perception it is clear that Sorabji's explanation is different to Aristotle's.

Opposing perception to the ordinary sense of the term where alteration and change indicate the loss of a quality and its replacement by another Aristotle explains that although we must continue to use the language of being affected and altered, we must understand these terms in the light of what has just been said.<sup>73</sup> So we must read his repetition of the theory of unlike affecting and changing like, as being the same as like affecting like, because the sense-object is unlike perception in essence, but like it in potentiality.<sup>74</sup> As Modrak puts it, the nature of the faculty is preserved in its exercise because its very nature is having a certain structure that it shares with its object.<sup>75</sup> The importance of the connection between the actuality thesis and the

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<sup>68</sup> See Appendix 2, t2, 417a1; *De Anima* 2.4, 415b24, and 416b3

<sup>69</sup> See Appendix 2, t4, 417a15-21

<sup>70</sup> Aristotle *Physics* 3.1, See Appendix 3

<sup>71</sup> Burnyeat, *De Anima* II.5, 2002: 29

<sup>72</sup> Burnyeat, 2002: 29

<sup>73</sup> See Appendix 2, t8, t9, 417b13-22

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix 2, t8, t9, 417a15-21

<sup>75</sup> Modrak 1987: 39

distinction between the types of alteration is signalled by Aristotle's use of *kathaper heiretai, as has been said*.<sup>76</sup> This emphasis on the point that the sentient subject is potentially such as the object of sense is actually strengthens the association of the sensing subject being altered only in this unique sense which involves no alteration. The stress on the role of the sentient subject which is what mainly concerns us now, is minimised in Aristotle's theory to make way for his theory of the active object. Aristotle in the *De Anima* shows only the slightest inclination of concern relating to the debate over the nature of conscious experience. Expressions which lead us to value *having* the experience more than the experience itself,<sup>77</sup> such as describing what that particular perception was 'like' are not found in the *De Anima*. Aristotle describes the sense-objects in terms of how they appear to us in our experience; *coloured, sounding* for example. However his concern about the perceptible nature of conscious experience is not linked to problems concerning the relation of a subject's self-conscious experience of the world in the way theorists concerned with this subject are. It seems that where modern thinking about the mind immediately jumps to concerns about *our* experience of the world, and *our* impact on the world, Aristotle was concerned more largely with the way the *world* impacts on us, such that the processes which connect us to that world are possible.

Kosman claims that in *De Anima* 3.2 Aristotle is speaking of a form of self-consciousness constituted in the reflexive awareness we have of our perceptual acts.<sup>78</sup> Kosman states two meanings of self-consciousness: consciousness of one's self, and consciousness being conscious of itself as such.<sup>79</sup> The latter is closer to Aristotle's philosophical theory. However, consciousness as a part of oneself, being aware that it is having an act of perception and perceptual awareness, can hardly be unaware that it *is* something which is having that perception. To define *perceiving that we perceive* in this way though, would be to misunderstand Aristotle's meaning and place him anachronistically in a context based on our history of anxiety about the separation of the Cartesian self. Aristotle displays no such worries; in his theory each is a part of the other, with the world as it is in actuality being prior to the potentially conscious

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<sup>76</sup> See Appendix 2, t11, 418a4

<sup>77</sup> Kosman *Perceiving that we perceive: De Anima III.2* 1975: 503

<sup>78</sup> Kosman 1975: 503

<sup>79</sup> Kosman 1975: 503

perceiver.<sup>80</sup> It is in the actualisation of these perceptions, it seems, that the conscious agency of the perceiver is realised.<sup>81</sup> The perceptible object would not complete its purpose of being 'see-able' if there was no conscious and ensouled being to see it and neither would the perceiver's ability to perceive fulfil theirs.

Perceiving that we perceive connotes a process which involves attending to your perceptions, a self-consciousness of the kind where one is conscious of what one is doing.<sup>82</sup> This attention appears to be described more as a reaction to the action of the perceived object and hence is more passively conscious than actively so.<sup>83</sup> Kosman however, suggests a more specific level of intentional and attentional introspection here, where perception consists of the mechanism occurring in the sense-organs *and* of the activity of apperceptive awareness which transforms that mechanism into perception proper, explaining the attribution of these apperceptive abilities as a condition of seeing, which constitutes perception.<sup>84</sup> This view which places much of the emphasis of the phenomenon on the wary attention of the perceiver I will have to reject, in favour of what I see as a position closer to Aristotle's own, where the activity of the object is determined to be Aristotle's primary method for explaining *perceiving that we perceive*. In this issue I support Caston.

The significance of Aristotle's involvement in the debate over whether consciousness is intrinsic to our mental states or removed from them in an 'inner-sense' capacity is not only a matter of getting to grips with what Aristotle intended to theorise, but with whether his theories can correspond to any today, and therefore be respected as useful not just in their historical significance. Aristotle's part in the debate of the nature of consciousness has been established in this discussion as intrinsic to perceptual processes. His involvement in the issue of conscious experience is less clear. While Aristotle speaks of these perceptual processes in terms of our experience of them he does not mention the existence of the perceiver as a conscious subject of these experiences. How he manages these two views in conjunction will become clearer in the next chapter, on perception of special sensibles.

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<sup>80</sup> Appendix 2, t4, 417a17

<sup>81</sup> Appendix 3, *Physics* 3.3; Appendix 2, t11, 418a4; t8, 417b19

<sup>82</sup> Appendix 1, t1

<sup>83</sup> Appendix 1, t10

<sup>84</sup> Kosman 1975: 503

## ***Chapter 2: Perceiving Special Sensibles***

The second worry Aristotle has about his theory that we perceive that we perceive by sight, concerns whether we perceive *that* something is red *at the same time* as we perceive the red.<sup>85</sup> This concern is revealed by his statement *but then the same sense will be of sight and of colour, the object of sight.*<sup>86</sup> This is problematic because the way in which perception takes on the colour of the perceptual object has an impact on what the whole theory of perceiving that we perceive means. The problem is how to understand what Aristotle means when he says that perception is coloured by the perceived object in the process of perceiving that we see. Aristotle's second worry is inseparable from his first. Positions taken in the dispute over how *that which primarily sees will also have colour*<sup>87</sup> is to be translated and interpreted are influenced by the translation of the rest of the sentence surrounding this complicated inference concerning perceiving that we see by sight. As his students we are left to interpret his meaning based on our knowledge of the context of his previous arguments.

As an explanation of the phrase *that which sees is in a sense coloured*<sup>88</sup> Aristotle reiterates an earlier premise, that *each sense organ receives the sense-object without its matter.*<sup>89</sup> This connection with *De Anima 2.12* is an example of how Aristotle connects the parts of the *De Anima*, and is a reminder that we are meant to bear in mind his earlier remarks on the mechanisms of perception while we contemplate his later ones.<sup>90</sup> The repetition of his earlier theory is within the context of an example that must be meant to remind us of the most famous example containing a wax impression. *Just as the wax receives the impression of the signet-ring without the iron or gold* so the perceptual capacity of the soul receives the impression of the perceptual object without its matter.<sup>91</sup> Perception, through the perceptual object, could be said to

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<sup>85</sup> See Appendix 1, t2

<sup>86</sup> See Appendix 1, t2

<sup>87</sup> Appendix 1, t6, "if seeing is perceiving by sight, and what is seen is colour or has colour, then if one is to see that which sees, *that which primarily sees will also have colour.*"

<sup>88</sup> See Appendix 1, t8, 425b23

<sup>89</sup> See Appendix 1, t8, and *De Anima 2.12*, 424a16

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Appendix 2, t11

<sup>91</sup> *De Anima 2.12*, 424a18-21

be always potentially coloured, because it is always aware of the potential to be seeing.<sup>92</sup> This is because we are always aware when perceiving, and asleep when not perceiving.<sup>93</sup> When actually seeing, perception is in a way coloured, as it is aware of the form of the object being received by the sense-organ without its matter.<sup>94</sup> This is how perception is coloured by the perceived object. In *De Anima 2.12* Aristotle's illustration of the theory by the model of the wax block,<sup>95</sup> reveals Aristotle's intention to apply to perception a model which Plato used to contrast judgement to perception.<sup>96</sup> The importance of the contrast to Plato shows Aristotle's epistemological concerns and places him at a distance from Plato in this respect.<sup>97</sup> Burnyeat claims that Aristotle is applying the wax block model directly to perception as a way of insisting, against Plato, that perception is awareness, articulate awareness, from the start; and therefore is capable of leading to knowledge.<sup>98</sup> Aristotle's use of the wax block model is successfully exploited by Burnyeat, whose interpretation rests on the claim that the effect of the object on the organ *is* the awareness.

Aristotle could also be anticipating our reading of his theory of *phantasia* in *De Anima 3.3* here.<sup>99</sup> Further evidence for this implication is in his phrase immediately following in *De Anima 3.2*; *that is why even when the objects of perception are gone, perceptions and images are still present in the sense-organ.*<sup>100</sup> This indicates a connection between the faculties of perception through the ability to perceive that we see and hear, for example, through the reception of the form of the sense-object, which then remains in the perceptual faculty made possible by *phantasia* and made accessible by the capability of our memories.<sup>101</sup> In this case the interpretation would lead to a claim that the image, or form, of the sense-object is taken into the soul's memory bank by the perceptual faculty, which includes, for example, seeing, by virtue of the eye which is affected by the action of the sense-object.<sup>102</sup> This is an interesting claim to consider; however since it is not directly related to my subject

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<sup>92</sup> Appendix 1, t9; cf. discussion in chapter one on darkness

<sup>93</sup> Appendix 1, t1; *On Sleep*, see Appendix 4, t1

<sup>94</sup> Appendix 1, t8; *De Anima 2.12*, 424a16

<sup>95</sup> *De Anima 2.12*, 424a17-24

<sup>96</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus*: 190e5-196c5

<sup>97</sup> Appendix 5

<sup>98</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 22

<sup>99</sup> See Appendix 5

<sup>100</sup> Appendix 1, t9

<sup>101</sup> Appendix 5

<sup>102</sup> Appendix 5

matter I will not follow up on this here. The question of how this perceiving that we perceive occurs and the question of how this is affected by the sense-object are simultaneous questions, just as they are simultaneous phenomena.<sup>103</sup> To determine whether perceiving that we perceive is consciousness we must address both concerns in detail, bearing their connection in mind.

Aristotle's repetition of his actuality theory emphasises his point that the organ and the potentiality for sensing are identified, but their essential nature is not the same.<sup>104</sup> This discussion is reminiscent of the chapter in the *Physics* where what causes change and what is changed are both one and not one.<sup>105</sup> The Unity of the process of conscious perception is shown in all these examples, where Aristotle states that in actuality these things which in essence are different, in potentiality and actuality are the same, are one simultaneous and harmonious moment of consciously perceived perception.<sup>106</sup> Aristotle explains that this is how in one sense a thing is acted upon by like and in another by unlike; for while it is being acted upon it is unlike, but when the action is completed it is like.<sup>107</sup> This raises the problem of whether this means that it is a literal change that occurs or rather a more figurative change where perception becomes 'like' its objects.<sup>108</sup> The way in which the sensing becomes like the sense-object is in a way acted on simultaneously by like and unlike; for sensing is like the object potentially, while unlike it in essence.<sup>109</sup> Aristotle means that the sense becomes like its object only in the moment of actual perception, in the completion of the potentiality of the perceptual episode.<sup>110</sup> This is similar to, and supported by, Myles Burnyeat's interpretation of this matter. He states that all these physical-seeming descriptions; the organ's becoming like the object, its being affected, acted on or altered by sensible qualities, its taking on sensible form without matter, are referring to what Aquinas calls a 'spiritual' change, a becoming aware of some sensible quality in the environment.<sup>111</sup> Aristotle exemplifies his meaning with

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<sup>103</sup> Appendix 1, t20

<sup>104</sup> *De Anima* 2.12, 424a25 – αισθητηριον δε πρωτον εν ωι η τοιαυτη δυναμις; See Appendix 2, t3, 417b2-9

<sup>105</sup> Appendix 3, t8, t9; Appendix 1, t10, 425b26-28; t14, 426a16-18

<sup>106</sup> Appendix 1, t20, 426b28-9

<sup>107</sup> Appendix 2, t4, 417a15-21

<sup>108</sup> Appendix 1, t11

<sup>109</sup> Appendix 2, t4

<sup>110</sup> Appendix 1, t22, 427a1; t20, 426b29; t8; *De Anima* 2.12, 424a18-21; Appendix 3, t9

<sup>111</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 21

this example; a builder is present to build a house, bricks are there to be built into a house.<sup>112</sup> The potentiality for a house is there, the actuality of the bricks makes the house possible with their reality, but the form of the bricks must receive the input of the builder for the house to become complete. Everything is acted upon and moved by something which produces an effect and actually exists,<sup>113</sup> although the second actuality which is the actual episode of perception is not possible without the existence of both the actual sense-object and the potential perceiver.<sup>114</sup> This is clear in the *Physics* also, where, in the example, the steep ascent and the steep descent are inseparable, they are one, but are described differently.<sup>115</sup> These differing perspectives are reminiscent of the difference between Aristotle's and ours. We cannot help but look from the perspective of the perceiver, yet Aristotle theorises from the perspective of the active perceptual object. It is for this reason that the theory is most difficult to understand.<sup>116</sup>

Aristotle's theory of perception in general in *De Anima* 2.5 describes this exceptional method of alteration,<sup>117</sup> which is reminiscent of *De Anima* 2.2 where Aristotle argues that changes from first to second actualities are unique in that the move to second actuality preserves and completes the nature of the capacity, while in other types of change the original state is destroyed in the process.<sup>118</sup> Since the faculty is potentially what the object is actually, there are no object-independent characteristics to be lost in the transition from dispositional to occurrent cognitive state and, as Modrak states clearly; object-dependent characteristics are actualised, not lost, in the change.<sup>119</sup> Of the four kinds of change: of quantity, of quality, of substance, and of place;<sup>120</sup> *coloured in a way* is an exception, a special kind of change different from all of these,<sup>121</sup> a change from first actuality to second actuality.<sup>122</sup> The example Aristotle chooses to use is one of teaching and learning,<sup>123</sup> where the one

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<sup>112</sup> Appendix 2, t7, 417b8-9; Appendix 3, t8

<sup>113</sup> Appendix 2, t4, 417a17-18

<sup>114</sup> Appendix 1, t14

<sup>115</sup> Appendix 3, t9, 202a16-22

<sup>116</sup> For support in this view, cf. Burnyeat 1992: 16

<sup>117</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>118</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>119</sup> Modrak 1987: 31

<sup>120</sup> Appendix 3, t3

<sup>121</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>122</sup> Appendix 2, t5, t6, t7, 417a21-b15

<sup>123</sup> Appendix 2, t8, 417b2-b15

teaching is the object acting and the one learning corresponds to the subject of perception; the perceiver in the perceptual process is the one who is changed in this subtle and non-physical manner.<sup>124</sup> The double meanings of *hearing* and *sounding* are the uses of the words in, and out, of our presence: meanings of potentiality and actuality.<sup>125</sup> One process is in the object and one in us, although the meanings are not equally accurate, for though sounding is actual, sound as a perceptual process is only potential until it begins to produce change in a hearer who moves from simply possessing a potentially hearing capacity, to being involved in an episode of actual hearing.<sup>126</sup> In this Aristotle's theory of the actual and potential, activity is prior to capacity.<sup>127</sup> What is capable of hearing sounds, for example, is only potentially hearing until a resounding occurs at the same time that the hearing capacity is able to hear the actual sound.<sup>128</sup> A sound may resound with no one to hear it but no one may hear what is not sounding;<sup>129</sup> however if there is no sound to hear there can be no hearing.

This is clear in Aristotle's exposition that *whenever that which can hear is active and when that which can sound is sounding, then the active hearing happens at the same time as the actual sounding: we may call these audition and sonance*. This also seems to refer to the example in the *Physics*, where steep ascent and steep descent are described differently, though they are the same.<sup>130</sup> In Aristotle's discussion of the moment of actualisation it becomes clearer how the perceptual faculty becomes the same as its objects in actuality.<sup>131</sup> The difference between the sort of effect that scent has on air and the effect it has on an organ is that the latter effect is the perceiving of something, the former the becoming of something perceivable.<sup>132</sup> It appears that actuality is the natural condition of the object: the object is there to be seen. The fact that these happen at the same time provides unity to the process. Its inseparable parts

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<sup>124</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>125</sup> Appendix 1, t12

<sup>126</sup> Appendix 1, t14

<sup>127</sup> Appendix 1, t11, 426a5

<sup>128</sup> Appendix 1, t11, 426a2; Appendix 1, t12

<sup>129</sup> Appendix 1, t15

<sup>130</sup> Appendix 3, t9

<sup>131</sup> Appendix 1, t10, 425b26

<sup>132</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 25

can only be realised as one thing, one episode of actual smelling, with many constituent parts.<sup>133</sup>

The debate over *how* our perception of perception takes on characteristics of the ‘perceived’ is an important part of determining how Aristotle thinks that we perceive that we perceive and for the purposes of this paper, an important part of determining whether this theory of Aristotle’s can correspond to any part of our contemporary view of consciousness. Richard Sorabji was the originator of this debate with his claim that perceiving involved a literal physiological change.<sup>134</sup> There have been a number of supporters to this position, for example, Stephen Everson, who specifies Aristotle’s theory of receiving the sensible form without the matter does not entail the absence of any material change, but only a change in which the particular material constitution of the thing sensed is irrelevant to the occurrence of sensing.<sup>135</sup> It is a kind of perception which entails a material alteration involving awareness.<sup>136</sup> This position does not deal with Aristotle’s explanations adequately, in my opinion, because of Aristotle’s explanation of the perception of common sensibles. To make use of Everson’s example, we are not simply aware of the colour red, but of the colour red in the certain texture of the featheriness of the robin’s chest in the size and shape of the bird at the particular moment of its chest moving in and out as its lungs underneath the exterior of the bird expand and contract. The particular material constitution of the robin is not irrelevant to the episode of sensing, if colour is to literally affect the sense-organ and through this action, the perceiving of this, then it is the whole perceptual picture that is simultaneously perceived, and this is why Everson’s explanation and the literalist’s position cannot be what Aristotle is intending. In this view I support Miles Burnyeat’s interpretation that the only alteration involved in perception is a kind of ‘spiritual’ change.<sup>137</sup>

The faculty versus activity debate and the literalist versus spiritualist debate are intertwined with one another and are inseparable. These positions have an interesting reflection on Aristotle’s ‘difficulty’ in *De Anima* 3.2. In the context of Aristotle’s

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<sup>133</sup> Appendix 1, t14

<sup>134</sup> Sorabji, R *Body and Soul in Aristotle*, 1974: 49, n.22

<sup>135</sup> Everson 1997: 137

<sup>136</sup> Everson 1997: 138

<sup>137</sup> Burnyeat, 1992: 21

discussion of perceiving that we see and hear we must assume that consciousness as a part of the perceiving faculty will become coloured also by the object of sight at the same time, and in the same way.<sup>138</sup> Burnyeat uses Aristotle's example of touch to show the consequences of accepting a literal change interpretation, that for Sorabji it will be the heart that hardens, not the hand: flesh on Aristotle's view is the medium, not the organ of touch.<sup>139</sup> He instead theorises that the taking on of the form of the object is a becoming aware of some sensible quality in the environment.<sup>140</sup> Aristotle is not a literalist, Burnyeat maintains that the eye's taking on a colour is just one's becoming aware of some colour and uses as support for his position emphasis on Aristotle's remark in *De Anima* 2.5 that the alteration in a sense-organ is of a special kind and is not the sort of alteration as in a change of quality, for example when a green thing becomes red.<sup>141</sup> Aristotle in *Physics* does not classify this sort of change as an alteration, and perception in *De Anima* 2.5 is explained not as a change from a potential to an actual but a change from an actualisation of the first level to the second level.<sup>142</sup> Therefore I agree with Burnyeat, that the sense-organ is not so much altered as "brought into activity."<sup>143</sup>

One's position held in this debate will influence the way Aristotle's first worry is interpreted; the worry about how perception becomes coloured by the sense-object during perception. Aristotle argues against the theory that there are no sense-objects without a sensory being there to perceive them, in favour of the weaker theory stating simply that perception requires something to perceive.<sup>144</sup> By arguing against the stronger claim in favour of the weaker Aristotle disagrees with those philosophers who in the past have supported the stronger claim. In one sense the earlier philosophers were right and in one wrong: they were right in terms of the actual existence of the terms but not right in terms of the existence of their potentialities.<sup>145</sup> They were mistaken in speaking singly about terms which have more than one

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<sup>138</sup> See Appendix 1, t20

<sup>139</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 20

<sup>140</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 21

<sup>141</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 19

<sup>142</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>143</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 19

<sup>144</sup> Appendix 1, t15

<sup>145</sup> Appendix 1, t15 -in one sense they were right, but in another wrong; for perception and the object of perception are spoken of in two ways, as potential and as actual, so their statements follow from the latter, but not the former.

meaning, they did not know about the existence of the potential and the actual, so they did not make this distinction.

The actuality theory is what unites the perceptual faculty in all its abilities and activities. The right proportions must coincide at the right moment in the right environment for perception to actually occur, otherwise all the faculties remain in their states of potentiality.<sup>146</sup> This connects inextricably the perceiver and perceived in their environment. Kosman's example of the smelly onion in his fridge imbuing the uncovered cheese with its onion-like smell, is used as an attempt to illustrate how the onion would act on the nose and the faculty of smelling, causing it to take on the matter-less form of the vegetable.<sup>147</sup> However, smelling does not take on the form of an onion in the same way that the cheese in Kosman's fridge does, for perception is a two-way process and the nose also must re-actively receive the smell of the onion as the onion acts on the nose and is aware of this.<sup>148</sup> The action of smelling refers to the whole actuality of the process of an episode of perception, not just what the nose does, but what the nose, smell, reflexive awareness and the suitable conditions of air do, together.

How this happens is stated by Aristotle in *De Anima* 3.2 in Aristotle's discussion of *sumphonia* and *logos*.<sup>149</sup> Aristotle repeatedly says that being acted upon has multiple meanings, sometimes this is a form of destruction by a contrary, but sometimes a preservation of a potential by an actual that is like it.<sup>150</sup> When this section of *De Anima* 3.2 is compared to *De Anima* 2.5 it becomes clearer what Aristotle means when he states that it is because hearing must be a proportion that excess, high and low pitch for example, destroy hearing,<sup>151</sup> and that hearing and sound so spoken of must be saved and destroyed simultaneously.<sup>152</sup> This connects the theory of the potential and the actual with the theory of *logos* and *harmony*. In actuality voice must be concordant in some manner for it to be audible. Yet, what this means is unclear, because we are able to hear a cacophony. The object becomes sound that is

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<sup>146</sup> Appendix 1, t16

<sup>147</sup> Kosman 1975: 507

<sup>148</sup> Appendix 1, t10, t11

<sup>149</sup> Appendix 1, t9

<sup>150</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>151</sup> Appendix 1, t16, 425a30

<sup>152</sup> Appendix 1, t14, 425a18

audible and the hearing is receptive of this in one harmonious instance. This must be the kind of concordance Aristotle is hinting at, the harmoniousness of the actual act of perception. This is an extension of *De Anima* 2.8 with the addition of an extra ability which involves a *logos*.<sup>153</sup> Our faculty must have a tool for receiving this composite. The form minus the matter in hearing can relate to single notes as well as complex combinations of notes for common sensible perception between senses. It is this power, which can perceive the simple and the composite at once, and by the same means, that I am trying to extract from Aristotle's text.

When Aristotle says that harmony is a kind of voice,<sup>154</sup> and that voice has meaning, at least this instance, it seems an object of perception attributes meaning to the moment of perception and thus the involvement of some sort of conscious attention is implied.<sup>155</sup> However, we know that voice can have meaning without us knowing what that meaning is, for example when one listens to a speaker of a language they have not learned. So meaning cannot come from the object, voice, but rather must come from the ensouled perceiver. This can necessitate no conscious attention *per se*; for in Aristotle's theory this kind of consciousness is a natural and merely re-active move in response to the action of the sense-object in episodes of perception; and in learning, through regular habituation.

The consciousness of perception is here however, imbued with an additional level, corresponding to our more focussed definition of consciousness. In *De Anima* 2.8 Aristotle says that *phonē*, voice, is produced only by an ensouled creature, who does this discriminately.<sup>156</sup> He appears to claim through this natural process the soul is the conscious agent of this action; making voice distinctive because of the agency of the soul, determined by the action of the perceptible object. This consciousness which is necessarily present in every perception could be seen to be attentive through the *logos* which must accompany every perceptual process of the second actuality.<sup>157</sup> The necessity for *sumphonia* to be the right proportion for it to be received fully by our senses applies to all the senses and entails a relationship of agreement. This follows

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<sup>153</sup> Appendix 1, t16; cf. Appendix 5 for Modrak's reading that *logos* is the connecting factor for conscious perception and conscious thought.

<sup>154</sup> Appendix 1, t16; cf. *De Anima* 2.8

<sup>155</sup> *De Anima* 2.8, 420b6, 420b30-33

<sup>156</sup> *De Anima* 2.8, 420b27-29

<sup>157</sup> Appendix 1, t16

from Aristotle's actuality theory; as both the sounding object and the potentially hearing subject must be in active actuality for perception to occur, so must the right kind of perceptual process occur, matching in the actor and the recipient for perception to occur.<sup>158</sup>

The destruction of perception by excess can be read with either a weak or a strong meaning. To read the line to mean excess 'makes perception not possible' is weaker than the possibility of excess physically destroying it. The weaker reading here implies that the pitch is either too low or too high for perception to be possible as actualised. However, there is a difficulty with this interpretation. The word Aristotle uses to describe the destruction of perception innately has a strong meaning; it is the word he uses to mean 'passing away' in his theory about 'coming to be and passing away.' *Phtheiresthai* here, is the same verb which Aristotle uses for death, for absolute destruction of being, indicates that after this, all that there is, is expectation. It is unclear how this could happen, and what the destruction applies to. A possible explanation could be that the example be taken as another instance of actual and potential perceiving, where excessive pitch or volume make the actualisation of the perceptual episode unable to move into the second state of actualisation. Just as a child who tries to force a puzzle piece into a hole that does not fit that piece, I imagine that a noise which does not fit into our auditory hole, for example, damages either the faculty which was not made to receive that particular breadth of shape, or the possibility for actualisation, which requires a certain shape. The proportion of one side of the episode of perception must agree with the other if they are to harmonise into a successful perception. The sense is the ratio, and a discordant object makes perception impossible as long as this discord is in place. The potentiality has not been actualised rather perception has been destroyed by the excessiveness of the sense-object. This is how perception in one way can be viewed as destroyed, and in another way viewed as saved. The actuality has been destroyed, the potential has been saved. Yet the strength of the term *phtheiresthai* must on this account be explained by the absence of any more accurate term, as Aristotle warned us in *De Anima* 2.5.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Appendix 1, t16; cf. t14

<sup>159</sup> Appendix 2, t11, 418a1-6

The ability to be able to perceive differences between special sense-objects<sup>160</sup> adds a new level to perception. This has an impact on what it would mean for a sense to be ‘destroyed’ by a discordant sense-object, for the discordant sense-object could be special to one sense, or common to all senses. Could it be possible for something to be so discordant that it could destroy all perception at once? If this is what Aristotle means then to destroy the ability which is immersed in the perception of special sensibles, the perception of these perceptions could destroy our entire perceptual consciousness. This joining together of the activities of the perceptual faculty in harmonious and proportionate actuality is exemplified in *De Anima* 3.2 as he leads the discussion towards the perception of differences between the special sensibles.<sup>161</sup> This is the beginning of the discussion concerning ‘the common sense.’

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<sup>160</sup> Appendix 1, t18

<sup>161</sup> See Appendix 1, t18

### ***Chapter 3: Perceiving Common Sensibles***

Imagine this: there is a pencil in front of you, but since none of your senses are connected by any cross-modal binding ability, there is not just one pencil in front of you, there are five. A blue pencil seen by your eyes, a hard pencil touched by your fingertips, a woody smelling pencil sniffed by your nose, a pencil which sounds surprisingly hollow listened to by your ears, and a pencil that tastes stringent like its painted covering are all that you perceive. This nightmare could easily happen if there was no unifying faculty for the individual senses. Each perception must be presented to one agency, and this for Aristotle, appears to be the common sense. This power of the perceptual faculty is able to be described as *kexōrismenon* and *axōriston*, separate and not separate, because of its unifying ability.<sup>162</sup> It is one, but within its content it is not one. Aristotle's example that the same faculty also perceives that good and bad are different is used to show the instantaneous and simultaneous nature of these judgements which can only happen by the power of a single thing.<sup>163</sup>

*De Anima* 3.2 raises things which the theory of perception as it stands in *De Anima* 2.5 cannot deal with. Hence it seems that Aristotle theorises the power of the common sense as a power which can assist the standard abilities of perception. In *De Anima* 2.6 Aristotle says that the '*object of sense*' is used in three ways: two we perceive directly and one indirectly.<sup>164</sup> The first two are; an object proper to the given sense which cannot be perceived by any other sense, and an object perceptible by all the senses. The third kind are incidentally perceived objects, where the percipient is not acted on by this thing perceived as such, but must accompany an active, actual, properly and directly perceivable object.<sup>165</sup> The objects which are common to all senses are movement, rest, number, shape and size.<sup>166</sup> The ability to perceive differences between special sensibles is said by Aristotle to be perceptual because the subject-matter is perceptual.<sup>167</sup> We do this by means of an ability shared by what it is

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<sup>162</sup> Appendix 1, t22, 427a3

<sup>163</sup> Appendix 1, t19

<sup>164</sup> *De Anima* 2.6, 418a8

<sup>165</sup> *De Anima* 2.6, 418a21

<sup>166</sup> *De Anima* 2.6, 418a18

<sup>167</sup> Appendix 1, t18

that perceives that we see and hear.<sup>168</sup> Perception is held to be a change of state, but as has been previously said, not just any change of state, a unique kind.<sup>169</sup> I am in agreement with Modrak's reading; that the actuality theory makes the awareness of an object a necessary feature of a cognitive act, and it also makes the character of a mental act dependent upon its object.<sup>170</sup> The character of sensing is determined by its object, so the sensing cannot be the object of any further awareness except in relation to the sense-object that gives it its character.<sup>171</sup> What we gain by being aware of our ability to perceive these differences is a better understanding of our own perceptual awareness. In response to Aristotle's theory it has been noted as significant that in the case of the senses and their proper objects the account turns on the descriptions of how the world is subjectively experienced, how it smells, tastes, and sounds.<sup>172</sup> The combination of these perceptible experiences is what forms our perceptions of things *as* the things that they are and the recognition and distinction between these differing sensible qualities is what makes the unity of these possible and this shows that for Aristotle, to perceive is to be conscious.<sup>173</sup>

It is a popular view amongst commentators that all of the functions in this discussion of perceiving that we perceive are attributable to a 'common sense,' yet these critics each express their view slightly differently. Kahn thinks the *De Anima* and *Parva Naturalia* form a continuous and progressive exposition of one single unified faculty of perception.<sup>174</sup> Modrak claims the common sense is simply the capacity for joint activity by the five senses.<sup>175</sup> Everson replies to these that the point is not that the common sense is possessed by the special senses *jointly*, but precisely that it is possessed in common by those senses and so not specific to any.<sup>176</sup> In response to these readings Gregoric more recently claimed that the senses are not integrated at the level of perception at all, but at the level of thought. This view is based on the thesis that the soul operates itself by itself in addition to using the senses to perceive, for example the soul applies common features such as 'same' and

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<sup>168</sup> Appendix 1, t19

<sup>169</sup> Appendix 2, t7

<sup>170</sup> Modrak 1987: 32

<sup>171</sup> Modrak 1987: 33; cf. Appendix 1, t18, 426b15

<sup>172</sup> Modrak 1987: 41

<sup>173</sup> De Somn 454a1-7; a view in which I am shared by Modrak 1987: 42

<sup>174</sup> Kahn 1966: 63

<sup>175</sup> Modrak 1981: 406; cf. Modrak 1987: 62-71

<sup>176</sup> Everson 1997: 155n26

‘difference’ to the impressions received through the senses, and thus discriminates them.<sup>177</sup> Gregoric claims that this is an active response on Aristotle’s part to avoid the disaster-scenario of the separation of the senses by postulating a separate power over and above the five senses which monitors their states and coordinates their reports, the common sense.<sup>178</sup> So, whereas Kahn and Modrak have claimed that the unity of perceptual consciousness is made possible by the activities of the common sense,<sup>179</sup> Gregoric claims the unity of consciousness is due to a higher capacity of the soul, the *noetic* faculty.<sup>180</sup> I feel that Modrak’s postulation is more correct in terms of the Aristotelian context; that Aristotle extends the functions of perception to make knowledge possible in connection to the world, and therefore increases the importance of perception greatly. Modrak notes that in *De Anima* 3.2 Aristotle exploits the notion of simultaneous realisations of the potential for being perceived as possessed by the object to argue that there is a single realisation of both; seeing, the second actuality of sight, and colour as perceived, the second actuality of colour, are one and the same.<sup>181</sup> The claim Aristotle makes for the simultaneous realisation of perceptual self-consciousness together with the perceptual act is the driving force of his theory that consciousness is associated with the sensory capacity. Thus he claims, against Plato’s ridicule of this notion in the *Charmides*,<sup>182</sup> that the single event that from one point of view is seeing and from another colouring,<sup>183</sup> makes consciousness in this instance perceptual, and necessary to perception.

Thus this ‘common sense’ cannot be interpreted as a special faculty. Aristotle dedicates the whole first chapter of book three to this point, that there are no senses other than the five. There is no separation within the perceptual faculty of the soul just as there is no separation of faculties within the soul. Anything spoken of as if divided is such only conceptually.<sup>184</sup> Illustrations of how perceptual unity is achieved are presented quite differently by each modern reader of the texts under consideration. Kahn denies that there is any suggestion that the several senses that perceive shape are

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<sup>177</sup> Gregoric 2006: 5

<sup>178</sup> Gregoric 2006: 39

<sup>179</sup> Kahn 1966: 9; Modrak 1987: 55

<sup>180</sup> Gregoric 2006: 55; See Appendix 5

<sup>181</sup> Appendix 1, t14; cf Modrak 1987: 30

<sup>182</sup> Plato, *Charmides* 165c-167e

<sup>183</sup> Modrak 1987: 30

<sup>184</sup> Gregoric 2006: 25

related to a common faculty in *De Anima* 2.6, and treats this as confusion between ‘common sensibilia’ and ‘common sense’, referring to *De Anima* 3.1 to affirm that there is no sixth sense.<sup>185</sup> Kahn’s solution to the double *aporia* presented at the beginning of *De Anima* 3.2 is to view the faculty of perception as a single thing with each sense protruding from the main faculty, unifying them all, like a tree with five branches.<sup>186</sup> In *De Anima* 3.2 Aristotle considers two aspects of the reflexive act by which the sense faculty takes its own operations as its object: awareness of perception as such, and differentiation of the content of perception.<sup>187</sup> Modrak incorporates both of these into her interpretation of the ‘common sense,’ as a faculty made up of all the senses.<sup>188</sup> The functions of *koinē aisthēsis* are particularly diverse and on Modrak’s interpretation include: the perception of the common sensible, reflexive awareness or perception, judgements about the unity of complex sense-objects, and discrimination of differences among proper objects.<sup>189</sup> Modrak theorises that the common sense is the point at which the special senses converge,<sup>190</sup> similarly to Kahn’s thesis, and that this is how these phenomena are possible. The common sense is, as Aristotle says, *one by number but different with responses to different kinds of forms*.<sup>191</sup> However, it seems more correct to me to say that the unifying abilities which the senses have in common are realised through the process of actualisation, not effected by a ‘common sense’ entity, but rather as abilities common to multiple senses.<sup>192</sup> We may call these abilities ‘common-sensical’, but not originating in any kind of ‘common sense’ faculty.

The impact this discussion and theory have for the overall concern with how we perceive that we see and hear is brought out by the implication that being reflexively aware of seeing is itself a kind of seeing.<sup>193</sup> This would complicate matters in terms of Aristotle’s primary concerns in his introduction of the passage. Modrak says that in this way Aristotle adds another function to the functions of the special senses and this complicates the conception of a special sense, for a special sense can no longer be

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<sup>185</sup> Kahn 1966: 8

<sup>186</sup> Kahn 1966: 11

<sup>187</sup> Appendix 1, t1, t18

<sup>188</sup> Modrak 1987:55-6

<sup>189</sup> Mod 1987: 61; cf. Modrak 1981

<sup>190</sup> Modrak 1987: 61

<sup>191</sup> *On Sense* 449a18

<sup>192</sup> Appendix 1, t17

<sup>193</sup> Modrak 1987: 66

defined simply in terms of its proper objects.<sup>194</sup> However I do not agree with this since it is not clear that Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive is another instance of 'seeing.' Therefore the special senses remain definable by their objects and the ability to perceive this is incorporated as a simultaneous part of this action, its object being the entire act of second-actuality perception. Hence there is no need for Modrak to ascribe a different notion to the account in *De Somno*.<sup>195</sup> In *De Anima* Aristotle is considering reflexive awareness in isolated special senses whereas in *De Somno* he considers how the object of reflexive awareness results from the convergence of several senses under a common faculty which unites them all.<sup>196</sup> By theorising that it is not "by sight" that we perceive that we see in *De Somno* I think that Aristotle means that it is not directly by the power of perceiving the special sensible of sight, but through the power of sight, and hearing and all the rest that we are aware of perceiving these differences. It must mean this, for if it meant by the perception of the special sensible concerned solely with sight there would be no common sensing. Thus Aristotle indicates a power enacted through common sensing, in which case the two accounts are therefore compatible in respect of their content. Modrak thinks that this awareness cannot be a function of one or several of the special senses because this would only be so if the object of experience were a collection of sensory fragments rather than an integrated whole and since it is rather an inseparable part of the cognitive activity which occurs simultaneously it is clearly a function of the common sense.<sup>197</sup> However Aristotle shows us in *De Anima* 3.2 that we are aware of the activity of each sense through that sense because of its sensible, and aware of common sensibles through the commonness which connects each of these in the actualisation of perception, so it is not necessary to postulate another sense.<sup>198</sup>

In higher animals it is always the case that more than one sense is active at any given moment. In this case it is not possible for there to be no cross-modal perception. Cross-modal perception is only one aspect of the power we attribute to consciousness.<sup>199</sup> Yet on the topic of animal consciousness, we are in a very grey area, for Aristotle does not specify human psychology of perception to the exclusion

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<sup>194</sup> Modrak 1987: 66

<sup>195</sup> Modrak 1987: 67

<sup>196</sup> *On Sleep*, 455a14-20

<sup>197</sup> Modrak 1987: 146

<sup>198</sup> Appendix 1, t19, 426b24

<sup>199</sup> Shields *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 2010: 3-4

of animals, though he certainly includes higher species of animals in his discussion of perception. We are informed that some animals do not have *phantasia*, but it is not clear whether they possess the ability to discern differences of common sensing. This is another thing that makes me reluctant to accept the common sense as in any way a faculty in its own right. If animals do not have *phantasia* then they cannot store their perceptions as memories like humans can. This seems to indicate that the animals may possess some of the abilities attributed to common sensing but not others, and implies that ability to judge complex objects based on common sense is on a par with the higher faculty of *phantasia*, and not available to all animals.<sup>200</sup> Hardie and Kahn disagree on this matter, Hardie emphasising the differences between perception in animal and man,<sup>201</sup> and Kahn minimising them to create a less anthropocentric interpretation of Aristotelian consciousness.<sup>202</sup> Modrak says that if human consciousness involves the joint activity of the perceptual and *noetic* faculties, the internal structure of human consciousness will not be the same as the internal structure of animal consciousness.<sup>203</sup> So it seems she is right in her remark that we are not able to decide on the basis of textual evidence how Aristotle would have dealt with the differences between human and animal consciousness.<sup>204</sup>

Modrak's theory emphasises the importance of the discussion of harmony<sup>205</sup> to claim that the unity of the perceptual capacity is brought about by the *logos* of each sense, the capacity possessed by a bodily organ to respond to a large range of sensible features.<sup>206</sup> The exercise of a sense is the actualisation of the *logos* of opposite qualities that defines the sense-object in question,<sup>207</sup> this *logos* is a direct consequence of the actuality theory. The notion of a *logos* does double duty here for it also explains the unique character of the particular colour under consideration: we experience red, not so much white and so much black.<sup>208</sup> It appears that a *logos* of sensible qualities

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<sup>200</sup> DA 434b25-435a10; I am supported by Modrak's view, 1987: 151

<sup>201</sup> Hardie 1976: 392

<sup>202</sup> Kahn 1966: 19

<sup>203</sup> Modrak 1987: 152; cf. Appendix 5

<sup>204</sup> Modrak 1987: 152

<sup>205</sup> Appendix 1, t16

<sup>206</sup> Modrak 1987: 56

<sup>207</sup> Appendix 1, t16, 426a27-b3; cf. *De Anima* 2.12, 424a26-32; Modrak 1987: 56; who views the analysis of sense objects in *On Sense* as framed in terms of *logoi* of opposite qualities (439b27, 440a13, 440b19, 442a12-17, 442b17-19, 448a8-12).

<sup>208</sup> *On Sense* 448a9-19

determines the unitary character of the individual sense-object.<sup>209</sup> Since the active sense is one with its object, it too must be a *logos* when actualised, and potentially a *logos* when unexercised capacity. Some commentators restrict the usefulness of the *logos* doctrine to certain physiological responses; or sense-objects. I agree that the literal interpretation is very unfitting here<sup>210</sup> in the terms of the actuality theory being explicated at its most intricate level. The inextricable connection of the subject and the object in perceptual processes dispels any Cartesian worries one might have while reading Aristotle's psychological works. This reveals something of the uniqueness of conscious experience. We need objects to be conscious of.<sup>211</sup> We are not simply floating consciousnesses isolated in a Cartesian void. The fact that some perceptual activities still do not have names<sup>212</sup> shows the inattention of present-day science to the part the sense-object plays in perception. The most important thing for Aristotle seems to be that all things in the world work together according to their own purposes. Not just for Aristotle however, it is important for humans and animals, plants and minerals that all of these processes work together.

The unity of the nature of the perceptual theory has led interpreters to claim that Aristotle's theory connects with our conception of conscious experience.<sup>213</sup> The senses actually converge, on concrete experience, in the unifying and discriminating activity of a single point. It is because of this central union, 'consciousness,' that the special senses are able to share in the 'common perception' of the same common sensible, as well as to perceive one another's objects incidentally in a single simultaneous act.<sup>214</sup> The actuality theory makes the awareness of an object a necessary feature of a cognitive act; it also makes the character of a mental act dependent upon its object, an interpretation with which I agree.<sup>215</sup> Aristotle uses his actuality theory to explain how the psychological and the physical phenomena can occur simultaneously.<sup>216</sup> Aristotle uses the example of a point to illustrate how this can be both one and two by being the same thing, indivisible and instantaneous in

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<sup>209</sup> Modrak 1987: 57

<sup>210</sup> Modrak 1987: 58

<sup>211</sup> Appendix 2, t4, t11

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Appendix 1, t13

<sup>213</sup> Shields 2010: 3-4; Modrak 1987: 181; Caston 2002: 752

<sup>214</sup> Modrak 1987: 11; Appendix 1, *De Anima* 3.2 and *On Sleep&Waking* 455a12-22

<sup>215</sup> Modrak 1987: 32

<sup>216</sup> Appendix 1, t14, t20

action, but being used twice to mean two things at once, and perception and thought are of this kind.<sup>217</sup> And so as it treats the limit as two, it discerns two things, as being itself in a sense distinct; but in so far as it uses it as one, it judges by one thing and at one time.<sup>218</sup>

So, there *is* a common sense but it is a part of all the individual senses and hence a part of the world, thus on Aristotle's theory our consciousness about the world is connected to the presence of the world inseparably. The special senses overlap *qua* faculties and also in a single momentary act: the common root agency is implicit but not explicit, as Kahn usefully remarks.<sup>219</sup> I support the view that there is no separate 'common sense' faculty, only a shared set of abilities which are common to the senses. On this view there is no special sense organ for the common sensibles, but they are true sense objects, perceived *per se* and not incidentally, they are objects of a common sense, an ability shared by all the senses. Yet this can be spoken of as a common sense because of the joining together of the senses in the conscious ability to perceive our perceptions of them.

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<sup>217</sup> Appendix 1, t23

<sup>218</sup> Appendix 1, t23

<sup>219</sup> Kahn 1966: 9

## *Conclusion*

It is clear that Aristotle has some notion of consciousness as we conceive of it now, though this is not a notion that covers all contemporary intuitions about the topic. These cover: sentience; wakefulness; self-consciousness; what-it-is-like to be a certain creature or individual; being a subject of conscious states, experiencing transitive consciousness. There are also varieties of state consciousness, and the issue of consciousness existing as an entity.<sup>220</sup> Aristotle appears to be able to fulfil certain understandings of sentience, wakefulness, self-consciousness i.e. consciousness of itself as consciousness, and perceptual transitive consciousness. I have argued against those that attribute signs of what-it-is-like to Aristotle's theory of perceptual consciousness, and also against those who see in his theory a possibility for a consciousness determined by one's conscious states. The issue of consciousness existing as a separate entity is not a possible reading of Aristotle, and is one of his most beneficial departures from Plato's, and consequently Descartes', theory of philosophy.

Aristotle's concern with general perceptual awareness of our conscious interactions in the world includes not just the cross-modal perceptual awareness of differences between sense-objects, but also the discernment of what these connections amount to. The recognition of how components of experience fit together could be viewed as what forms the character of consciousness as we understand it. However, the modern notion of consciousness includes the reflexive awareness of the self as well as reflexive awareness of momentary states of consciousness. Armstrong's example of the truck driver's lack of reflex, or introspective proper, shows this modern consciousness theorist's view that the highest level of consciousness, belonging solely to humans, is the ability to consciously introspect.<sup>221</sup> This important part of the modern conception of consciousness is achieved in Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive, where our awareness of our own perceptions, and thus our self-consciousness of this kind, are essential to perception. Modrak says Aristotle's notion of reflexive awareness can accommodate the creation of a link of conscious experience to what-it-is-like to be that organism, through the connection

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<sup>220</sup> Shields 2010: 3-4

<sup>221</sup> Armstrong 1999: 725

between reflexive awareness of transitory psychological states and reflexive awareness of self as a product of such states.<sup>222</sup> My doubt is not that Aristotle's theory *can* accommodate this connection, but whether he intended it to. I disagree with Modrak's interpretation here. I do not think that we can justifiably attribute such a definition of consciousness to Aristotle who based conscious states on continuity of involvement in the activity of the perceived object, instead of understanding consciousness of self as defined by the states it was concerned with. Aristotle had no worries about consciousness as a separate entity precisely because he had no concept of consciousness as a subject of conscious states in its own right. This I think is one of the most attractive characteristics of Aristotle's theory.

A number of critics have claimed that there is no theory of consciousness in Aristotle's perceiving that we perceive, including such notable scholars as Burnyeat and Wilkes for example. Aristotle connected human beings and animals inseparably to their surroundings by linking conscious human processes in actuality to external perceptual objects. It is simply incorrect that as an Aristotelian in this contemporary setting we would have to stop believing that the emergence of life or mind requires explanation.<sup>223</sup> Aristotle goes to great and effortful lengths to explain the existence of life and mind, simultaneously. It is this discussion that I think can be particularly relevant and interesting to contemporary thinkers who find this subject of interest.

In my discussion concerning consciousness in this paper I have shown that Aristotle's theory of perceiving that we perceive opposes the literalist position: the one that leads many commentators to the conclusion that Aristotle was an ancient functionalist. I have also conveyed that if Aristotle's physiological theory of perception receiving the form of the sense-object is not to be taken literally then there is still much that we can learn from his theory. For instance, if awareness of our perceptions as such is an integral part of perceptual processes and is an important process connecting us to our surroundings, and these processes happen throughout our waking life, then it must be vital to comprehend these to assist in improving understanding about humanity and raise understanding of interactions of this kind.

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<sup>222</sup> Modrak 1987: 147

<sup>223</sup> Burnyeat 1992: 26

This view partially supports Charles Kahn, Deborah Modrak and K.V. Wilkes in their interpretations of the unity of consciousness. Wilkes's preference for a theory that unifies the psychological with the physiological theories is a view I share. Wilkes notes a key merit of the Aristotelian account of the *psuchê* when contrasted with the mind to be its emphasis on activity, particularly social activity.<sup>224</sup> This is contrasted with the Cartesian solipsism of consciousness.<sup>225</sup> Activities are emphasised in Aristotle's discussion as the unifier of the perceptual processes. Aristotle achieves this through the reactivity of consciousness in response to the activity of the sense-object; creating a theory of two-way activity in the actualised processes of perception. There is no need to assign a separate faculty to the common sense, and Aristotle's notion of the perceptually conscious *psuchê* certainly can contribute to the contemporary understanding of the conscious mind. Modrak notes correctly that the difference between our and Aristotle's consciousness concerns the direction of causality.

The actuality principle leads Aristotle to the opposite conclusion from the conception nowadays: the unified object of experience produces the unified mental activity as opposed to the unity of experience being a consequence of the unity of apperception. This distinguishes Aristotle's position from Plato's, Descartes' and to the extent that we are heirs of Plato and Descartes, from our conception of consciousness as well. The Aristotelian conception leaves no room for a homunculus who receives the reports of the various faculties and is the ultimate source of consciousness.<sup>226</sup> However this difference can benefit contemporary thought, helping us to conceive of consciousness as a connecting factor between us and the world we interact with. The unity of consciousness is achieved in the perceptual faculty. As a result of his foundational principles, Aristotle is in a position to give an adequate treatment of the phenomena of consciousness without recourse to a technical notion of consciousness as such.<sup>227</sup>

Corresponding to the modern day explanation of consciousness are parts of Aristotle's theory of reflexive perceptual awareness of the ability to perceive, as well as of our actual actions of perceiving transitory episodes. With this view I support

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<sup>224</sup> Wilkes 1992: 120

<sup>225</sup> Wilkes 1992: 120

<sup>226</sup> Modrak 1987: 150-1

<sup>227</sup> Modrak 1987: 181

Victor Caston in his activity reading of perceiving that we perceive in *De Anima* 3.2. The theory of the complex nature of cross-modal perceptual awareness in transitory episodes of perception is also related to contemporary conceptions of consciousness. The actuality and *logos* theories, with their focus on the object of perception are a way of connecting the perceiver to the perceived object via the consciousness of perceiving. In Aristotle's examples from his discussions of reflexive awareness the actualisation of the moment of perception due to the activity of the object and the complexity of cross-perceptual awareness present a harmonious theory of perceptual consciousness. Through his theory of the unity of perception provided by the ability to perceive our sensing through each of the five individual senses in complex combinations and judgements between these Aristotle creates a holistic picture of the harmony of perceptual experiences. He links perceivers to the world they are in by connecting them in all their conscious waking states to the things they perceive binding them to their experience of the world with the actuality theory.

When we are awake we are always perceiving something. Aristotle's theory contributes to our understanding of consciousness, while suggesting a unifying approach which fills our intuitions about consciousness in a way Descartes left us anxiously without. The effect consciousness has on the body and this connection between body, consciousness and external environment is shown to be the unifier of these things. For Aristotle, the essential connection between the perceiver and the perceived is achieved through perceptual awareness. Although contemporarily the relation between conscious perceiver and thing perceived is spoken of as a matter of conscious experience, Aristotle's connections with this particular modern intuition are far from explicit. Any implications of consciousness of self that appear to be present in Aristotle's discussion of this should be treated carefully, as the clearest implications of self-conscious in this theory of Aristotle's do not seem to carry the same intuitions as the topic does now.

Though Aristotle's theory cannot fulfil all the expectations of our modern day conception and his explanations may not match ours because of our improved scientific knowledge, his theory not only matches many of the abilities we attribute to consciousness but it also has several advantages over the current notion of consciousness, and allays some of the worries about it. The holism and harmony of

Aristotle's approach to philosophy are beneficial attributes of his perceptual theory. Consciousness is for Aristotle the unifying factor of perceptual processes. It is the reactive awareness of our perceptions through soul and body to the world and it creates a theory that makes body, soul and world inseparable. Aristotle's theory is one of general perceptual awareness which unifies all the capacities and activities of a perceptual act by making the object of perception the actor and the person perceiving the object, including all parts of their perceptual faculty, the one acted upon. This externalisation of the perceptual process puts Aristotle's object in the place of the modern-day subject, joining together through seamless acts of perception the subject and object and thus escaping the post-Descartes pitfall of the isolation of the subject through dualism. Aristotle's psychological theory elucidates a unified view of the body and the mind connected by sensation with consciousness pervading the physiological and psychological faculties. It certainly is relevant to discussions of this kind in our contemporary time.

## ***Appendices***

### **Appendix 1- *De Anima* 3.2**, translated by W.S. Hett.

-Words in [brackets] are additions by me to clarify the translation where necessary.

t1 - *425b12* - Since we can perceive that we see and hear, it must either be by sight itself [that we see], or by some other sense.

t2 - *425b14* - But then the same sense must perceive both sight and colour, the object of sight.

t3 - *425b15* - So that either two senses perceive the same object or sight perceives itself

t4 - *425b16* – Again, if there is a separate sense perceiving sight, either the process will go on *ad infinitum* or a sense must perceive itself. So we may assume that this occurs in the first instance.

t6 - *425b18-20* - but here is a difficulty: for if perception by vision is sight, and what is seen either is colour or has colour, then if one is to see that which sees, that which primarily sees will also possess colour.

t7 - *425b20-22* - It is therefore obvious that the phrase ‘perceiving by sight’ has not merely one meaning; for, even when we do not see, we discern darkness and light by vision, but not in the same way.

t8- *425b23-24* - Moreover, that which sees does in a sense possess colour; for each sense-organ is receptive of the perceived object, but without its matter.

t9- *425b24-25* - This is why, even when the objects of perception are gone, sensations and mental images are still present in the sense-organ.

t10- *425b26-426a1* the activity [actuality] of the sensible-object and the sensation is one and the same, though their essence is not the same; in saying that they are the same, I mean the actual sound and the actual hearing; for it is possible for one who possesses hearing not always be hearing and that which [can] sound not to always be sounding. But [whenever] that which can sound is sounding, [and that which can hear is active] then the active [actual] hearing happens at the same time as the actual sounding; we may call these respectively audition and sonance.

t11- *426a2-5* - if then, movement [change], that is, the acting and being affected takes place in that which is acted upon, then the sound and the hearing in a state of activity [actuality] must reside in the potential hearing; for the activity of what is moving [changing] and active [actual] takes place in what is acted upon. Hence that which causes motion need not be moved [itself].

t12 – *426a6-12* - The activity, then, of the object producing sound is sound, or sonance, and of that producing hearing is hearing or audition, for hearing is used in two senses, and so is sound. The same account applies to all other senses, and sensible objects. For just as acting and being acted upon reside in that which is acted upon, and

not in the agent, so also the activity of the sensible object and the sensitive subject lie in the latter.

t13 – *426a13-15* - In some cases we have names for both such as sonance and audition, but in others, but in others one of the terms is nameless; for the activity of vision is called seeing, but that of colour has no name; the activity of taste is called tasting, but that of flavour has no name.

t14 – *426a16-19* – But since the activity of the sensible and of the sensitive is [one] the same, though their essence is [other] different, it follows that hearing in the active sense must cease [be destroyed] or continue [be saved] simultaneously with the sound, and so too for flavour and taste and the rest; but this does not apply to their potentialities.

t15 – *426a20-24* - The earlier natural philosophers were at fault in this, supposing that white and black have no existence without vision, nor flavour without taste. And in one sense they were right, but in another wrong; for the terms sensation and sensible being used in two senses, that is potentially and actually, their statements apply to the latter class, but not the former. These thinkers did not distinguish the meanings of terms which have more than one meaning.

t16 – *426a25-426b9* - If harmony is a species of voice, and voice and hearing are in one sense one and the same, [and in one sense not so, and if harmony is a proportion], then it follows that hearing must also be in some sense a ratio [proportion]. That is why both high and low pitch, if excessive, destroy hearing; in the same way in flavours excess destroys taste, and in colours the too bright or too dark destroys sight, and so too in smelling the strong scent, whether sweet or bitter, destroys smell; which implies that the sense is some kind of proportion. And this is why things are pleasant when they are brought pure and unmixed into the proportion, for example the high pitched, sweet or salt; for in that case they are pleasant. But generally speaking a mixture produces a better harmony than the high or a low pitch, and to the touch that is more pleasant which can be warmed or cooled; the sense is the proportion, and excess hurts or destroys.

t17 – *426b9-12* - And so each sense relates to its sensible subject-matter; it resides in the sense-organ as such, and discerns the differences in the said subject-matter, for example vision discriminates between black and white, and taste between sweet and bitter; and similarly this holds in other cases.

t18 – *426b13-17* - But since we also distinguish white and sweet and compare each sense-object in reference to each other, by what sense do we perceive that they also differ? Indeed it must be by some sense [by perception]; for they are objects of perception. It is clear that flesh is not the ultimate sense organ; for if it were judgement would depend on being in contact.

t19 – *426b18-24* - Nor is it possible to judge that sweet and white are different by separate [senses], but both must be clear to any one [sense]. For otherwise, even if you perceived one thing and I another it would be clear that they differed from each other. One thing must assert that they are different; for sweet is different from white. The same faculty [thing], then, which asserts this, hence, as is asserts so it thinks and

perceives. Evidently, therefore, it is not possible to judge separate objects by separate faculties [means].

t20 - 426b25-29 - And it is also clear that it is not possible at separate times either. For just as it is the same faculty [thing] that declares that good and bad are different, so also when it declares that the one and the other are different, the 'time when' is not merely incidental (I mean for example 'I *now* say that there is a difference', but do not say that there is *now* a difference'). The faculty says now, and also that the difference is now; hence both are different at once [at the same time therefore]. So the judging sense must be undivided and also must judge this in an undivided time.

t21 - 426b30-33 - But indeed it is impossible for the same thing to move simultaneously with opposite motions, and in an indivisible time. For if the object is sweet it moves perception or thought in one way, while the bitter moves it the opposite way, and if white in a different way altogether.

t22 - 426b34-427a3 - Is then, that which discerns at the same time both indivisible in number and undivided, while divided in essence? Then in one sense it is indeed what is divided that perceives divided things, but in another sense it does this being indivisible. For it is divisible in essence, but it is indivisible spatially and numerically.

t23 - 427a4-16 - Or is this impossible? For although the same indivisible thing may be both contraries potentially, it is not so in essence, but becomes divisible in actualisation; the same thing cannot be both white and black at once; and so the same thing cannot be affected by the forms of these, if this is what happens in perception and thought. The fact is that just as what some thinkers describe as a point is, as being both one and two, in this sense divisible, so too in so far as the judging faculty is indivisible, it is one and instantaneous in action, but in so far as it is divisible, it uses the same symbol twice at the same time. In so far, then, as it treats the limit as two, it judges [discerns] two things, as being itself in a sense distinct; but in so far as it judges of it as only one, it judges by one faculty [thing] and at one time.

## **Appendix 2- *De Anima 2.5*, translated by W.S. Hett**

t1 - 416b33- Let us discuss sensation in general. Sensation consists in being moved and acted upon, for it is held to be a sort of change of state.

t2 - 416b35-417a3 - Now, some say that like is only affected by like (-the sense in which this is possible or impossible has been discussed in the general account of acting and being acted upon- On Generation and Corruption, i. 7. 323b18).

t3 - 417a3-14 - The question arises as to why do we not perceive the senses themselves as well as the external objects of sense, or why without the stimulation of external objects do they not produce sensation... It is clear that the faculty of sensation has no actual, but only potential existence. Like fuel which needs a spark to set it alight. Since we speak of perceiving in two senses- having the power of hearing, as well as when the faculty is actually operative, the term sensation must be used in two senses, as potential and as actual. Similarly, to perceive means both to possess the faculty and to exercise it.

t4 - *417a15-21* - To begin, let us assume that being acted upon and moved is the same as exercising the function; for movement is a form of activity, though incomplete, (see *Physics* iii.2, 201b31). Everything is acted upon and moved by something which produces an effect and actually exists. Therefore as has been said, in one sense a thing is acted upon by like and in another by unlike; for while it is being acted upon it is unlike, but when the action is completed it is like.

t5 - *417a22* - We must also distinguish certain senses of potentiality and actuality

t6 - *417a23-b1* - Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of potentiality: a man who can be described as knowledgeable because his matter is of a certain kind disposed towards the conditions of knowledge (the condition we are born in to *DA* 2, 417b17-18); and a man who holds the knowledge of grammar and is capable of exercising it whenever he likes. Each of these men has a capacity for knowledge, but in a different sense. He distinguishes these two potentialities from the man who is already exercising his knowledge, and so is in actuality knowledgeable and in the strict sense knows, for example knows this particular thing. The first two men are both only potentially knowledgeable; but whereas one becomes so in actuality through a qualitative alteration by means of learning and after frequent changes from a contrary state, the other passes by a different process from the inactive possession of sensation or grammar to its active exercise. The third man is already in a state of actually exercising his knowledge.

t7 - *417b2-7* - Aristotle continues, that even the term 'being acted upon' is not used in a single sense, but sometimes it means a form of destruction of something by its contrary, and sometimes rather a preservation of that which is like it, in accordance with the relation of potentiality to actuality; for that which merely possesses knowledge comes to exercise it by a process which either is not alteration at all (for the development is into its real self or actuality), or else is a unique kind of alteration.

t8 - *417b8-9* - So it is not sound to describe that which thinks as being altered when it thinks, any more than it is true to say that the builder is altered when he builds.

t9 - *417b10-19* - That which produces development from potential to actual in the matter of understanding and thought ought not to be called teaching, but needs some other name; and that which, starting from a potentiality for knowledge, learns and acquires knowledge from what is actual and able to teach, either ought not to be described as 'being acted upon', as has been said, or else there are two senses of alteration, one a change to a negative condition, and the other a change to a positive state, that is, the realisation of its nature.

t10 - *417b19-27* - Again, actual sensation corresponds to the exercise of knowledge; with this difference, that the objects of sight and hearing (and similarly those of the other senses), which produce the actuality of sensation, are external. This is because actual sensation is of particulars, whereas knowledge is of universals; these in a sense exist in the soul itself. So it lies in man's power to use his mind whenever he chooses, but it is not in his power to experience sensation; for the presence of a sensible object is essential. The same thing is true of our knowledge of sensible objects, and for the same reason, viz. that sensible objects are particular and external.

t11 - 417b28-32 - But there will be a later opportunity to clear our impressions about these things. For the moment it will be enough to establish that the term 'potential' is used with two meanings; first as we might say of a boy that he is a potential general, and secondly as we might say of an adult. These two meanings also apply to the potentially sentient. [sensing]

t12 - 418a1-6 - But since there is no name corresponding to this difference in meaning, and we have now explained that the meanings differ, we must continue to use the phrases 'to be acted upon' and 'altered' as though they were precise terms. The sentient subject, as we have said, is potentially such as the object of sense is actually. Thus during the process of being acted upon it is unlike, but at the end of the process it has become like that object, and shares its quality.

### **Appendix 3- *Physics 3, 1-3, on Change/ Movement* – translated by R.P. Hardie**

t1 - *Physics 3.1- 200b10-14* - Nature is a principle of motion and change, and it is the subject of our inquiry. We must therefore see that we understand what motion is; for if it were unknown, nature too would be unknown.

t2 - 200b26- 33 - Some things are fulfilment only, others in potentiality and in fulfilment- one being a 'this', another so much, another such and such, and similarly for the other categories of being. The term 'relative' is applied sometimes with reference to excess and defect, sometimes to agent and patient, and generally to what can move and what can be moved. For what can cause movement is relative to what can be moved, and vice versa.

t3 - 200b34-201a2 - It is always with respect to substance or to quantity or to quality or to place that what changes changes. But it is impossible, as we assert, to find anything common to these which is neither 'this' quantity nor quality nor any of the other predicates.

t4 - 201a4-9 - Now each of these belongs to all its subjects in either of two ways: namely substance- the one is its form, the other privation; in quality, white and black; in quantity, complete and incomplete.

t5 - 201a10-14 - We have distinguished in respect of each class between what is in fulfilment and what is in potentiality; thus the fulfilment of what is potentially, as such, is motion- e.g. fulfilment of what is alterable, as alterable, is alteration; of what is increasable and its opposite, decreasable (there is no common name for both), increase and decrease; of what can come to be and pass away, coming to be and passing away; of what can be carried along, locomotion.

t6 - 201a15-19 - when what is buildable, in so far as we call it such, is in fulfilment, it is being built, and that is building. Similarly with learning, doctoring, rolling jumping, ripening, aging.

t7 - 201a20- 23 - The same thing can be both potential and fulfilled, not indeed at the same time or not in the same respect, but e.g. potentially hot and actually cold. Hence

such things will act and be acted on by one another in many ways: each of them will be capable at the same time if acting and of being acted upon.

t8 - 201b7-15 - Each thing is capable of being at one time actual, at another not. Take for instance the buildable: the actuality of the buildable as buildable is the process of building. For the actuality must either be this or the house. But when there is a house, the buildable is no longer there. On the other hand, it *is* the buildable which is being *built*. Necessarily, then, the actuality is the process of building. But building is a kind of motion, and the same account will apply to the other kinds also.

t9 - 3.3, 202a13-20 - It is the fulfilment of this potentiality by the action of that which has the power of causing motion; and the actuality of that which has the power of causing motion is not other than the actuality of the moveable; for it must be the fulfilment of *both*. A thing is capable of causing motion because it *can* do this, it is a mover because it actually *does* it. But it is on the moveable that it is capable of acting. Hence there is a single actuality of both alike, just as one to two and two to one are the same interval, and the steep ascent and the steep descent are one – for these are one and the same, although their definitions are not one. So it is with the mover and the moved.

t10 - 202b11-22 - Explanation of how teaching and learning in actualisation are the same.

#### **Appendix 4: ‘On Sleep and Waking’- translated by W.S.Hett**

t1 – 1, 454a5-8 - Any one who is awake is conscious of some stimulus, either external or internal. If, then, waking consists in nothing else than the exercise of consciousness, clearly it is in virtue of the part by which they perceive that animals wake when they are awake and sleep when they are asleep.

-The ability to perceive and be conscious of either perceptual stimuli (external), or intellectual stimuli (internal) is the defining characteristic of a sentient creature.

t2 – 2, 455a13-23 - Now every sense has both a special function of its own and something shared with the rest. The special function, e.g. of the visual sense is seeing, that of the auditory, hearing, and similarly with the rest; but there is also a common faculty associated with them all, whereby one is conscious that one sees and hears (for is it no by *sight* that one is aware that one sees; and one judges and is capable of judging that sweet is different from white not by taste, nor by sight, nor by a combination of the two, but by some part which is common to all the sense organs; for there is one sense-faculty, and one paramount sense organ, but the mode of its sensitivity varies with each class of sensible objects, e.g. sound and colour)

#### **Appendix 5- On connections between the perceptual and intellectual faculties**

Modrak discusses the idea that consciousness in Aristotle is not just perceptual, but a connecting point for all the psychological faculties, based in the common sense.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Modrak 1987: 180; cf. pp.56-66 for Modrak’s discussion of the part *logos* plays in this connection.

Similarly, Thomas Johansen claims that in the context of Aristotle's attempts to group together the perceptual and intellectual faculties, the aim of Aristotle's argument is to show that these phenomena are perceptual against Plato's rejection of the value of this faculty.<sup>229</sup> These are only two, out of multiple readings of Aristotle which view his theory of consciousness as combining perceptual consciousness with the intellectual faculty. While I agree that the connections which bind together Aristotle's theories across disciplines through conscious abilities are present and a valuable thing to explore in Aristotle's works, I have chosen to begin my investigations in perceptual consciousness because I think that the theory of perceiving that we perceive is where the idea of consciousness is centred. I explain my reasons for this throughout the discussion in this dissertation.

I would also like to note the possible connection, not just of perceptual consciousness to intellectual such, but also to involve imagination and memory at least in my reading of Aristotle's endeavour to explain how consciousness seems to permeate so much of our waking existence.<sup>230</sup> The connection between not only *De Anima* 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, but also the treatises in the *Parva Naturalia* is apparent. These psychological works incorporate theories and principles from other areas of Aristotle's works, the *Physics* for example, and it will be enlightening for the present discussion to be taken further by discussing its connections with the rest of the Aristotelian corpus.

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<sup>229</sup> Johansen 2005: 236

<sup>230</sup> For further discussion, from essays I read and would have liked to have space to discuss in this dissertation:

- On Consciousness in Mind and Imagination: cf. Schofield, M *Aristotle on the Imagination* 1992; Frede, D *The Cognitive Role of Phantasia* 1992; Wedin, M *Mind and Imagination in Aristotle* 1988

- On Consciousness and Thought: cf. Kahn *Aristotle on Thinking* 1992, which was written to compliment Kahn's interpretation of sense-perception in his earlier paper; and Kosman *What Does the Maker Mind Make* 1992 for a discussion of the Active Intellect

- On Consciousness and Memory: cf. Julia Annas, who distinguishes two kinds of memory in *On Memory*: in chapter 1- personal memory, and in chapter 2, *On Recollection*- non-personal memory. I think this discussion is relevant to the issue of whether Aristotle has a conception of conscious experience as we do.

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