

## Two Jobs for Aristotle's Practical Syllogism?

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In der Forschung ist es üblich davon auszugehen, dass Aristoteles' Praktischer Syllogismus *zwei* Aufgaben erfüllt. Ihm wird zugesprochen (auf irgendeine Weise) *sowohl* die Bewegung von Lebewesen *als auch* menschliche Deliberation zu erklären. Ich werde dies als „two-jobs view“ des Praktischen Syllogismus bezeichnen. Im Folgenden werde ich dafür argumentieren, dass der „two-jobs view“ des Praktischen Syllogismus nicht funktioniert. Dann werde ich eine sehr kurze und unvollständige Skizze davon geben, wie ein „non-two-jobs view“ des aristotelischen Praktischen Syllogismus aussehen könnte. Abschließend werde ich zwei mögliche Probleme des „non-two-jobs view“ diskutieren.

### I

#### *Animal motion*

I start with a commonplace on Aristotle's theory of animal motion: Aristotle claims to *have* a theory of animal motion and he regards this theory as part of his overall project of natural philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Part of this theory is the announcement in the very beginning of *De motu* that he will deliver the common explanation for any animal movement such as flying, walking, swimming and the like. Later in *De motu*, in 6, 700b9–11, Aristotle specifies this initial announcement: he claims to provide an answer to the question of how the soul moves the body *and* (or: „*that is to say*“ depending on whether we want to read an epexegetic *kai* in b10) what the starting point (*archê*) of animal motion is. Thus, (on either reading) it seems fair to take Aristotle to be announcing an answer to the question the conditions under which agents, and indeed animals in general, are moved to either walk, swim, fly etc. And it seems that it is precisely this question that is taken up in the beginning of chapter 7 of the work, the first half of which is devoted to what is known as the practical syllogism:

But in which way is it that thought (viz. sense, imagination, and thought proper) is sometimes followed by action, sometimes not; that is [is followed] sometimes by movement, sometimes not? (701a7–8; transl. Farquharson, modified<sup>3</sup>)

To ask this, I take it, is to ask for sufficient conditions of action and motion in a way that is applicable to episodes of such activities. To be in a position to answer

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the organizers and participants of the conference, especially David Charles, for their comments. I am also grateful to Benjamin Kiesewetter and to an anonymous referee of this journal for benevolent and very helpful remarks.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the introduction of the treatise in 698a1–7 and other contextualizing passages, for example 6, 700b4–11 and 11, 704a3 ff.

<sup>3</sup> On the translation, see fn. 9 below.

this question is to be able to specify under precisely what conditions agents are moved to act. There is overwhelming evidence that Aristotle intended this to extend to brutes as well. The whole purpose of *De motu* is to give the common explanation of *all* animal motion, i.e. for the motion of brutes *and* of humans (MA 1, 698a4–7; 11, 703b3–4<sup>4</sup>). This common approach of the work is also apparent in the passages that immediately precede and immediately follow the discussion of what is known as the practical syllogism: immediately *preceding* (6, 700b9–701a6), Aristotle talks about *zôa*, either generally (700b9; b32; 701a4) or distributively (700b31), but *not* specifically about humans. He further reduces *all* desiderative and *all* cognitive states relevant for animal motion to simply „thought“ and „desire“. Hence, the term „thought“ comprises cognition generally, i.e. both animal and human cognition (sense perception, imagination and thought proper – thus Farquharson’s bracketed addition in the above-quoted translation of 700b20–21), whilst „desire“ comprises all of its three types, i.e. appetite, spirited desire and wishing (700b9ff.).<sup>5</sup> With this, Aristotle coins a terminology especially designed for the purpose of the common explanation of *all* animal motion. And in the immediate *sequel* of the passage in question this common approach is reaffirmed:

this is the way in which *animals* (*zôa*) are impelled to move themselves and act. (MA 7, 701a33–34<sup>6</sup>)

This makes it very likely that the passage in between 700b9–701a6 and 701a33–b1 is likewise meant to apply to animals generally and that, hence, *De motu* sticks to its common approach towards the explanation of animal motion also in the passage in which the practical syllogism is introduced.<sup>7</sup> It therefore seems that the practical syllogism in *De motu* is meant to state the answer to the question of the *archê* of animal motion such as flying, walking, swimming and the like for *all* animals capable of locomotion, including humans. If this is right, then the direct explanandum of the practical syllogism in *De motu* is animal motion.

Given that the direct explanandum of the practical syllogism in *De motu* is animal motion, the following question arises: is it possible for it to be at the same time explaining something *else* as well, i.e. besides animal motion also human deliberation or other, non-deliberative forms of practical thinking? In what follows I will briefly argue why I think the question should be answered in the negative. I will

<sup>4</sup> See also De an. III 9, 432a15ff., whose scope clearly extends to all animal self-motion.

<sup>5</sup> The same specific terminology is employed in the passage on the locomotive part of the soul in De an. III 9–11, especially 433a9ff.

<sup>6</sup> For the immediate context of this passage, see below section V.

<sup>7</sup> The sentence introducing the practical syllogism (*Pôs de noôn hote men pratei hote d' ou pratei, kai kineitai, hote d' ou kineitai*) is often interpreted as referring to human thinking alone, since *noôn* in 701a7 can be taken to imply *anthrôpos* as an implicit subject (translating „thinking in what way does one [i.e. a human being] act [...]“). However, given the terminology and the common approach towards the explanation of animal motion, it is more likely that Aristotle makes a general point about animal motion here. Hence, an indeterminate *tis* seems a better candidate for the implicit subject of *noôn* (thus translating literally: „How does it happen that if one thinks [i.e. engages in sensing or imagining and thinking] one sometimes acts and sometimes does not act, that is moves, and sometimes does not move?“).

do this by arguing that Aristotle's explicit conception of deliberation is incapable of explaining animal motion in the way his natural philosophy would require it (II) and that Aristotle is not in possession of an alternative, either deliberative or non-deliberative conception of practical reasoning capable of explaining animal motion (III). If this is right, then Aristotle cannot have meant to explain animal motion by means of practical reasoning, which is what the two-jobs view of the practical syllogism would require. I start by giving a very brief sketch of Aristotle's explicit account of human deliberation. Given the limited scope of this paper, I confine myself to just listing some of its relevant features and to then pointing to its incompatibility with the purpose of explaining motion.<sup>8</sup>

## II

### *Human deliberation*

Aristotle characterizes deliberation as an activity of the intellect. It is propositional in character and of a non-deductive, heuristic structure; that is to say that the agent, prior to a course of deliberation, does not know what his deliberation will result in. Hence, deliberation is a *finding out* of something. It is *hypothetical* insofar as it structurally requires a given end as a starting point, and that this end cannot be made a means of the same episode of deliberation.<sup>9</sup> Aristotle describes deliberation as serving to determine doings (or means) sufficient to achieve desired ends, and as proceeding in the direction opposite to the order of doings, i.e. what comes first in deliberation comes last in action. Deliberation reasons from ends to means, not vice versa. Aristotle says deliberation involves knowledge of causes and (Aristotelian) causal relations (notably, for-the-sake-of relations). Thus, he thinks that the means determined by deliberation stand in a relation of *hypothetical necessity* towards the desired ends and that the agent recognizes them as such (i.e. *as means*). A further feature of Aristotelian deliberation is that it is not about particulars in the sense that we do not deliberate about the perceptible features of the objects relevant for action immediately at hand.<sup>10</sup> For, as he says,

<sup>8</sup> What follows is basically an extract from passages such as EN III 3, 1112b11–28; EE II 10, 1226b10–13 and 1227a6–18.

<sup>9</sup> This is a statement about the *structure* of deliberative thought. This is not to say that there is no deliberation about ends in Aristotle, since nothing prevents the end of one course of deliberation from subsequently being made the object of another course of deliberation.

<sup>10</sup> EN III 3, 1112b33–1113a2. I cannot argue for this point extensively here, but a passage that is commonly taken to explicitly state that deliberation is concerned with particulars (EN VI 8, 1142a20–21 *eti hē hamartia ē peri to katholou en tōi bouleusasthai ē peri to kath' hekaston*) need not and indeed *should* not be taken this way. It can easily be translated as follows: „Further, the failure regards either the universal in deliberation or it regards the particular.“ That this is in fact the more probable reading is shown by a parallel passage in EE II 10, 1226a33–37 (*dio kai aporēseien an tis, ti dē poth' hoi men iatroi bouleountai peri hōn echousi tēn epistēmēn, hoi de grammatikoi ou; aition d' hoti dichēi ginomenēs tēs hamartias – ē gar logizomenoi hamartanomen ē kata tēn aisthēsīn auto drōntes*). The other passages that establish a positive relation between deliberation and knowledge of particulars are without exception passages that concern *phronēsis* (see e.g. EN VI 7, 1141b14–22; VI 8, 1142a22–30; VI 11, 1143a25–b5). But *phronēsis*, for Aristotle, is not an average case of human deliberation. It is the *virtue* of

we *perceive* these features. Finally, deliberation does not end with action, but with a *proposition*. The content of this proposition refers to an end in the immediate power of the agent (in the case of successful deliberation). This proposition can, but need not necessarily, become the content of a choice (*prohairesis*). And this choice, in turn, can, but need not necessarily, result in corresponding action.<sup>11</sup>

In sum, Aristotle's conception of deliberation is *teleological* in character. But as such it is too loosely connected to effective action to be capable of accounting for corresponding *motion*, because it states neither its necessary nor its sufficient conditions. And this neither generally, i.e. for all animals, nor specifically for humans, since brutes are incapable of deliberation, and humans, after having deliberated and decided to act in a certain way, can for example change their ideas about how to act, or they can (as akratic agents do) deliberate and decide to act in a certain way without actually carrying out what they deliberated upon. As a result, we may say that in order to state the conditions under which agents (and *a fortiori* animals) are moved to act, a more reliable criterion is required than what deliberation can account for according to Aristotle. Such a criterion would have to be *decisive* in the sense of providing invariable necessary and sufficient conditions of animal motion. That Aristotle's concept of deliberation does not provide such a moving cause is the reason for its unsuitability to account for animal motion.<sup>12</sup>

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deliberation, which means that it is successful deliberation with a morally good outcome. It would be misleading to associate these specifically moral features of *phronêsis* with the general concept of deliberation: The circumstance that *phronêsis*, besides finding out the right means to the right ends, implies appropriate behaviour – and, presumably, because of *this* also the knowledge of the relevant particulars (*praktikê*, EN VI 7, 1141b14–22) –, is due to its moral value, and not to the fact that it involves deliberation. I think that Aristotle's claim that *phronêsis*, unlike ordinary deliberation, includes the so-called moral virtues (EN VI 5, 1140b4–5; b28–30; VI 12, 1144a20–b1; VI 13, 1145a1–2; VII 11, 1152a7–9; see also EE II 3, 1221a12; a36–38) reflects this moral extra of *phronetic deliberation*.

<sup>11</sup> There is a certain tradition among interpreters to restate Aristotle's descriptions of human deliberation in a *deductive* fashion (in various ways, see e.g. Barnes, 1977, 217; Mele, 1981, 312–16). But, given that he maintained that all of the four causes (in one way or the other) can be made objects of deductions (APo. II 11), Aristotle could easily have done this himself. And I think it is significant that he did not: he repeatedly says that deliberation is a search (*zêtêsis*), a *finding out* of something. To restate this in a deductive fashion would mean to ignore what is peculiar to this activity.

<sup>12</sup> In her 1978 study of *De motu* (1985, 341), Nussbaum takes the practical syllogism to be a schema for the *teleological* explanation of animal motion (similarly, with reservations, Santas, 1969, 171 ff.). But, it seems to me, to ask for the explanation of animal *motion* is first and foremost to ask for a *moving* cause. It is important to note that Aristotle does not announce the practical syllogism as a piece of teleological explanation, but as the efficient cause of animal motion. A purely *teleological* explanation of an animal motion could in theory be provided by the content of a relevant desire *alone*, i.e. it could be provided by a „major premise“ without a minor (for such a teleological explanation of episodes of human action, cf. APo. I 24, 85b27–38). To be sure, teleological and efficient-causal explanation must not exclude each other and certainly for Aristotle they do not (though, as e.g. his *Physics* shows, he regarded them two *distinct* types of explanation, and it is interesting to see in which way he thought them to be connected in the case of human action; for an account, see Corcilius 2008a, for a different account, cf. Detel, 1999, 63). See section IV.

*Clarifications*

This brief characterisation of deliberation, of course, is not meant to imply that, for Aristotle, thought cannot one way or the other *lead* to motion. This would be a gross misunderstanding. It is rather that for the *explanation* of motion according to Aristotle's own standards of natural philosophy there is more to it than to merely state antecedents in terms of thought. There must be a *proper cause* of animal motion that – *ceteris paribus* – invariably results in motion, is coextensive with animal motion generally,<sup>13</sup> and that, for the reasons given above, *cannot* be identical to human deliberation. And, as it seems, the context of Aristotle's natural philosophy, of which *De motu* is a part, requires the stating of such a *per se* cause. This, presumably, involves an agent/patient relation with either physical contact (*haphê*) or (at the least) immediacy between the moving and the moved factor of the causal relation.<sup>14</sup> I come back to the issue of the *per se* cause of animal motion in section IV.

Before I proceed, let me add two further clarifications: the plausibility of the picture given here crucially depends on whether it reflects the *only* option available to Aristotle. For it is not inconceivable, and some scholars do actually claim, that Aristotle also knew *other* conceptions of practical thinking (albeit not stating this explicitly in his known works). And given this possibility, it is conceivable that these other conceptions exhibit stronger connections to action and motion than the one just sketched (henceforth: Aristotle's standard account of deliberation).<sup>15</sup> I will come back to the issue of non-deliberative practical thinking in a moment.

The second clarification is that the above characterisation is not meant to deny that it is perfectly possible for anyone to employ deductive thought within a course of deliberation according to Aristotle. To deny this possibility would, I think, be absurd. There is no reason why *any* sort of thinking should be presumptively excluded from deliberative thinking. Compared with such an extreme denial, the claim made here is rather modest. It is that the above features are *per se* claims that Aristotle makes about deliberative thinking. That is, if one were to ask him what it is that makes deliberative thinking the kind of thinking that it is, he would probably come up with something like these features (and maybe some further qualifications). But it is important that this does not commit him to holding that agents within a course of deliberation either cannot or should not employ other types of thought.

<sup>13</sup> De an. III 9, 432a15ff., MA 1, 698a4–7; 11, 703b3–4. See also PA I 1, 641a32–b10.

<sup>14</sup> Although the term *kath' hauto aition* seems to occur only once in the *Physics* (II 5, 196b26), *per se* causes of motion, I take it, are an important notion in the background of Aristotle's philosophy of nature. Contrary to accidental causes, *per se* causes of motion are causes that explain motion in a *physical* way (such moving causes, for Aristotle, are invariably moved themselves, though not necessarily in the same respect in which they are moving causes, cf. Phys. III 1, 201a23–25; III 2, 202a3–12; 202a6–7; VII 2, 243a32–244a6. For *per se motion*, cf. V 1, 224a26ff. and VII 3, 245b3ff. See also section IV).

<sup>15</sup> This other type of practical thinking is generally taken to be of a deductive rule-case structure. Exceptions are e.g. Wiggins (1975/76) and McDowell (1998), who argue explicitly against a rule-case model of deductive practical thinking (which they identify with the practical syllogism).

## III

Can the practical syllogism in *De motu* illustrate practical reasoning?

What I have said so far is basically this:

- (i) In Aristotle's standard view, deliberation is not capable of stating per se causes of either animal or human locomotion.
- (ii) Such per se causes are what the context of his natural philosophy requires and what he announces the practical syllogism to provide in his *De motu*.

Given this, what are the options available for maintaining an account of the practical syllogism in *De motu* as being about practical reasoning nevertheless? I would like to sketch four scenarios.

First scenario. Suppose (i) is not true and Aristotle's standard account of deliberation *does* state the per se cause of animal motion. What would be the consequences? Besides resulting in tensions with the passages summarized in section II, this would undermine a good deal of our understanding of some of his more general views on causality. It is, after all, *Aristotle* who appears to insist on both the *completeness* of his scheme of the four causes and their individual *distinctiveness*.<sup>16</sup> If he thought that deliberative thinking was sufficient for the explanation of animal *motion*, then this would have made him introduce a sort of causal explanation that unifies elements of efficient-causal and teleological explanations within a single type of explanation.<sup>17</sup> But this goes against his claim of the distinctiveness of the four causes. Therefore, this scenario would force us to revise some of Aristotle's general claims on causality.<sup>18</sup>

Second scenario. Suppose he had *another*, a non-standard view of human deliberation that is capable of stating the per se causes of motion. Here, I think, more or less the same would follow. For such an account of deliberation would either go against the distinctiveness claim of the four causes by conflation, or it would militate against the completeness claim by introducing a *new* kind of cause (over and above efficient and final cause).

A third option is to deny (ii) and to say that the practical syllogism in *De motu* isn't about the explanation of animal motion in the strict sense at all, but about a new and special type of practical *thinking* only. The obvious disadvantage is that it would contradict Aristotle's announcements at the beginning and throughout his work (quoted in section I).

Fourth scenario. Suppose Aristotle had a non-standard view of practical thinking that would be *sufficient* for the per se causes of motion, but without stating these causes *explicitly*. At first sight, this seems to be a promising option, since

<sup>16</sup> Phys. II 3, especially 194b16–17; 195a4–5; a26–27; b28–30. Metaph. A 3–A 10, 993a13.

<sup>17</sup> I take Aristotle's so-called four causes to refer to distinct types of explanation. This implies that the cases in which formal, efficient and teleological cause coincide in one (mentioned in Phys. II 7, 198a24–27) are not intended as a coinciding into one single type of *explanation* by Aristotle, but into one *subject* having these three causal aspects (see also APo. II 11, 94b27–37).

<sup>18</sup> Metaph. A 3, 984b20–22, e.g. even *reproaches* Anaxagoras for having conflated the explananda of the final and the moving cause (A 3, 984b15–22; A 4, 985a18–21).

it has the advantage of not violating Aristotle's general claims on causality, i.e. it accepts that in the context of natural philosophy, including *animal* motion, per se causes of motion have to be stated, while preserving the intuition that Aristotle's practical syllogism explains human action by means of practical thinking. Presumably, it is for this advantage that this scenario has become so attractive for scholars. If I'm not wrong, this view is shared by most interpreters of the Aristotelian practical syllogism; at least by all those who doubt that Aristotle is serious about his statements according to which the conclusion of the practical syllogism *is* an action. For if it *were* an action, this, on any account of Aristotelian practical thinking, would violate the per se cause requirement of his natural philosophy, since the propositions that constitute the premises of syllogisms could never result in motion, but only in further propositions. But the per se cause requirement is a requirement *accepted* by those who deny the identity of conclusion and action in the practical syllogism. Hence the attractiveness of this scenario: if the practical syllogism can account for sufficient conditions of motion without actually stating its per se causes explicitly, then Aristotle's views on causality can be preserved *and* a view of the practical syllogism in terms of practical thinking can be maintained. I shall call this view the „refined two-jobs view of the practical syllogism“.

I would now like to say briefly why I think that the refined two-jobs view, in spite of its attractiveness for many scholars, is still not satisfactory. I shall concentrate on five problems.

(1) The first and obvious problem is that this view does not work in Aristotle's standard account of deliberation. It requires an additional account of practical thinking on Aristotle's part. However, it seems difficult to find clear examples of such an additional account in the texts. Under „additional“ I understand an account either with per se features of deliberation different from Aristotle's standard account or a conception of non-deliberative practical thinking with connections to action and motion stronger than those of the standard account.<sup>19</sup>

(2) The second problem is that the refined two-jobs view puts Aristotle in a strange situation with regard to the explanation of animal *motion*. For it would have him announce a scientific explanation of animal motion in *De motu animalium* without explicitly mentioning its per se causes. Proponents of the refined two-jobs view are aware of this shortcoming. They follow different strategies of mitigation.

One strategy is to regard the practical syllogism in *De motu* as an analogy in the sense that brutes do not literally engage in practical thinking, but that they do something *like* this. Such accounts sometimes work with the notion of „judgements“ of the perceptual faculty *analogous* to deduction on the part of the animals. This is still odd, for, besides working on assumptions unwarranted in the

<sup>19</sup> As a rule, the evidence for alleged Aristotelian conceptions of practical thinking other than his standard account of deliberation stems from passages either in the context of the practical syllogism itself or from passages in the context of the discussion of *phronêsis*. Both of these contexts are highly disputable as sources for non-standard conceptions of practical thinking (cf. above fn. 12).

texts (implicit „judgements“ of the perceptual faculty), this would still not give us *per se* causes of animal motion.<sup>20</sup>

Another strategy is to create an *indirect* relationship between the practical syllogism and the causation of action. One example is Anscombe (<sup>2</sup>1963, 64–65, and 68), who argues that, although the first premise of a practical syllogism does not state the content of a desire, on a perceptual level it involves a special sort of want that explains the ensuing motion. Other examples are Mele (1981, 285, fn. 8), who speaks of the agent as „assenting to the premises“ of the practical syllogism, and Charles (1984, 84ff.) who combines his view of the practical syllogism with an interpretation of desire as an „acceptance of a proposition“. I see mainly two problems for this strategy. The first is that it, too, works with additional assumptions that are not stated in the texts (Aristotle does not oppose „want“ and „desirability“, as Anscombe does, neither does he speak, as the Stoics did of „assent“ or „acceptance“ in *De motu*<sup>21</sup>). This, of course, does not necessarily present a problem, but in this case the additional assumptions regard issues of the relation between thought and motion that are central to every theory of action and/or animal motion: it would simply be disappointing if we had to *supply* such additional assumptions in a work that purports to state the principle of animal motion and that announces that it will explain how the soul moves the body. Moreover, even accepting additions of this kind, on any indirect relationship between the practical syllogism and the causation of action, Aristotle would still announce a scientific explanation of animal motion in *De motu animalium* without specifying its *per se* causes.

There are more strategies but, as far as I can see, besides working on additional hypotheses, none of them fulfils the *per se* cause requirement of animal motion.

(3) Closely related to this is a problem that concerns the „conclusion“ of the practical syllogism. In accepting the *per se* cause requirement, most holders of

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Nussbaum (practical syllogism as the *explicit* or conscious statement of an otherwise *implicit* judgement in animal behaviour: 1985, 174, 207).

<sup>21</sup> Charles (1984) is an exception, since he does provide textual evidence for his propositional interpretation of Aristotle's conception of desire. This is a difficult passage in *De an.* III 7 (431a8–14), which contains a multi-stage analogy between affirmation/denial on the one hand and pleasure/pain and pursuit/avoidance on the other. Charles (1984, 86) takes the analogy at face value and interprets it as a definition of desire as acceptance of a *proposition* (a judgment of the form „ $\phi$  is good“). This is a controversial reading. One possible point of critique relevant here is that this reading seems not to *resolve*, but to only *transfer* the problems of the two-jobs view of the practical syllogism to the interpretation of *desire*. For, although at first glance it permits an elegant solution to the problems of movement-causation generally concomitant of propositional interpretations of the practical syllogism, this interpretation encounters difficulties when it comes to the definition of non-rational desires. And here, in spite of his literal interpretation of the analogy (desire as mode of acceptance of a proposition), Charles admits of non-propositional, imaginative desires, which do not themselves accept *propositions*, but are, as he says, „like“ judging that  $\phi$  seems good and hence can be „represented“ as accepting a proposition“ (1984, 89, my emphasis). It is not clear to me whether Charles introduces this important extension of his interpretation of desire as an additional assumption or he sees this as a further application of the analogy in *De an.* III 7, 431a8–14. The latter would (implausibly) involve a double-use of the analogy, i.e. a literal and a non-literal reading of the phrase in 431a9–10: „it (i.e. the soul) *as if it were* affirming or denying, pursues or avoids it [namely, the perceived object]“ (*hoion kataphasa ē apophasa diōkei ē pheugei*).



the refined two-jobs view are forced to maintain that Aristotle is not to be taken literally in regard to his statement that the „conclusion“ of the practical syllogism is identical to action/motion, since the conclusion of a deduction can at most *result* in, but never be *identical* to motion/action. The problem here is not so much that Aristotle explicitly says that the „conclusion“ is a *praxis* (three times: MA 7, 701a19–20; a22–23 and EN VII 3, 1147a26–28<sup>22</sup>); it is rather that in this view *De motu* does not tell us how exactly to conceive of the causal mechanism that leads from the supposed literal conclusion of the practical syllogism to the motion of the animal. This is a serious shortcoming, since in the refined two-jobs view the chief question of Aristotle's whole theory of animal motion (the question of how the soul moves the body) would be left unanswered (there would be no bridge between the propositional content of the conclusion and the physiological mechanism leading to the motion of the animal).<sup>23</sup>

(4) The fourth problem is that, on a *methodological* level, Aristotle explicitly appears to rule out the explanation of animal motion by means of thought. This is the famous passage in PA I 1, 641a32–b10, where it is said that the rational part of the soul is *not* a source of animal motion and that, hence, the natural philosopher must not speak of all soul, but only of those parts that can originate motion.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Though this *is* strong evidence against the two-jobs view. For a list of arguments challenging this evidence, see Charles (1984, 91 ff.).

<sup>23</sup> MA 7, 701a14; a15; a17; a22; a30; a33 and EN VII 3, 1147a28, passages in which Aristotle says that the action/motion follows „immediately“ (*euthus*) upon the premises, are sometimes adduced to show that Aristotle, contrary to his identification of the „conclusion“ of a practical syllogism with action/motion, did in fact distinguish between the two. But I think it is important to note that these passages do not regard the immediacy with which the action/motion follows upon the „conclusion“, but the immediacy with which it follows upon the „premises“. These passages, therefore, by no means weaken Aristotle's claim that the „conclusion“ of the practical syllogism *is* an action/motion. Furthermore, in the context of his natural philosophy Aristotle does not use the expression *euthus* to denote a delay, but on the contrary to denote the *immediacy* with which, given certain conditions, something happens or is the case (cf. MA 8, 702a15: *euthus to men poiei to de paschei*; see also Bonitz, 1870, s.v. 296a12–17: „inde *euthys* etiam non addito v *physei* translatum a temporali ratione ad causalem usurpatur [...] ad significandum id quod *hyparchei* suapte natura, non intercedente alia causa“). In a similar fashion and for the same end, the clause „if nothing prevents“ has been used (*an mē ti kōlūēi ē anankazēi*, MA 7, 701a16). But, to judge from *Metaph. T* 5, 1048a16–21, this phrase is a sort of *ceteris paribus* clause. Hence, in the context of the practical syllogism, it should be taken to merely indicate the absence of *external* impediments to the coming-to-be of the action/motion once the „premises“ are given (not the „conclusion“).

<sup>24</sup> See especially PA I 1, 641b4–9: „However it is not the case that all soul is an origin of motion, nor all its parts; rather, of growth the origin is the part which is present also in plants, of alteration the perceptive part, and of locomotion something else and not the rational part; for locomotion is present in other animals too, but thought in none. So it is clear that one [i.e. the natural philosopher, KC] should not speak of all soul.“ (*Ē ouk esti pasa hē psuchē kinēseōs archē, oude ta moria hapanta, all' auxēseōs men hoper kai en tois phutois, alloiōseōs de to aisthētikon, phoras d' heteron ti kai ou to noētikon; hyparchei gar hē phora kai en heterois tōn zoōn, dianoia d' oudenī. Dēlon oun hōs ou peri pasēs psuchēs lekton*; transl. Lennox, slightly modified). This passage is sometimes taken to exclude *practical* thought, i.e. the thought for a given practical end (drawing on certain interpretations of *De an.* III 10, 433a13–15 and EN VI 2, 1139a35–36). But, if Aristotle thought that there is a type of thinking (i.e. practical thinking) that is excluded from the verdict in *De partibus animalium*, why should he make this claim in *De partibus animalium*? And why should he make it precisely in a context in which the explanation of animal motion (*phora*) is discussed? But however this may be, in the light of PA I 1, 641a32–b10,

This, I think, shows two things: it shows that Aristotle is very much aware of the methodological background of the problems of the two-jobs view; and it shows that, for methodological reasons, he was interested in *avoiding* these problems.

(5) The fifth and final problem for the refined two-jobs view is of methodological character, too. It also opens a path, I believe, to the true methodology of Aristotle's practical syllogism.

In *Metaph. T 5*, 1048a2–24, besides making general remarks about the relation of thought and physical processes, Aristotle says how thought-guided behaviour ought to be explained on the level of efficient causality:

*T 1 (a)* [...] it is necessary, for such [i.e. non-rational] capacities, when what can act and what can be acted on meet in the way appropriate to the capacity in question, that the one acts and the other is acted on. But that is not necessary for capacities of the other class [i.e. rational capacities]. For each one of all these latter capacities is capable of producing one thing, whereas those are of opposites, with the result that they would produce opposites at the same time – but this is impossible. Hence there must be something else which is in control of the capacity. By this I mean desire or choice.

For our purpose, the upshot of this passage is that, although *conceptually* rational capacities entail opposites, on a *physical* level they do not entail such opposites. Thus, a doctor, due to his rational knowledge of health, is capable of either healing or killing his patient, but he is not capable of *simultaneously* healing and killing him. Moreover, what is decisive about which of the theoretical options of either healing or killing is chosen, is a process itself, namely *orexis*, or *prohairesis* (which, for Aristotle, is a certain kind of *orexis*). This is crucial, since *orexis* does fulfil the per se cause requirement of animal motion.<sup>25</sup> The moral of this passage, I take it, is that there are no *specific* causal mechanisms for process-causation involving thought and that, hence, if rational capacities, as it were, want to play a role in the world of processes, they have to do this under the conditions that apply to processes generally. *tertium non datur*.

The second part of the passage is of immediate interest for the methodology of the practical syllogism.

*(b)* For whichever of the two it desires decisively, it will do that when it is in the state appropriate to the capacity and it meets what can be acted on. Therefore everything that has a rational capacity (*to dunaton kata logon*), when it desires something it has the capacity to bring about and it is in the relevant state, necessarily does this. (Transl. J. Beere, modified)

What Aristotle does here is to equate the explanation of processes involving reason, i.e. the explanation of the actualisation of rational capacities, with those that do not involve reason. In both cases and in spite of the, as it were, bivalence of rational capacities, there is a certain necessity with which such processes occur,

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*Metaph. T 5*, 1048a2–24 (to be quoted below) and other passages, it seems the burden of proof lies on those who want to include practical thinking in Aristotle's natural philosophy.

<sup>25</sup> Aristotle regards desire (*orexis*) as a process (*kinêsis*), *De an.* III 10, 433b17–18, and hence a „moved mover“ (*kinoun kai kinoumenon*, 433b15–16; *MA 6*, 700b35–701a1; 10, 703a4–5).

once contact between the two relata of the causal relation (agent and patient) is established. And this necessity allows Aristotle to state the sufficient conditions of motion in a generalized and law-like fashion. The parallels to what I take to be the practical syllogism in *De motu* are striking. I will come back to this passage shortly.

To sum up. So far I have argued for the ineptitude of Aristotle's standard account of deliberation for the explanation of motion on the grounds that it cannot provide per se causes of animal motion. Similarly, I argued against the possibility of a non-standard account of practical thinking with animal motion as an explanandum. I further argued that there are methodological reasons for Aristotle to generally exclude thought from the explanation of animal motion and that he even says this in his *De partibus animalium*.

These are, roughly, the reasons I have for thinking that the two-jobs view of the practical syllogism, including its refined version, doesn't work and why I think a different, a non-two-jobs account of the practical syllogism should be pursued. In what follows I would like to sketch very briefly such a „non-two-jobs view“ (IV) and to discuss some possible problems for this view (V).

#### IV

##### *A non-two-jobs view of the practical syllogism*

If the two-jobs view cannot be maintained and the question of how the soul moves the body must be kept as an explanandum of the practical syllogism, the following picture emerges. Given the above considerations, the practical syllogism in *De motu* is very likely to play a restricted but nevertheless central role within Aristotle's theory of animal motion: this is the role of illustrating the efficient-causal mechanism involved in the triggering of episodes of animal motion. It thereby gives the per se cause of animal motion. It does so by employing an *analogy* with deductive thinking as it is involved in theoretical reasoning. The *tertium comparationis* of this analogy is the *necessity* with which things come about once the sufficient conditions obtain. More precisely, it illustrates the physical necessity with which episodes of animal motion result, once sufficient conditions have taken place, with the necessity with which scientists deduce their conclusions from theoretical premises.<sup>26</sup> Within this analogy, the „major premise“ takes the place of a *desire* for a given object and the „minor premise“ the place of the actual *perception* of a particular object potentially fulfilling the desire; the action/motion itself corresponds to the conclusion of the theoretical syllogism.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Hence the „deontic“ formulations of the major premises in most (not all) examples („Every man should take walks“, „No man should take a walk now“, „I should make something good“, „What I need, I have to make“ etc.): these are probably not statements hinting at specifically „practical“ inferential relations (as has been suggested, e.g. by Von Wright, 1963), but can be taken to simply verbally illustrate *desires* (for arguments in favour of this view, see Anscombe, <sup>2</sup>1963, §35, 64–65).

<sup>27</sup> That the action is meant to be an action (and not the resolution to act) becomes apparent in the examples in MA 7 (similar in EN VII 3, 1147a30–31): they do not verbalize the conclusion, but

What I think could have led scholars to think that the practical syllogism is either a piece of teleological explanation or a sui generis sort of „practical“ thinking is the fact that it employs what is nowadays considered „mental“ vocabulary like e.g. „perception“, „thought“ and „desire“. This, presumably, led to the view that the practical syllogism is not giving an explanation on a „causal level“. But in Aristotle there is no such abrupt switch in methodology between the „mental“ and the „causal“ as the modern interpretation of this distinction suggests. Especially in the case of animal behaviour the languages of the „mental“ and efficient causality overlap in a way that is different from the way modern philosophers usually draw the line between the „mental“ and the „causal“: perception, for Aristotle, is a straightforward case of qualitative change (MA 7, 701b18; b23; b29 and elsewhere) and desire is a case of (presumably, thermic) motion (*kinêsis*, De an. III 10, 433b17–18; MA 7, 701b19–23; 8, 701b33–702a7). Thus, in Aristotle, in these cases at least, the language of the „mental“ translates directly into the language of efficient causality. Now what is important about this hylomorphic double-sidedness of these „mental items“ is that it makes the use of these „mental“ items (perception and desire) a *necessary* part of the efficient explanation of animal motion. The reason for this is that hylomorphism requires also the mentioning of the *form* of the qualitative and thermic changes that trigger animal motion. For animal self-motion, for Aristotle, is not brought about by any kind of qualitative and thermic change, but only by such changes as they occur *in virtue of* certain desires and perceptions. That is why the practical syllogism in addition to qualitative and thermic changes also involves the *awareness* of certain objects (in perception and desire). Hence a qualitative change, in order to trigger the movement specific for animals, must be such as to relate to a desired object. This requires that the change be brought about by the awareness of an object appropriate for the desire.<sup>28</sup> This is reflected in the sentence immediately preceding the passage on the practical syllogism:

For the animal moves and goes forward by reason of desire or choice, when *some qualitative change has taken place in virtue of perception or imagination (kineitai gar kai poreuetai to zôon orexei ê proairesei, alloiôthentos tinos kata tèn aisthêsin ê tèn phantasia)*, MA 6, 701a4–6).

And precisely this movement-triggering qualitative change in virtue of perception is taken up in the immediate sequel of the passage:

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give an action/motion description in the third person (e.g. „Every man should walk. I am a man. straightaway *he* walks“ instead of „I should walk.“). MA 7, 701a19–20 (*kai to sumperasma, to himation poiêteon, praxis estin*: „And the conclusion, the ‚I have to make a cloak,‘ is an action“) need not be regarded as an exception, since the verbalization in this case is best understood as making the identification of the conclusion with the action as explicit as possible. On this passage, see below.

<sup>28</sup> That is why the practical syllogism gives an explanation of how the *soul* (i.e. the activity of perception and desire) moves the body. Motions of the animal that are brought about by the animal, but not by a desire and the awareness of an object appropriate for that desire (either involving desire, but not the awareness of an object relating to this desire, or involving the awareness of an object without a corresponding desire) do not count for Aristotle as animal *self*-motions, but either as non-voluntary or as involuntary motions (see MA 11).

This, then, is the way in which animals are impelled to move themselves and act: the proximate cause of movement is desire, and *this comes to be either through perception or through imagination and thought* (*houtós men oun epi to kineisthai kai pratein ta zôa hormôsi, tês men eschatês aitias tês kinêseôs orexeôs ousês, tautês de ginomenês ê di' aisthêseôs ê dia phantasias kai noêseôs*, MA 7, 701a33–35).

In between the two passages, I suggest, Aristotle has been stating in *which way* perception has to occur in order to trigger desire in the appropriate way for animal motion. Within the model of the practical syllogism, this is illustrated by the „middle term“ of the practical syllogism, which I take to be the perception/awareness of an object *such as to affect desire in the appropriate way*, i.e. an object (a good or apparent good) in immediate reach potentially fulfilling the desire. Given this model, it seems natural to understand the sentence that introduces the practical syllogism as addressing precisely this question:

But in *which way* is it that thought (viz. sense, imagination, and thought proper) is sometimes followed by action, sometimes not, that is (followed) by movement, sometimes not? (*Pôs de noôn hote men pratei hote d' ou pttatei, kai kineitai, hote d' ou kineitai*; MA 7, 701a7–8; transl. Farquharson, modified).

Also from a methodological point of view, we should expect an explanation along these lines in *De motu*, given that it matches the general framework in which Aristotle locates the per se cause of animal motion. This is the analysis of animal motion by means of the abstract scheme of motion-analysis from the *Physics* (introduced shortly before the passage on the practical syllogism in MA 6, 700b35–701a2). This is the famous scheme of unmoved mover, moved mover and moved part (Phys. VIII 5, 256b14ff. and 258a5ff.), which was first applied to animal motion in De an. III 10, 433b13–27. From the passage in MA 6, 700b23–701a6 we know that within this scheme an object (either a good or an apparent good) takes the part of the unmoved mover, the perception of which (involving qualitative change) causes the motion of desire (the moved mover), which in turn moves the animal as a whole (the moved part). What still needs to be addressed is the question under precisely what conditions animal motion takes place. This is the question I propose the practical syllogism in *De motu* to be addressing by qualifying in *which way* perception, imagination or thought (and with them a qualitative change) must occur in order to trigger the mechanism of unmoved mover, moved mover and moved part. The answer is, as mentioned above, that it must be the perception of an object immediately at hand capable of fulfilling the desire. Since MA 7, 701a23–25 says that the „premises“ of the practical syllogism are of two sorts, either of the „good“ (the desired object, the „major premise“) or of the „possible“, I take it that the „premise of the possible“ (i.e. the perception of an object immediately at hand) is triggering the desire (and hence animal motion), because it presents the possibility of a *good* appropriate for the desire.

This, as may have been noted already, fits well with the general methodological remarks in part two of *TI*, where it is said that when we desire something decisively and we come into contact (*plêsiazei*) with an object appropriate for that desire, then it is necessary for us to act accordingly. It thus seems that the „major premise“ in *De motu*'s practical syllogism is equivalent to such a desire and the

„minor premise“ equivalent to the contact of such a desired, and hence movement-triggering, object via qualitative change brought about by sense-perception, imagination and thought.

In this view, the practical syllogism in *De motu* forms Aristotle's core piece in providing the common (per se) cause of animal motion as announced in the beginning of his work. These are movements such as flying, swimming, walking and the like (1, 698a4–7). This is what *De motu* repeatedly *claims* to provide and what, as I argued, it cannot provide in a teleological account of the practical syllogism. It furthermore presents a satisfying answer to the question posed in the beginning of MA 6, namely the question of how the soul *moves* the body and (or „that is to say“, depending on whether we prefer an epexegetic *kai* in line 700b10) what the starting point of animal motion consists in.

What follows from this? It follows, I suggest, that the relations holding among the „premises“ of the Aristotelian practical syllogism are not intended to be primarily *conceptual* or *logical*, but *efficient-causal* relations; the practical syllogism is not meant to explain or illustrate particular arguments, types of argumentations or inferential relations, because it is not about any content or formal feature specific to thought at all. Rather, it makes *use* of deductive reasoning in order to illustrate a non-inferential mechanism of movement causation.<sup>29</sup>

What, I think, does *not* follow is either a vulgarised version of a Humean theory of motivation or a causal determinism with respect to human action. There is no room to argue for this here. But it does not follow, partly because, within this model, there is plenty of room for thought, and with this the awareness of causal relations to be brought into the causal mechanism described by the practical syllogism (e.g. in deliberation and, regarding desire, in the process of formation of desire, the latter of which is not an issue in *De motu*, since the whole scientific undertaking of *De motu* explicitly presupposes the existence of relevant desires, see MA 6, 701a4–6; 7, 701a33–b1). Aristotle's common theory of animal motion neither denies nor reduces the possibility of rationality playing an important and even decisive role for human self-motion. The practical syllogism merely states the minimal efficient-causal conditions sufficient for *any* kind of animal motion, including human action. The practical syllogism, on the non-two-jobs view, is not an account of animal motion and human action *in competition* with a rational or teleological explanation, but in *addition* to it: the minimal conditions of animal motion specified by the practical syllogism, i.e. desire and a perception appropriate to that desire, can, and presumably also *should*, be informed by *all* the cognitive

<sup>29</sup> The practical syllogism is by no means the only example in which Aristotle makes analogical use of technicalities of his syllogistics and theory of predication in order to explain non-inferential natural mechanisms (e.g. Phys. II 7, 198b7–8: the natural philosopher must also be able to state the cause according to which „this must be so if that is to be so“ *as the conclusion is effectuated (ek) by the premises*“. Another example is the analogy Aristotle draws between simple saying, predication, and affirmation and denial on the one hand and sense perception, pleasure and pain, and desire on the other, De an. III 7, 431a8–10 and restated in a condensed version in EN VI 2, 1139a21–22). There are more examples. Because of this we should be careful and not automatically assume that on each occasion in which he speaks of premises, *horoi* etc. (in contexts other than his syllogistic or theory of science) Aristotle really has nothing else than *syllogisms* in mind.

resources the animal in question has at its disposal, including thought and genuine practical reasoning. From the perspective of the common theory of animal motion, there is no problem in saying that an agent *thought* that to do such-and-such is what best serves his ends and that this here is a particular occasion for doing this and that he hence did it; but what is important is that, in the interpretation suggested here, in such cases the *motion* of the animal would not be explained by means of thought, but by means of the efficient-causal mechanism illustrated by the practical syllogism. This is a mechanism of desire and qualitative change brought about by perception, however these may be informed by the rational faculties of the agent. From the perspective of the theory of animal motion, such rationally informed cases would differ from ordinary cases of movement-causation only in that they involve more complicated ways of finding a perception appropriately affecting desire.

In the non-two-jobs view, specimen of the practical syllogism can be found in *De motu* and the EN VII *only*. The other passages scholars commonly refer to as passages about, or giving specimen of, practical syllogisms are, I suggest, either not about animal motion but about human deliberation in one way or the other, or they *are* about animal motion but not about the *triggering mechanism* of animal motion. The latter passages do typically speak about premises and/or opinions but *never* mention either inferences or conclusions (like e.g. in *De an.* III 11); and the former, being passages about human deliberation, typically do not (at least not in non-metaphorical ways<sup>30</sup>) employ deductive vocabulary.<sup>31</sup>

## V

### *Two challenges*

The non-two-jobs view, such as presented here, faces two major challenges. These are presented by two passages, MA 7, 701a17–25 and EN VII 3, 1147a24–35. Both of these passages concern the practical syllogism, but clearly seem to exhibit features of deliberative and in part even deductive *reasoning*.

MA 7, 701a17–25.

This passage contains the fourth example of a practical syllogism in *De motu*. And *here*, contrary to the previous examples, Aristotle must be talking about deliberative *thinking*:

*T2 (a)* I need a covering; a cloak is a covering. I need a cloak.

What I need, I have to make; I need a cloak. I have to make a cloak.

And the conclusion, the ‚I have to make a cloak‘, is an action.

*(b)* And he acts from a starting point: if there is to be a cloak, there must be necessarily this first, and if this, then this.

And this he does at once.

<sup>30</sup> This refers to passages such as EN VI 9, 1142b21–26.

<sup>31</sup> Mem. 2, 453a9–14 does talk of deliberation as a sort of *syllogismos*, but not in the sense of „deduction“, see King (2004) and fn. 3.

(c) Now, it is clear that the action is the conclusion. And as for the premises of action, they are of two kinds – through the good and through the possible.

(d) But just as some of the (dialectical) questioners, so here, reason does not stop and consider at all one of the two premises, i.e. the obvious one. Hence whatever we do without calculating, we do quickly. (Transl. Nussbaum, altered).

That the passage is giving examples of episodes of thinking becomes apparent in the *chain argument* in part (a) and in the hypothetical structure of the argumentation in part (b). Because of this, one might be inclined to think that the previous examples are illustrations of episodes of thinking, too, and that hence the whole practical syllogism is about *thought* rather than about the per se cause of animal motion. This, of course, would contradict my above suggestion. But I don't think that this would be the right way to look at the passage.

I suggest that Aristotle introduces this episode of deliberation into his theory of animal motion in order to explain deliberation *on the level of per se causes* of animal motion. This is not to say that he breaks with his methodological conviction, according to which neither thought nor the content of thought is a legitimate object of natural science. The interest of this passage is still not either how or what we *think* when we engage in a course of deliberation.<sup>32</sup> Rather, in this passage, Aristotle is interested in integrating the possibility of deliberation into his common theory of animal motion. The reason why I think that this *is* a question of his theory of animal motion is, partly, that the causal mechanism illustrated by the practical syllogism could still be conceived of in terms that render deliberation useless altogether *and*, partly, because to say that thought is not relevant for the common explanation of animal motion (as said in *De partibus animalium*), is *not* to say that such a common explanation need not be able to address the question of how one specific and important type of motion, namely human action, can fit into this scheme.<sup>33</sup>

I would like to base my reading on the following three observations:

- (i) The first „premise“ in *T2* („I need a covering“) illustrates – like the previous cases – a *desire* for a given thing.
- (ii) In the whole course of reasoning, i.e. in part (a) and (b), there is exactly *one* sentence that can be taken to refer to particular objects and this is its *last* sentence.
- (iii) The „conclusion“ is again said to *be* the action.

This, I think, shows that the only episode of deliberation that occurs in *De motu* is *embedded in* the efficient-causal structure of the analogous practical syllogism as known from the previous examples. I.e., contrary to the previous examples, in *T2* we *do* have an example of deliberative thinking (apparent in the chain inferences and the hypothetical structure in (a) and (b)), but it is *integrated* in the

<sup>32</sup> This is done elsewhere, i.e. in his *ethical* writings.

<sup>33</sup> Again: I don't think that Aristotle is concerned here with the big question of how thought can partake in animal motion *generally*. What is being dealt with here is the much more modest question of how thought can come in, once a relevant desire (the major premise of the practical syllogism) has been formed.



standard process of motion causation (the analogous practical syllogism), since, just as in the other cases, the first „premise“ is the statement of a desire and the last „premise“ refers (or can be taken to refer) to a particular object. So we do have the same structure as in the previous examples. The difference is that here, the standard case of movement causation is somehow extended, so that thinking can come in.<sup>34</sup>

But so far this is just a description. What I think can be expected from Aristotle's theory of animal motion is an explanation of how exactly such episodes of deliberative thinking enter the basic triggering mechanism of animal motion described by the practical syllogism.

The answer, I think, is given in section (d) of T2. Here, in (d), Aristotle tells us what happens if thought is *not* involved. This has often been taken to imply that prior to this passage, i.e. throughout 701a7–24, Aristotle has been talking about practical *thinking*. But, again, I don't think this would be the right way to look at the passage. In order to see this, it is important to note that the explanation Aristotle offers for the non-calculative substitute for the episode of reasoning embedded in the analogous practical syllogism in (a) and (b) is itself an analogous practical syllogism:

„I have to drink,“ says appetite. „Here's drink,“ says sense perception or fantasy or thought. At once he drinks. (MA 7, 701a32–33; transl. Nussbaum).

This is not different from the standard explanation of animal motion in the beginning of chapter 7 (701a7–17), i.e. two „premises“, a desire and a perception potentially fulfilling the desire, and the „conclusion“ not being verbalized, but directly identified with the action. From this I conclude that (d) does not introduce an explanation of animal motion different from 701a7–17, but precisely the same explanation, namely the analogous practical syllogism. And given this, it is unlikely that there is a contrast between (d) and the standard explanation at the beginning of chapter 7. Rather, (d) is to be contrasted with the last example only, i.e. *only* with the embedded piece of deliberation described in (a) and (b). That is to say that the examples previous to (a) and (b) do *not* concern deliberation and human thinking as opposed to non-calculative action causation. Taking this into account, a natural reading of section (d) is to take it as stating the efficient-causal conditions for deliberative thinking (as described in section (a) and (b)) as taking place within the standard mechanism of movement causation.

What I think happens is this: the normal course of events as described by the analogy with deductive reasoning has to be either *stopped*, *retarded* or *inhibited*. This, or something like this, I take the phrase in section (d), *dianoia ephistasa*, to be saying.<sup>35</sup> With this expression, I suggest, Aristotle indicates that thinking

<sup>34</sup> In this, i.e. in that deliberation is taken as a sort of extension *within* the practical syllogism, the view propounded here differs from Cooper's view. Cooper (1975, 46) takes the practical syllogism to be separated from the process of deliberation and as providing „the link by which a course of deliberation, yielding a decision to act (e.g. to eat chicken), is enabled to produce an action in furtherance of this decision“.

<sup>35</sup> The present participle *ephistasa* is translated as intransitive above (as in most translations). It seems equally possible to translate it as transitive, its direct object being one of the two premises of the

(*dianoia*), which I take as standing for a rational desire, somehow *stops, retards* or *inhibits* the normal and spontaneous course of events (which *would* lead to action if thought were not involved), so that deliberation about which course of action to take can take place. If I am right, from the perspective of his theory of animal motion, Aristotle conceives of deliberation as an *intervention* in the normal course of formation of animal motion.

There is also other evidence that, on the level of the per se causes of motion, Aristotle advocates this „interventionist“ model of deliberation. One case in point is EN VII 7, 1150b19–22, where he distinguishes between the intemperate and the weak *akratês*. The intemperate *akratês* is a person who has the right, reason-guided disposition to act, but temptation takes him by surprise; in consequence of this he does not find the time to even consider his otherwise morally correct convictions. In such cases, Aristotle says the *absence* of deliberation is the reason for the behaviour of the intemperate *akratês* (in his words: *dia to mê bouleusasthai*). It is interesting to note that as a reason for this absence he cites two *physiological* causes: the *quickness* (*tachutês*) and the *vehemence* (*sphodrotês*) with which the intemperate tend to follow their imaginations (1150b27). This suggests that, for Aristotle, normally disposed, temperate persons are somehow able to either *slow down* or to even *stop* the spontaneous course of events, and also that this is the way that Aristotle quite *generally* conceived of the efficient-causal process preceding and underlying human deliberation.<sup>36</sup> Presumably, as said before, the causal force behind this intervention is meant to be a (rationally guided) *desire*.

EN VII 3, 1147a24–35

The other challenge is presented by the notoriously difficult passage in EN VII 3, 1147a24–35. I will be very brief on this, too, and try to concentrate on the role of the practical syllogism.<sup>37</sup>

*T3 (a)* Again, in the following way we may also view the cause in the fashion of natural philosophy:

*(b)* The one opinion is universal, the other concerned with particulars, of which perception is already decisive; when a single opinion results from the two, it is necessary that the soul in one case affirms the conclusion, while in the case of productive [opinions it is necessary that] it immediately acts.

E.g., if everything sweet ought to be tasted, and this is sweet, in the sense of being one of the particular sweet things, it is necessary that the man who can act and is not restrained must at the same time act accordingly.

*(c)* When, then, the universal opinion is present in us restraining us from tasting, and there is also the opinion that everything sweet is pleasant, and that this is sweet – now this is the opinion that is active –, and when appetite happens to be present

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practical syllogism, i.e. the obvious one. That is the way Jutta Kollesch renders the passage („So hält auch die Überlegung in keiner Weise die zweite, einleuchtende Prämisse an und betrachtet sie.“ For similar uses of *histêmi*, cf. De int. 3, 16b20 and *Problemata* XVIII 1, 916b7–8).

<sup>36</sup> See De an. III 10, 433b5–10 (*anthelein*); III 11, 434a10–12; EN IX 4, 1166b7–8 and elsewhere.

<sup>37</sup> For a complete interpretation of the relevant passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, cf. Corcilius (2008c).

in us, the one opinion bids us avoid the object, but appetite leads us towards it (for each of the parts [i.e. reason and appetite] can move). (Transl. Ross, modified)

I cut the passage into three sections.

Section one (*a*) announces an account of weak *akrasia* in the fashion of natural philosophy. Section two (*b*) gives a short account of how Aristotle conceives of the practical syllogism in his works on natural philosophy. And section three (*c*) *applies* this type of explanation to the analysis of the *ethical* problem of *akratic* behaviour.

Section two (*b*) is basically identical to the remarks in *De motu*. The first point of convergence is that both practical syllogisms have the same explanandum, i.e. the necessary<sup>38</sup> coming about of animal motion/action. The second point of convergence is that they do so by employing an analogy of the triggering of action/animal motion by events connected with deductive reasoning: the necessity with which we contemplate the conclusion of a theoretical syllogism once we contemplate the premises is likened to the necessity with which animal motion ensues, once the sufficient conditions have taken place.

Further, in both cases the conclusion of the practical side of the analogy is *not* verbalized and the action follows from the premises immediately.

Because of this convergence I think that, in all its essential points, section (*b*) is identical to *De motu*'s practical syllogism. This strongly suggests that *phusikôs epiblepeîn tèn aitian* in section (*a*) (1147a24–25) is to be understood as announcing the *efficient cause* of animal motion and, by the same token, also of human action.<sup>39</sup>

Things become interesting in section (*c*). For this section is obviously not a *simple* application of the analogous practical syllogism from *De motu* as described above, since Aristotle here seems to be talking *literally* about universal opinions instead of desires. The reason for this, I suggest, is that the case of the weak-willed *akratês* is about precisely *that* connection of thought and motion that Aristotle, as seen above, has excluded from his natural philosophy for methodological reasons. With this I do not want to say that he is putting aside his methodological conviction in accordance with which matters of rational explanation of action have to be kept apart from the explanation of animal motion. On the contrary, it seems to me that it is precisely this methodological partition between rational explanation of action on the one hand and efficient-causal explanation of animal motion on the other that provides the clue to Aristotle's solution for the *aporia* of the weak *akratês*.

For the background of the problem, which also serves as Aristotle's starting point in dealing with it, is Socrates' thesis according to which nobody acts volun-

<sup>38</sup> The necessity of the practical syllogism is not made explicit in *De motu*, but seems implied in 8, 701b33–702a21.

<sup>39</sup> There are differences among the passages, too. But I think the only difference one could attach some importance to poses no threat to the doctrinal identity of both passages. It is that *T3*, in talking about the practical syllogism, explicitly mentions the *quantity* of the premises, i.e. in the *Ethics* we hear that the major premise is universal and that the minor is concerned with particulars. *De motu* does not say so, although its first examples in 7, 701a13–15 do actually quantify the premises in using the pronouns *pantii* and *oudenii* (I owe this observation to an anonymous referee of this journal).

tarily against his knowledge and the resulting paradoxical denial of the existence of *akrasia*. My suggestion is that it is precisely Aristotle's *separate* treatment of rational explanation of action on the one hand and animal motion on the other hand that enables him to explain why and how our knowledge of what is best and our behaviour *can* be in discord in the first place. This, I suggest, is the reason why he is importing the explanatory model of animal motion from *De motu* (natural philosophy) into his *Ethics*.

For ultimately here, too, it is an ordinary, analogous *De motu* practical syllogism that explains the action of the *akratic* agent: a desire (in this case appetite for sweet food) and corresponding information about a particular object in the immediate reach of the agent (a perception: „this is sweet“). In this respect, the explanation is very much the same as in the first three simple examples of MA 7. But in contrast to the standard type of motion explanation, in the case of the weak *akratês* there is not one, but two rivalling desires, an appetite (*epithumia*) and a rationally guided desire.<sup>40</sup> And *in addition* to these there are two universal opinions, each of which can be used to describe the situation in a different way.

Why these additions? There is no room to go into the details here, but I take it that Aristotle introduces his practical syllogism as a model of his natural philosophy into the *Ethics* because he wants to make a point about the *relation* that holds between our moral (universal) convictions and our motivational behaviour. More precisely, he wants to make a point about how this relation applies in the case of two competing desires in view of the same particular object (i.e. a piece of sweet food in two different universal descriptions: either as a good to be pursued or as something to be avoided). I think it is important to note that this relation, i.e. the relation between our moral convictions and our behaviour, is not part of Aristotle's natural philosophy. I hence suggest that both additions to the practical syllogism in EN VII (the second desire and the two universal opinions) are not *modifications* of the practical syllogism as a piece of natural philosophy, but prerequisites he needs in order to depict the *ethical* constellation *akratic* agents find themselves in, and that form, as it were, the background for the role of the practical syllogism in the *Ethics*. The point of bringing in the practical syllogism seems simply to demonstrate that – contrary to Socrates' thesis – our moral convictions (universal opinions about what should be done) are not sufficient for corresponding behaviour. We need to practise our convictions, and this, in addition to the right information about what to do, requires moral training:<sup>41</sup> in other words, moral convictions, in order to become practical, must be made „premises“ of practical syllogisms.<sup>42</sup> Hence, as far as the explanation of *animal motion* is concerned, the *Ethics* work with the same type of practical syllogism as *De motu* does. That this is the case emerges from the fact that, although it is certain that the *akratês* chooses the universal description „everything sweet is pleasant“ as the relevant description for his action, Aristotle does not say that his universal

<sup>40</sup> We know from many other passages that Aristotle conceives of *akrasia* in terms of a conflict between two desires, i.e. *epithumia* and *boulêsis*. The rational desire is only hinted at in *T 3*.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. EN VII 3, 1147a22 (*dei gar sumphuênai, touto de chronou deîtai*).

<sup>42</sup> Or „in order to really become *moral* convictions“.

*opinion*, but rather *appetite* (*epithumia*), leads to action. This corresponds precisely to what *De motu* declared was the proximate efficient cause of motion, i. e. a desire triggered by a perception of a certain kind (MA 6, 701a4–6; 7, 701a33–35).

## VI

### *Conclusion*

I hope to have shown that the two-jobs view of Aristotle's practical syllogism, including its refined version, does not work. And although this result may stand against strong intuitions shared by many interpreters (and may even possibly provoke their dislike), I take it to be a minimum result of this paper to have shown that the two-jobs view is a view that rests on assumptions that are anything but trivial in the context of Aristotle's philosophy of nature, and that hence the burden of proof lies on those who maintain that his practical syllogism is about anything over and above animal *motion*. I also hope to have been able to draw attention to the *possibility* of a non-two-jobs view of the practical syllogism. Its main advantages, to my mind, are that it allows us to take seriously Aristotle's announcements and methodological remarks on animal motion (unexplained in the standard accounts of the practical syllogism) *and* that it allows us to understand *De motu* as delivering a coherent theory of animal motion, and this, I think (though I could not argue at length for this here), in an attractive way. This includes the explanation of deliberation on the level of *per se* causes of motion and the application of part of this theory to the illustration of the motivational aspects of the (for Aristotle) *ethical* problem of *akrasia*.

With all this, the non-two-jobs view does not exclude any kind of thinking from the domain of practical reasoning; it only excludes deductive reasoning from being a *per se* feature of practical reasoning. Furthermore, it eliminates a somewhat mysterious connection between thought and action that is difficult in itself and, as far as I can see, contrary to Aristotle's general convictions regarding the completeness of his four causes and their respective distinctiveness.

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