CHAPTER 1

Accounting for Receptivity

1.1 The Passivity of Perception

Among the numerous passages attesting to Aristotle's willingness, in the *De Anima* and beyond, to classify perception as a kind of being affected (πάσχειν),[1] one of the most telling comes at the outset of his inquiry into the thinking part of the soul in *An.* 3.4:

> If thinking is indeed like perceiving,[2] (**i**) it will either be a kind of being affected by the object of thought or something else like this. Thus (**ii**) [νοῦς] needs to be something impassive (ἀπαθές) but (**iii**) receptive of form and (**iv**) in capacity such [as its object]. (*An.* 3.4, 429a13–16)

It is significant that, when summarizing his account of perception in this new context, the very first feature that Aristotle underscores is its passivity.

This fact has, unfortunately, been somewhat obfuscated by difficulties surrounding the point behind Aristotle's disjunction in (i). Perhaps, one might think, he wants to say that thinking is *not really* a kind of being affected, but only resembles it.[3] And perhaps he is implying that this was already true for perception.[4] These readings, however, are undermined by how Aristotle proceeds in the chapter. When he comes to formulate a puzzle about thinking as a kind of being affected at 429b22–6, he simply drops the second disjunct. Furthermore, in his response to the puzzle, he

[1] Cf. Section 0.1, n. 4.

[2] For our present purposes we can leave aside the question of the status of this hypothesis, which is crucial for the interpretation of *An.* 3.4–8. Some scholars have argued that Aristotle only introduces it in order to refute it later (see e.g. Lowe 1983: 28 or Jaulin 2020: 77). Others have taken it to have a constructive role, though merely as a heuristic tool (see e.g. Corcilius 2024a). Still others have recognized a genuine similarity here (see e.g. Polansky 2007: 436–7, and, earlier, Polansky 2000: 60; cf. also Caston 2000: 138–9 and Magee 2003: 124–5).

[3] Some interpreters have, on these grounds, identified this as the first contrast between perception and thought, see e.g. Hicks 1907: 476, Ross 1961: 291, or Shields 2016: 298.

[4] This seems to be how, for instance, Alexander of Aphrodisias read Aristotle, as becomes apparent in his *An.* 84.3–6 (cf. Section 5.3).

reaffirms the classification (again without any mention of the second disjunct).[5] This suggests that the disjunction is neither intended to draw a contrast between perception and thought, nor meant to call their classification as cases of being affected into question. To understand the point behind the disjunction, we must return to Aristotle's account of perception. I shall argue that he is referring us all the way back to *An.* 2.5.

As soon as passivity is in place in (i), Aristotle further infers from it a series of three characteristics pertaining to νοῦς in (ii)–(iv). The last two of these features are rather clearly drawing on Aristotle's second general account of perception in *An.* 2.12.[6] What is significant here is that *receptivity* is introduced as following from, or further building on, the relevant notion of *passivity*. We shall see that this order encapsulates something important about the relation between Aristotle's two general accounts of perception in *An.* 2.5 and 2.12.

The case of (ii) – that is, *impassivity* – is somewhat more puzzling. There is no passage within Aristotle's account of perception in *An.* 2.5–3.2 that explicitly establishes the claim that 'that which can perceive' (τὸ αἰσθητικόν) is impassive. Moreover, the whole idea of inferring impassivity on the part of perceivers (or thinkers) from the passivity of perception (or thinking) seems paradoxical.[7] This is what has led to the scholarly suggestion that we see here, again, a contrast between perception and thought.[8] But this suggestion is even more powerfully disproved by what follows in *An.* 3.4. Aristotle returns to discuss impassivity at 429a29–b5 in order to argue that 'the impassivity of that which can perceive and that which can think is not the same' (429a29–30). This is a rather obvious qualification of (ii), which shows that the claim made in (ii) was not yet intended to draw out a contrast between perceiving and thinking. This is further confirmed by the logic of Aristotle's second inferential step in the quoted passage: impassivity is derived together with (iii) and (iv), which

[5] See *An.* 3.4, 429b29–430a2. Cf. *Metaph.* Λ.7, 1072a30 where Aristotle takes for granted that 'νοῦς is moved by the object of thought'.

[6] See *An.* 2.12, 424a17–19, 23–4 (discussed in Section 7.4).

[7] The paradox cannot be dissolved simply by retranslating the adjective ἀπαθές as 'devoid of any property' (for which see e.g. Crubellier forthcoming). This characteristic could, indeed, be more easily inferred from πάσχειν. According to Aristotle, if *X* is to be affected by *F* it must, indeed, prior to the affection, be devoid of *F* and of any property that could hinder *F*'s acting. But this abstract meaning of ἀπαθές is relatively rare in Aristotle (see Bonitz 1870: 72). And there is no attested occurrence of the noun ἀπάθεια with this abstract meaning whatsoever (cf. Bonitz 1870: 71–2), which makes this reading of (ii) particularly unlikely, given its echo in terms of ἀπάθεια at 429a29–30.

[8] See e.g. Shields 2016: 297: 'The disanalogy: Reason is, nonetheless, unaffected (*apathes*; 429a15).' Cf. Ross 1961: 40.

clearly draw on established major features of perception. This underscores the question about where Aristotle believes impassivity has been established.[9] I shall argue that in (ii) Aristotle still has *An.* 2.5 in mind, though in this case we cannot fully understand his point without comprehending how his first general account of perception is set within a dialogue with his predecessors (as developed in Book 1), including Anaxagoras and his theory of an impassive νοῦς.

Let us now turn to examine how Aristotle's first general account of 'all perception' (416b32–3) is introduced in *An.* 2.5. He starts from the observation that perception 'comes about in being changed (κινεῖσθαι) and being affected (πάσχειν), as has been said', for (γάρ) 'it seems to be an alteration (ἀλλοίωσίς τις)' (416b33–4).[10] The thought here is not altogether transparent, but it seems safe to say at least that it indicates the central focus of Aristotle's first general account. Throughout the chapter, he is engaged in investigating how the notion of being affected as well as the related notions of being changed and being altered apply to perception, and how they contribute to capturing what exactly perception is. The notion of being affected is omnipresent in *An.* 2.5 and the chapter contains the only explicit passage in *De Anima* – and, indeed, in the Aristotelian corpus as a whole – distinguishing *different kinds* of being affected (417b2–5).[11] Moreover, the chapter closes (418a3–6) with nothing other than a full-fledged account of perception as a kind of being affected by, and assimilated to, the perceptual object. Furthermore, immediately before this closing passage, Aristotle insists (at 417b32–418a3) that, after drawing the requisite distinctions, it is admissible, and indeed necessary, to use the notions of 'being affected' and 'being altered'

[9] The notion of ἀπάθεια is first introduced in *An.* 1.2 (405b19–23) as a characteristic of the Anaxagorean νοῦς (for the modal profile of its impassivity, cf. *Phys.* 8.5, 256b20–7). At *An.* 1.4, 408b24–30 it is νοῦς (and the perceptive capacity) that is claimed to be ἀπαθές in the sense of resistant to perishing (there is, to be sure, no way of inferring this from passivity). At *An.* 1.5, 410a23–5, and 2.4, 416a32, the adjective figures in Aristotle's formulation of the thesis that like *cannot be affected* by like.

[10] It is not easy to capture exactly the intended meaning of 'coming about in' (συμβαίνειν ἐν) here (cf. *Cael.* 3.7, 306a20–3; *Meteor.* 2.5, 361b31–2). For a similar phrase expressing the traditional characterization of perception as a kind of alteration, see Theophrastus, *Sens.* 2, 499.7–8 (cf. 23, 506.5–6 and *Metaph.* 5b5–6). Cf. Burnyeat 2002: 76–9 for an interpretation of συμβαίνειν ἐν as an '"is" of classification' in contrast to an '"is" of composition' (as proposed by Sorabji and others). I find Burnyeat's criticism of the latter reading convincing. But the notion of 'classification' needs to be clarified, which I endeavour to do in Sections 1.3 and 3.4.

[11] Accordingly, the chapter can be understood as explaining what is elsewhere often tacitly assumed – namely, that perception is *a kind of* 'being affected' and 'being altered' (or 'being affected' and 'being altered' *of a kind*). See e.g. *Phys.* 7.2, 244b10–12; *Insomn.* 2, 459b4–5; *MA* 7, 701b17–18 (cf. also *Soph. Ref.* 22, 178a4–27).

(ἀλλοιοῦσθαι) as 'proper terms' (κύρια ὀνόματα) when talking about perception, claiming that this should be done despite the fact that the usual narrow notions of 'being affected' and 'being altered' have turned out to be unsuitable.[12] It is here, I shall argue, that we find the background necessary for understanding Aristotle's disjunction in (i) above.

While one can hardly deny that *An.* 2.5 provides the central source for understanding the sense in which perception is passive, there have been widely diverging views on what exactly this passivity amounts to. We can distinguish four main approaches:

MATERIAL INTERPRETATION. Some interpreters have thought that 'being affected' refers only to a necessary condition or to the material component of perception, such as any bodily changes presupposed by, or involved in, the activity of perceiving.[13]

DEFLATIONARY INTERPRETATION. Other scholars have claimed that 'being affected' in the relevant sense captures only the *transition* from not perceiving to perceiving and, in general, from not φ-ing to φ-ing, where φ-ing does not need to be passive in any sense whatsoever (as supposedly manifested by the example of housebuilding at 417b9).[14]

PSYCHIC INTERPRETATION. Still other scholars have understood the notion of being affected as capturing the specifically 'psychic' aspect of perception in contrast to its 'bodily' element.[15]

APORETIC INTERPRETATION. Recently, it has been argued that *An.* 2.5 does not say *anything* positive about the passivity of perception whatsoever: it only formulates a dilemma constituted by two different and apparently incompatible descriptions of perception as a kind of being affected by, and assimilated to, the perceptual object on the one hand, and as a non-kinetic activity (ἐνέργεια) on the other.[16]

[12] The passage is discussed in Section 3.4.

[13] See e.g. Sorabji 1974: 53–6, and Sorabji 1992: 208–9; cf. Sorabji 2001: 51, who describes this reading as the *communis opinio* before Burnyeat's seminal paper on *An.* 2.5. For its ancient predecessors, see Section 5.3.

[14] This is the reading proposed by Burnyeat 2002, which has been adopted by numerous modern scholars, including Sorabji 2001 (see references in n. 21).

[15] See Lorenz 2007 (following, effectively, a long and influential tradition that can be traced back at least to Themistius, more on which in Section 5.4). The idea is also endorsed e.g. by Johansen 2012b: 166, and Carter 2018: 53–8 (cf. Carter 2019a: 104); cf. also Charles 2000: 111. Notice that the *Psychic Interpretation* of passivity does not amount to a spiritualist interpretation of Aristotle's account of perception. On the contrary, it was proposed by Lorenz as an alternative to Burnyeat's spiritualism, which draws on the *Deflationary Interpretation* of passivity (which, in turn, can be spelled out in terms other than spiritualist ones).

[16] See Anagnostopoulos 2023.

I shall argue that none of these approaches can correctly capture the strategic role ascribed to the notion of being affected in *An.* 2.5. That's because interpreters have expected both too much and too little from this chapter. On the one hand, they have expected too much when looking for answers to questions about the respective roles of the body and the soul here (*Material*, *Deflationary*, and *Psychic Interpretation*).[17] On the other hand, they have expected too little when taking the notion of passivity developed here to be just one horn of a dilemma (*Aporetic Interpretation*), when taking it to concern only the material side of perception (*Material Interpretation*), or, again, when deflating this notion to such an extent that nothing genuinely passive remains (*Deflationary Interpretation*). I shall argue that although *An.* 2.5 operates at a preliminary stage of inquiry, which makes it impossible to draw any firm conclusion from it about the respective roles of the body and the soul, Aristotle succeeds in outlining here the essence of perception as a specific – namely, complete – kind of passive activity.

To draw out this ground-breaking achievement, I focus on three main issues: (1) Aristotle's way of distinguishing different kinds of πάσχειν in the core part of *An.* 2.5; (2) the role played in the whole chapter by the idea that perception is a non-kinetic (i.e. complete) activity; and (3) the way in which Aristotle takes his first general account of perception to surpass his predecessors' earlier accounts and to solve difficulties inherent in them. In the remaining three sections of the present chapter, the three issues are introduced one by one, with a focus on what is both exegetically and philosophically at stake in each case.

1.2 Passivity and Preservation

At a key juncture of *An.* 2.5 Aristotle distinguishes between two kinds of πάσχειν:[18]

[17] A comparison with Aristotle's treatment of nutrition in *An.* 2.4 may help explain why this is mistaken. Aristotle's solution to the initial puzzle at 416b3–11 leaves the respective roles of the soul and the body entirely undetermined, with the only takeaway being that what nourishes itself needs to be an ensouled body (416b9–11). The specific role of the soul is only distinguished from the role of the body later at 416b20–3.

[18] According to the *Aporetic Interpretation*, Aristotle instead distinguishes πάσχειν from what is not really πάσχειν, but rather a preservation. I shall, in contrast, defend the traditional view that two kinds of πάσχειν are distinguished here. For a later application of the notion of preservative πάσχειν, see *An.* 2.10, 422a34–b10 (discussed in Section 6.4).

> And neither is being affected (τὸ πάσχειν) simple. But one kind of it (τὸ μέν) is a destruction (φθορά τις) by what is contrary (ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐναντίου), whereas another kind (τὸ δέ) is rather a preservation (σωτηρία μᾶλλον) of what is in capacity (τοῦ δυνάμει ὄντος) by that which is in fulfilment (ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐντελεχείᾳ ὄντος) and like it (καὶ ὁμοίου) just as capacity relates to fulfilment (οὕτως ὡς δύναμις ἔχει πρὸς ἐντελέχειαν). (*An.* 2.5, 417b2–5)

There are several interpretative questions about how the kind of πάσχειν that 'is rather a preservation' (we can call it 'preservative πάσχειν') is introduced here and characterized. To address these worries appropriately, we shall need to analyse not only the sentence but also its larger context (417a21–418a3) in detail in Chapter 3. For now, I only wish to sketch two main existing readings and offer an alternative approach.

The deflationary reading[19] is based on interpreting the preposition ὑπό as introducing not the efficient cause (i.e. τὸ ποιοῦν), as one would expect, but the final state to which the πάσχειν in question leads (i.e. the *terminus ad quem*).[20] Understandably, the reader who takes this interpretative path then tends to take Aristotle's point about likeness as saying that the starting point and the end-point of preservative πάσχειν are *very much* like each other, just as, for instance, the housebuilder who is not active is very much like the housebuilder who is actively housebuilding. The two are separated not by a genuine change, but merely by an innocuous transition.[21] These two interpretative decisions jointly imply that preservative πάσχειν involves, in itself, no genuine passivity whatsoever.

On the other hand, existing non-deflationary readings[22] differ in taking ὑπό as introducing the efficient cause and in understanding the point about likeness as spelling out a commonality between the patient and the

[19] This reading underlies the *Deflationary Interpretation*, but it is also endorsed within the *Aporetic Interpretation*.

[20] See especially Burnyeat 2002: 54–6, who is drawing here on Alexander's *Quaest.* 3.2–3 (see especially 3.3, 83.32–84.5 and 86.18–23; cf. 3.2, 81.22–5).

[21] Rather than the transition being, say, from white to red, it is e.g. from potential thinker to actual thinker (Burnyeat 2002: 55–6). The idea, then, is that the potential thinker is preserved by (ὑπό) the actual thinker or by 'being a thinker in fulfilment'. And this is supposed to be exactly what preservative πάσχειν means: to 'be affected' in the relevant sense means *nothing other* than to bring a 'second' capacity that one already has into fulfilment. Some such reading is adopted by many recent interpreters, see e.g. Polansky 2007: 234–6, Caston 2005: 267–8, Herzberg 2007: 113, Shields 1997: 328, Johansen 2012: 24, 290, 293 (cf. already Johansen 1997: 11–12), and Rapp 2017b: 71–2. A termini-reading is also endorsed by Heinaman 2007, Bowin 2011 (cf. Bowin 2012a and Bowin 2012b), or Anagnostopoulos 2023.

[22] These can underlie both the *Material* and *Psychic Interpretation*.

agent as a condition of the latter acting on the former. Typically, Aristotle is taken to be speaking here about a *generic* or a *potential* likeness between the two.[23] The upshot of this interpretation is that, except for the term 'preservation', everything Aristotle says about the second kind of being affected is a perfectly general description applicable to any πάσχειν whatsoever (as implied by *GC* 1.7).[24]

Each of these approaches faces exegetical difficulties. The widespread deflationary understanding of ὑπό appears to be very unlikely.[25] Furthermore, both approaches rely on a very unusual understanding of likeness. Nowhere else in the *De Anima* does Aristotle mean by 'likeness' a likeness of two *termini*, or a merely potential or generic likeness. One passage in *An.* 2.5 (416b35–417a2), to be sure, has been widely read as introducing the concept of a generic likeness; but we shall see (in Sections 2.1 and 2.2) that this standard reading faces serious problems. Indeed, throughout *An.* 2.4–5, and beyond, Aristotle always speaks of 'likeness' in terms of a full-fledged likeness between the agent and the patient *resulting* from πάσχειν, and he always describes the state preceding πάσχειν simply in terms of unlikeness.[26]

More importantly, I shall argue that neither of the two approaches allows us to appreciate the philosophical contribution of the quoted passage to the overall argument of *An.* 2.5. Under existing non-deflationary readings, the passage fails to specify the notion of preservative πάσχειν in a way that would bring us any closer to understanding what perception is (given that what is said about it holds equally well for any other instance of πάσχειν). Under the deflationary approach, on the other

[23] For the former, see e.g. Hicks 1907: 356 (cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In An.* 2.11, §366). For the latter, see e.g. Ps.-Simplicius, *In An.* 122.23–5 or Brentano 1867: 79–81, cf. Charles 2021: 120–9 and Kelsey 2022: 59–63. Lorenz 2007: 181–8 clearly accepts a non-deflationary reading of ὑπό, but without spelling out his understanding of the likeness involved.

[24] Some interpreters take even the preservation to be 'a perfectly general point about being affected', as is the case in Kelsey 2022: 62. This view leads Kelsey, understandably, to place the quoted passage in brackets as a parenthetical remark.

[25] We do not find a single parallel use of ὑπό in the *De Anima*. Indeed, as far as I can see, fifty-three out of fifty-six uses are unambiguously introducing the efficient cause. Just a few lines after our passage, the very same expression, ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐντελεχείᾳ ὄντος, is qualified by διδασκαλικοῦ (417b13), confirming that what Aristotle refers to is, indeed, the efficient cause (here the teacher) as the source of the patient's (here the learner's) fulfilment, and *not* this fulfilment itself. In the remaining two cases in *An.* 2.5 (417a9, 418a3–4), too, τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ ὄν refers unambiguously to the efficient cause (here the external perceptual object); cf. *An.* 2.11, 424a1–2; 2.12, 424a22–3; 3.7, 431a1–7.

[26] See especially *An.* 2.5, 417a20 where Aristotle makes it as explicit as he can that, by likeness, he means what results from being affected, *not* what precedes it (what precedes is unambiguously described as unlikeness). This is confirmed at 418a4–6. See also *An.* 2.4, 416a32 and b7; cf. 3.3, 428b14 and 429a4–5.

hand, preservative πάσχειν loses any contact with the passivity of perception whatsoever. The troubles implied by this move become evident in Myles Burnyeat's seminal paper. Burnyeat, who successfully elevated the *Deflationary Interpretation* to something of a *communis opinio*, insisted at the same time (rightly I believe) that receptivity of perception is the leading concern of Aristotle's first general account.[27] Yet, it is difficult to understand how Aristotle can account for perception's receptivity after deflating the notion of preservative πάσχειν. Burnyeat's idea is, roughly, that Aristotle first introduces the notion of preservative πάσχειν at 417b2–5 to capture a mere transition from a second capacity to its fulfilment, and then distinguishes two different kinds of such transitions: those that *can* and those that *cannot* be described as 'alterations of a kind'.[28] It seems very unlikely, though, that Aristotle wished to undertake this cumbersome conceptual manoeuvre.[29]

[27] Aristotle's central aim is to 'do justice to the receptivity of perception' (Burnyeat 2002: 69; see also 45, 58, 71–3). There is barely any trace of the deflationary reading in antiquity beyond Alexander's *Quaest.* 3.2–3. In Themistius' *In An.* preservative πάσχειν is understood as labelling the specific way in which 'that which can perceive' is affected by, and assimilated to, perceptual objects in contradistinction to the way in which non-perceptive objects are affected by, and qualitatively assimilated to, objects around them (see *In An.* 56.34–57.9). Such a reading of 417b2–5 seems to be also behind the account of perception in Alexander's own *De Anima*. Within 38.19–40.3, drawing directly on *An.* 2.5, we do not find any of the distinctive features of the deflationary approach adopted in *Quaest.* 3.2–3. Rather, Alexander seems to be assuming that the chapter has explained the specific sense in which perceivers are affected and altered by perceptual objects in contrast to how non-living entities and plants are affected. Moreover, this is how all other Greek commentators known to us seem to have understood the passage, too (see Philoponus, *In An.* 301.3–303.29, Ps.-Simplicius, *In An.* 122.22–7, and Sophonias, *In An.* 67.6–17).

[28] Burnyeat 2002: 57–9.

[29] There is no obvious reason why Aristotle should then want to introduce something like preservative πάσχειν (which is not a genuine kind of πάσχειν) in the first place. Why is e.g. μεταβάλλειν, which serves as a neutral word fit for transitions (cf. 417a30–b2), not sufficient, and why does Aristotle not simply distinguish between μεταβολαί that are, and μεταβολαί that are not, alterations? Furthermore, the sharp contrast in meanings between πάσχειν and ἀλλοιοῦσθαι, implied by Burnyeat's reading, is surprising, for throughout the chapter Aristotle treats the two terms as intimately bound together, from their introduction at 416b33–5 (see especially the closing lines: 417b32–418a6). A central pillar of support for the deflationary reading has been found in Aristotle's reference to housebuilding at 417b8–9: if the notion of preservative πάσχειν is here applied to the transition from not building to building (i.e. to a productive activity *par excellence*), as is often presupposed, then the notion clearly cannot involve any genuine passivity. However, I shall argue (in Section 3.5) that Aristotle's point in these lines is very different and has no such implications, thereby undermining the passage's support for the deflationary reading. An additional motivation behind Burnyeat's strategy is his understanding of the contrast between perception and thought at 417b16–29, which he takes to imply that perception is, and thought is not, receptive/qualitative (see Burnyeat 2002: 57–9 and Burnyeat 2008a: 22–4). This is a thorny issue that cannot be decided without an in-depth analysis of *An.* 3.4–5 (a task I reserve for elsewhere). For now, it suffices to note that the opening of *An.* 3.4 (as discussed in Section 1.1) speaks against Burnyeat's reading.

I shall argue that, in the quoted passage, Aristotle speaks of a genuine case of being affected and that he describes it in a much more informative way than is presupposed by existing non-deflationary readings. He claims that, in preservative πάσχειν, 'that which is in capacity' is both *preserved* by 'that which is in fulfilment' (i.e. the agent) and is *assimilated* to it. Being affected by – and assimilated to – something else means for the subject here being preserved and, indeed, fulfilled as the sort of thing it is. In other words, it is for the subject exactly what, say, singing a song is for a singer or building a house is for a housebuilder. In this way, the quoted sentence outlines the very essence of perception as a receptive cognitive act.[30]

One important implication is that when the perceiver is affected by, and assimilated to, a perceptual object, her perceptivity is thereby in no way diminished: she can just as easily be affected by and assimilated to any other object or, indeed, the very same one. This is, arguably, how preservative πάσχειν contrasts with its destructive counterpart (such as being heated), which results, instead, in a transition from one state to its contrary and thereby modifies the ways in which the subject can and cannot be affected. When, for instance, a stone has been heated in a sauna from 20°C to 80°C, it is now *easier* for it to be assimilated to a pot of water at 90°C than it was before, but it is *more difficult* for it to be assimilated to a pot of cryogenic liquid at –200°C; moreover, it will now be *impossible* for this stone to be affected by (and assimilated to) the surrounding air at 80°C. When, in contrast, a perceiver has been affected by, and assimilated to, a blue object in the relevant way, it does not thereby become any more difficult for her to be affected by, and assimilated to, a yellow object, or any easier for her to be affected by, and assimilated to, a purple object. Moreover, such a perceiver can also continue being affected by (and assimilated to) the same blue object that she has already perceived. This is the respect in which perceiving is like singing a song or building a house: a builder who is building (or has built) Speusippus' house becomes thereby – qua builder at least – no less capable of building Aristotle's house. However, perceiving is not entirely like housebuilding or singing. Unlike these, perceiving consists, essentially, in being affected by, and assimilated to, something else.

[30] There is a notorious question about the scope of preservative πάσχειν, for at 417b12–16 Aristotle seems to apply it to learning. I shall argue (in Section 3.6) that he does in fact do so, but that this application presupposes a transformation of the notion, which is originally, and primarily, introduced to capture activities like perception and, apparently, thought.

The suggestion, therefore, will be that the notion of preservative πάσχειν is intended exactly to draw out this double contrast, and thereby to capture, on the most general level, the essence of perception as a receptive cognitive act. Perception is contrasted both (1) with non-kinetic (complete) activities, like housebuilding, which are productive (or spontaneous) rather than passive, and (2) with passive changes (κινήσεις) as incomplete activities, like being heated. Unlike activities such as housebuilding or singing, perception is essentially *passive*. However, unlike passive changes such as being heated, perception is a *complete*, *non-kinetic* activity. The essence of perception can, then, in the most general terms, be encapsulated in the notion of a *complete passive activity*, and the primary contribution of *An.* 2.5 consists exactly in working out this notion. The deflationary reading fails to appreciate (1),[31] while the existing non-deflationary readings fail to appreciate (2).

If this is right, then Aristotle's account can be understood as incorporating two distinct intuitions about perception, each of which appears to capture something essential about it but both of which prima facie appear to be mutually incompatible – namely, that: (a) perception consists in being affected by, and assimilated to, perceptual objects; and (b) the perceiver must be, and must remain, unlike all perceptual objects and impassive with respect to them in order to remain unbiased and to perceive the object as real and external to herself. These, as we shall see, are effectively the two main competing intuitions that Aristotle identifies in the views of his predecessors.

However, before turning to Aristotle's predecessors, we must first consider how the notion of completeness is introduced and handled in *An.* 2.5.

1.3 Passivity, Completeness, and Continued Perceiving

The passage that distinguishes two kinds of πάσχειν belongs to the core part of *An.* 2.5 (417a21–418a3), where Aristotle draws two sets of distinctions and determines how the notions of being affected and being qualitatively changed are, and are not, to be used with respect to perception. Immediately before Aristotle starts drawing these complex

[31] This holds not only for Burnyeat 2002 and interpreters who follow his understanding of the preservative πάσχειν. It is also true, for instance, of Kosman 1994: 204–5 (cf. Kosman 1984: 132 and Kosman 2013: 72–5), who treats *An.* 2.5, 417b2–5 as another 'version of the distinction between motion and activity'.

distinctions, he explicitly raises the topic of *completeness*, while signalling that something about how he is, or will be, handling it here is provisional:

> We are speaking (λέγομεν) [or: Let us speak (λέγωμεν)][32] first as if being affected, being changed (τὸ κινεῖσθαι), and being active (τὸ ἐνεργεῖν) were the same thing. Because change (κίνησις) is a kind of activity (ἐνέργειά τις), albeit an incomplete one (ἀτελής), as has been said elsewhere. (*An.* 2.5, 417a14–17)

This statement is followed by a formulation of the assimilation model (417a17–21) according to which the patient is unlike the agent insofar as it is being affected (πάσχει) and is like it insofar as it has been affected (πεπονθός). In his seminal paper, Myles Burnyeat drew far-reaching consequences from the quoted passage. He took it as laying down a key methodological constraint that remains in place throughout Aristotle's treatment of perception. According to Burnyeat, because this inquiry is a part of Aristotle's 'physics', and his 'physics' is exclusively about changes (κινήσεις) – that is, incomplete ἐνέργειαι[33] – Aristotle invites us 'to suppose that there is no such thing as complete or unqualified actuality . . . There is only the incomplete actuality exhibited by a process of change that is defined by and directed towards an end-state outside itself.'[34] The request is 'extraordinary' (as Burnyeat himself describes it) because elsewhere – including *An.* 3.7 and *Sens.* 6 – Aristotle is keen to stress that perception *is* a complete activity.[35] Indeed, these other passages could easily make one believe that completeness is an *essential* feature of perception that should in some way figure in any successful account of it. According to Burnyeat, however, such a position is excluded exactly by the fact that physics is limited to considering changes. The worry then becomes whether physics can speak about perception at all. It can, replies Burnyeat, but only if it 'merges' 'the (instantaneous) transition to perceiving and perceiving [itself]'.[36] On this view, it appears that two errors are expected to cancel each other out. I shall argue, though, that this magic is not needed because neither error is actually committed by Aristotle.

Burnyeat attempts to justify the first error by pointing to Aristotle's focus on 'the causality of perception': this, he contends, can be analysed without taking into account 'the point that there is no moment of

[32] On this alternative, see n. 41.
[33] Burnyeat 2002: 73, cf. Burnyeat 2008b: 259–65.
[34] Burnyeat 2002: 47, cf. 56 ('there is no hint of *that* distinction anywhere in II 5').
[35] For references, see Sections 2.5 and 2.6.
[36] Burnyeat 2002: 72–3. Cf. e.g. Charles 2021: 129: 'The transition from being a potential seer to an actual seer is seeing.' For a criticism of this move, see Heinaman 2007: 160–6.

perceiving at which its goal is not achieved', allowing the latter to be delegated to works other than the *De Anima* – and, indeed, outside Aristotle's 'physics' altogether.[37] I shall argue for the exact opposite: the point about completeness of perceiving, which is emphasized in *An.* 3.7 and *Sens.* 6, is essential to Aristotle's analysis of the causality of perception, and already plays a crucial role in the first general account of perception in *An.* 2.5.

That this is, in fact, the case has not been fully appreciated, I contend, particularly because one question directly relevant for the causality – and indeed the very nature – of perception has not been taken sufficiently seriously. The question can be put straightforwardly: how does the case of *continued perceiving* differ from the case of merely having an after-image or *phantasma* of the object I was perceiving a moment ago?[38] The reason why this question matters to Aristotle is that it represents an instance of a more general issue, which is, arguably, central to his account of perception – namely, that of distinguishing between a case of genuine perceiving and a mere appearance. Moreover, the reason why the question of continued perceiving is so pressing is that it seems particularly difficult for any assimilation model of perception – including the one that Aristotle himself starts to develop in *An.* 2.5 – to account for the difference of perception from a mere after-image or *phantasma*. If perceiving *X* is explained as a way of being affected by, and assimilated to, *X*, and if the relevant likeness is not something that is progressively achieved through time but rather something that exists from the very first moment of directing one's senses towards *X*, then it is not obvious how exactly we should account for the difference between the scenario in which I continue perceiving *X* and the alternative scenario in which *X* is already gone but is still appearing to me. Surely, I have a likeness of *X* in me in both cases; so what is the difference? A related question could be raised for Aristotle's account of perceptual blind spots:[39] why is it that perceptual assimilation does not produce such a blind spot? To appreciate the weight of these questions, it is worth noting that continued perceiving is not a special case: *all* cases of perceiving are *eo ipso* cases of continued perceiving. This is directly implied by the

[37] Burnyeat 2002, 73, cf. Burnyeat 2008b: 259–65.

[38] Cf. *An.* 3.2, 425b23–5: 'Each perceptive organ is receptive of the perceptual object without the matter; that is why perceptions or rather [καί] *phantasiai* of the perceptual objects are present in the perceptive organs even when these objects have gone away.' The question is exactly how the *phantasiai* remaining in the perceptive organs are distinguished from perceptions produced by the objects when they are present. Cf. e.g. *Insomn.* 2, 459b7–22.

[39] See *An.* 2.11, 423b31–424a10 (discussed in Sections 6.4 and 6.5).

completeness of perception, and that is one of the reasons why Aristotle can hardly leave this feature out when analysing the causality and the nature of perception. This is an essential feature of perception and one that contains a considerable challenge for the kind of account that Aristotle is developing in the wake of his predecessors.

I shall suggest that this straightforward – but far from simple – question about continued perceiving is present in the background of Aristotle's concern regarding the traditional view that like is perceived – and is in general known – by like (*LKL*), and particularly with the implication of this view that in perception like is affected by like (*LAL*). This is because *like being affected by like* is exactly what distinguishes continued perceiving from just having an after-image or *phantasma* (or a blind spot): in both cases, I have a likeness of the object in me, but only in the former case am I also being affected by that object, so that like is affected by like. The problem is that the notion of being affected as developed by Aristotle in *GC* 1.7 seems a priori to exclude this option, because things that already *are* like each other, according to this account, can no longer *act* upon each other. This, I shall argue, is at least a part of the difficulty that motivates Aristotle to draw the distinctions that he does at 417a21ff. These distinctions should help us understand exactly how the assimilation model summed up before this passage (at 417a17–21) and applied to perception at the very end of the chapter (418a3–6) can really work without collapsing cases of continued perceiving into mere appearances.[40]

This issue is also to be identified in the background of the quoted passage that signals the provisional nature of Aristotle's initial discussion at 416b33–417a21 (rather than of his treatment of perception as a whole, as Burnyeat would have it).[41] In sharp contrast to Burnyeat's reading, I submit, it is exactly the observation that perception is *not* an incomplete activity at 417a16–17 (quoted above)[42] that allows us to understand and

[40] The importance of the question of how perception differs from a mere appearance is emphasized by Bolton 2005. His response to the concern is that both states have the same material cause but differ in their efficient causes (which straightforwardly implies a difference in form). However, I worry that this purely causal account of the difference does not fully appreciate the weight of the question.

[41] The question of the scope of this passage is connected to a textual issue: the manuscripts are divided between an exhortation (λέγωμεν: 'let us speak') and a description of the present state (λέγομεν: 'we are speaking'). Yet, the textual issue is not decisive; rather, the question of the scope must be decided on the basis of the content and context of the passage. For a helpful discussion of the textual issue, see Anagnostopoulos 2023: 82–3, with whom I share a preference for the indicative. However, even if one opts for the subjunctive, the scope of Aristotle's exhortation may well be limited by 417a21, where he introduces the need for distinctions (δέ here clearly corresponds to μέν at 417a14).

[42] This is also almost a verbatim quotation of *Phys.* 3.2, 201b31–2.

appreciate the motivation for and legitimacy of speaking as if being affected and being active were the same thing. The point is that, in an important sense they *are*, indeed, the same. It would be a non-starter for any account of perception, by Aristotle's lights, to assume that the perceiver is first being affected by the perceptual object over time interval t_1 before then perceiving it over time interval t_2. If the perceiver is no longer being affected by the perceptual object at the time at which she is perceiving it, how does perceiving differ from just having an after-image of the object? Being affected and being active cannot – in the specific case of perception – be dissociated in any temporal way. Rather, they must be the same at least in terms of their temporal extension.

If this is right, it has an important implication for the ways in which the assimilation model (introduced immediately at 417a17–21) can, as well as the ways in which it cannot, be applied to perception. When Aristotle says – drawing on *GC* 1.7 – that (1) what is being affected (present tense) is unlike the agent and (2) what has been affected (perfect tense) is like it, (1) and (2) must not, arguably, be contrasted in temporal terms – as they standardly are in other cases of being affected (such as those discussed in *GC* 1.7) where the completion of being affected by *X*, and so assimilation to *X*, excludes the possibility of being further affected by *X*. Aristotle's provisional identification of being affected and being active (417a14–17), in other words, brings out what is essential for our correct understanding of the assimilation model (417a17–21) if it is to be successfully applied to perception. In the case of perception, being affected (πάσχειν) passes the tense test together with the activity (ἐνεργεῖν), at least in the sense that having been affected by, and so assimilated to, a perceptual object does not exclude being further affected by that object. This is the key condition needed to account for continued perception. Furthermore, it also turns out to be a key condition of accounting for how an external object can be *present to* the perceiver – that is, for the fact that rather than turning the perceiver's organ into a similar perceptual object, the external object makes itself perceived by her.[43]

Under the proposed interpretation (further developed in Sections 2.5 and 2.6), the message of 417a14–17 is, thus, much more positive and constructive than it is usually taken to be. However, Aristotle clearly says that the identification of πάσχειν and ἐνεργεῖν, as introduced here, is only provisional. The identification's provisional nature, I shall argue, is intended to be overcome exactly by the distinctions that are later drawn

[43] See Sections 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, and 4.2.

at 417a21ff., so that only at the end of the chapter (418a3–6) will the reader be in a position to understand fully how the assimilation model can correctly be applied to perception. With this in mind, we can see that the identification of πάσχειν and ἐνεργεῖν at 417a14–17 is provisional in at least three respects. First and foremost, while the passage – under the suggested reading – indicates that the perceptual πάσχειν passes the tense test, it is far from obvious how this could be the case. In fact, with an understanding of the notion of πάσχειν inherited from *GC*, it seems impossible for something to have been affected by, and assimilated to, *X*, and yet still be able to be affected by *X*. Second, the identification is provisional because the middle term (i.e. change) is a false one. While the identification itself contains an important truth, Aristotle can provide only a preliminary, and strictly speaking false, reason for it, because he has not yet introduced the appropriate notion of being affected as independent from the notion of change. Finally, the identification is also provisional because, while being affected and being active have, apparently, the same temporal extension in the case of perception, they are not strictly speaking the same. Rather, while they are numerically the same, their being differs, and Aristotle owes us an account of this difference.

We shall see (in Sections 3.2 and 3.5) that the distinctions given in 417a21ff., and the notion of preservative πάσχειν in particular, help Aristotle overcome these deficiencies. Rather than introducing an inadequate merging between the transition to perceiving and perceiving itself, Aristotle explains at 417b2–12 just how perceiving as a *complete* activity can also be a *passive* one.

1.4 Aristotle's Interlocutors

The proposed interpretation therefore provides a fresh perspective on Aristotle's concern with the view – present throughout *An.* 2.5 – that, in perception, like is affected by like (*LAL*). Standardly, interpreters take *LAL* to be true for Aristotle insofar as it points to the condition of generic likeness.[44] Yet, that has nothing to do, specifically, with perception. Accordingly, on such a reading it is difficult to understand why Aristotle makes the question of the truth and falsity of *LAL* central to his argument in *An.* 2.5. Indeed, on such a reading, it turns out that the notion of preservative πάσχειν can hardly contribute *anything* to our understanding of *LAL*. However, if this is the case, the closing lines (418a3–6) appear to

[44] As it is incorporated into Aristotle's general account of being affected at *GC* 1.7, 323b23–33.

be just a dull repetition of the assimilation model from 417a17–21. If, in contrast, the truth of *LAL* is understood along the lines sketched out in the preceding section, it captures a non-trivial insight into the very essence of perception as a receptive cognitive act and we can easily understand how the distinctions presented in 417a21ff. are needed to secure this insight. Moreover, under this interpretation we can better appreciate Aristotle's engagement with the anonymous thinkers to which *LAL* is ascribed at 416b35–417a2. There is little doubt that these are (some of) the proponents of the traditional view that like is known by like (*LKL*). Yet, the connection Aristotle sees between *LKL* and *LAL* merits further investigation.

This question opens up the larger issue of how Aristotle's presentation of his first general account of perception in *An.* 2.5 draws on – and responds to – the critical discussion of his predecessors in Book 1. The importance of this question for the interpretation of *An.* 2.5 was already emphasized by Burnyeat in his seminal paper.[45] However, Burnyeat's understanding was framed by the influential idea, promoted in the 1960s by G. E. L. Owen and Suzanne Mansion, according to which Aristotle's search for principles is a *dialectical* undertaking starting from 'reputable opinions' (ἔνδοξα) as the relevant kind of 'what appears to be the case' (φαινόμενα).[46] This idea has recently come under attack,[47] and, with respect to the *De Anima* specifically, it has been emphasized just how sharply Aristotle's dealings with his predecessors differ from a purely dialectical procedure.[48] Jason Carter has offered an analysis of Aristotle's concern with his predecessors in *An.* 2.5 based on safer methodological grounds and on a meticulous reconstruction of Aristotle's argumentation in Book 1.[49] Carter has shown that, throughout the *De Anima*, while

[45] See Burnyeat 2002: 32–46. His contribution in this respect is highlighted by Sorabji 2001: 49. Before Burnyeat, the connection to Book 1 was stressed e.g. by Witt 1992: 181–2.

[46] See Owen 1961 and, in the same volume, Mansion 1961; cf. e.g. Barnes 1980, Nussbaum 1982, Irwin 1989: 26–50, Bolton 1990, Kraut 2006; with respect to *An.*, see e.g. Baltussen 1996 or Polansky 2007: 22–4 (in general), 62–7 (concerning Book 1), 224–5 (concerning ἔνδοξα in *An.* 2.5). Ferejohn 1999 brings this tendency to its extreme when he manages to analyse the 'dialectical' engagement of *An.* 2.5 without any reference to Book 1.

[47] See especially Salmieri 2009, Primavesi 2010: 50–8, Frede 2012, Shields 2013.

[48] See Carter 2019a: 21–46, and King 2021a, who both emphasize that while a dialectical discussion is neutral with respect to the truth of the proposition, Aristotle's engagement with his predecessors in *De Anima* is from the outset directed at truth. His engagement with δόξαι (there is no mention of ἔνδοξα in *De Anima*) of his predecessors is instrumental in this endeavour, but it is certainly not *the* method Aristotle employs. Cf. also Bolton 2021: 66–73.

[49] Carter 2019a: 141–67. Another recent study of Aristotle's concern with his predecessors in his account of perception is Kalderon 2015. However, Kalderon focuses primarily on the reception of forms without the matter in *An.* 2.12. Ferro 2022: 31–44 reclaims the label of 'dialectic' for

developing his own view, Aristotle is deeply engaged in a discussion with his predecessors and that understanding this engagement can be a great help in reconstructing Aristotle's own position – without this taking anything away from the scientific rigour of Aristotle's thought.[50]

I shall argue in Chapter 2 that a yet more nuanced picture of Aristotle's engagement with his predecessors is needed in the specific case of *An.* 2.5. I take it that what has not been sufficiently appreciated here is the deeply *aporetic* nature of this engagement. One of my central contentions will be that, while Aristotle explicitly refers in *An.* 2.5 only to *LKL* (or, more precisely, to its *LAL* implication), he is effectively addressing it together with another view, since *LKL* represents one of two horns of the key puzzle that Aristotle is dedicated to resolving in Book 2. Given that *LKL* is relevant for him exactly as being productive of one horn of a *problem* that he thinks his own theory must be capable of resolving – namely, a problem with *explaining* perception – he could not properly address *LKL* without also responding, albeit implicitly, to the view that is productive of the other horn of that problem. This other view, I shall argue, is Anaxagoras' idea that what knows *X* needs to be neutral and impassive with respect to *X*. Taken together, the two views articulate exactly the two, seemingly incompatible, intuitions that are to be incorporated into Aristotle's own notion of preservative πάσχειν (as suggested in Section 1.2). Roughly, they say that (a) in order to know something, one needs to be affected by it as like by like, and that (b) in order to know something, one needs to be neutral and impassive with respect to it, and the object must remain external.

It helps to bear in mind, in this connection, what Aristotle says about the importance of puzzles (ἀπορίαι) for scientific inquiry and the role that one's predecessors play in formulating and helping one navigate such puzzles. The discussion of Aristotle's predecessors in *An.* 1 is not motivated by a detached historical interest in what people were thinking in the past, or by a triumphalist urge to show that everyone before him was wrong.

Aristotle's undertaking in *An.* 1, and he seems right in emphasizing the preliminary status of Aristotle's discussion as largely an 'internal refutation'.

[50] Bolton 2021: 67–73 contends that the argument of *An.* 2.5 cannot be understood as a way of resolving a conflict between ἔνδοξα, partly because what Aristotle is concerned with is *explanation* and '*why questions* do not raise dialectical problems' (p. 68). That seems right. But this should not lead us to think that Aristotle's engagement with his predecessors plays no role here. He seems to believe that analysing earlier views can be useful at a preliminary stage of addressing *why questions* (cf. Carter 2019a: 19–56). Bolton has a point in observing that under the usual interpretation of the opening of *An.* 2.5 there is no obvious conflict to be resolved; but that may be because the usual interpretation of the opening is incorrect.

In fact, *An.* 1.2 contains one of Aristotle's clearest statements of what he takes himself to be doing when engaging with the thoughts of those who came before him:

> Since we are inquiring into the soul, and thus need to work through the puzzles (διαπορεῖν) whose solution (εὐπορεῖν) would be a mark of progress, it is necessary for us to consider the opinions of those predecessors who made certain claims about the soul, so that we may take over what has been said rightly by them (τὰ μὲν καλῶς εἰρημένα λάβωμεν) and so that, if anything has been said wrongly (μὴ καλῶς), we may avoid the error (εὐλαβηθῶμεν). (*An.* 1.2, 403b20–4)

The necessary first step in discovering the account of the soul as the first principle of embodied life, as in any such endeavour, is to identify the *problems* that impede us from arriving at a full understanding of the soul – the central questions that our account is supposed to answer and the key puzzles that it is supposed to resolve.[51] A helpful way of identifying these key puzzles, Aristotle believes, is critically reviewing the opinions of those who already made serious attempts at providing some such account in the past. In the most prominent views developed by one's predecessors over the course of centuries, and in the arguments that have been provided in their defence, it is likely that at least the proverbial grain of truth has been crystalized – although these views tend to contradict each other and their respective 'truths' often seem mutually incompatible. In another methodological reflection (at *GC* 1.7, 323b17–18), Aristotle provides a succinct analysis of the usual situation: the conflicts arise because 'where one needs to grasp a whole (δέον ὅλον τι θεωρῆσαι), each of the sides happens to capture only a certain part (μέρος τι τυγχάνουσι λέγοντες)'.[52]

Aristotle's goal, then, is to preserve what is true (and genuinely well-argued) in each of his predecessors' relevant views (τὰ καλῶς εἰρημένα λαβεῖν) and to prevent himself from falling into the difficulties that the

[51] See also Aristotle's general account of the usefulness of ἀπορίαι in *Metaph.* B.1, 995a24–b4; cf. *Metaph.* M.1, 1076a10–16 and *Top.* 1.2, 101a35–b4. The importance of the ἀπορίαι in *An.* 1 comes from the fact that each inquiry is subject-specific (cf. *An.* 1.1, 402a16–18), and it thus raises specific kinds of challenges. It is, then, important to understand not just the general principles of searching for scientific definitions (as outlined in *APo.* 2), but also the specific challenges connected to searching for the essential definition of the soul and its constituent parts.

[52] For the dialectical background of Aristotle's concept of ἀπορίαι and of 'working oneself through a puzzle' (διαπορεῖν), see Rossi 2017 and Rapp 2017a. For the use of ἀπορίαι in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, see Madigan 1999, Crubellier and Laks 2009, Laks 2009, and Buddensiek 2017. Cf. Gelber 2017 for ἀπορίαι in Aristotle's *GA*.

proponents of these views were getting into (τὰ μὴ καλῶς εὐλαβηθῆναι) – whether they were themselves aware of it or not. The project, in other words, is to provide a resolution, showing how the respective truths of conflicting (and often fallacious) theories can be combined into a single coherent account that finally manages to 'grasp the whole'. It would be a caricature of Aristotle's procedure if we imagined that the goal could be achieved on purely dialectical grounds or, say, by simply listing all the relevant claims of one's predecessors and discarding the false ones. The hope is rather that a serious engagement with our predecessors will allow us to identify the key problems that must be dealt with and solved in order to develop a successful account. But the solution cannot, of course, be found by further thinking about one's predecessors and what they said. Rather, the solutions can be found only by inquiring deeper into the matter itself than one's predecessors did. The fact that this inquiry, if successful, will finally make us capable of showing how the truth of each side can be taken on board while overcoming the errors and the apparent incompatibilities of our predecessors' views only means that our account passes a very useful test that critical discussion of our predecessors provided. One reason why such a test is useful is that it allows one seriously to claim that significant progress has been achieved.

In *An.* 1, Aristotle identifies two main issues concerning the soul that his predecessors had been interested in addressing: (a) how the soul can be what makes animals capable of perception and of knowing in general, and (b) how the soul can be what makes animals capable of self-motion.[53] The main stretch of *An.* 1.2 (404b7–405b30) and most of *An.* 1.5 (409b23–411a26) is dedicated to the first of these issues. Aristotle's analysis of this question, I contend, can be subsumed as a whole under one central puzzle formulated towards the end of *An.* 1.2 (at 405b12–23).[54] Aristotle identifies here two main views on the nature of knowing, which directly bear on how the soul, as the first principle of knowledge, should be conceived. Each of these views appears to be well justified, but they seem to contradict one another and each of them leads to apparently unsolvable difficulties. To summarize the situation very roughly: one of the two sides (the majority view) says that the subject

[53] This is how the discussion is set up at *An.* 1.2, 403b25–8, and this pair of issues is then recalled several times throughout Book 1 (1.2, 404b7–10, 404b27–9; 1.5, 411a24–6; cf. 1.2, 405a17–19 and 23–5) and beyond (see especially 2.2, 413a22–25; 3.3, 427a17–19; 3.9, 432a15–17). On two occasions in Book 1 (1.2, 405b10–12; 1.5, 409b18–21), Aristotle adds a third issue – namely, the incorporeality of the soul.

[54] The passage is quoted and discussed in Section 2.2.

knows the object on account of being like it (*LKL*) and being affected by it (*LAL*); the opposing side (Anaxagoras) says that the subject knows the object on account of being unlike it and impassive (ἀπαθές) with respect to it. The former looks attractive because, in order to know something, it seems necessary that one have some kind of likeness of it within oneself and that one be continuously in touch with it (call this the ACQUAINTANCE/CONTACT REQUIREMENT). The latter looks attractive because, in order to know something, it also seems necessary to remain neutral and unbiased with respect to it and to other potential objects of knowing, and it seems necessary that the object remain external and untainted (call this the UNBIASEDNESS/EXTERNALITY REQUIREMENT).

If Aristotle believes that each of these views contains an important true insight, what is the way out of the puzzle? So far, Aristotle's account of perception has not been explored from the perspective of this question.[55] And yet, it is not just Aristotle's explicit reflection on the use of puzzles (quoted above) that suggests he is willing – and believes it is important – to give an answer to this question. There is, additionally, a passage in Theophrastus' *De Sensibus* 19 suggesting, as we shall see (in Section 2.7), that, in Aristotle's school, any satisfactory account of perception was expected to explain how the truth of *LKL* (and *LAL*) can be combined with the truth of the view that the perceiver needs to be impassive with respect to her object.

In Chapter 2, I show, step by step, how the key puzzle from *An.* 1.2 brings us to a deeper understanding of Aristotle's first general account of perception and how it sheds light on the notion of preservative πάσχειν in particular. It is this background that will also help us understand Aristotle's implicit inference (at *An.* 3.4, 429a13–16) from the passivity of perception to an impassivity on the part of the perceiver.

[55] Not even by Jason Carter, who, like other scholars, discusses just *LKL* in the context of *An.* 2.5 (see Carter 2019a: 143–67) and takes Anaxagoras' account to become relevant only for Aristotle's discussion of νοῦς in *An.* 3.4 (see Carter 2019a: 168–90 and Carter 2019b). Kalderon 2015 does not mention Anaxagoras or the Anaxagorean view from *An.* 1.2, 405b19–23 at all. Kelsey 2018 pays close attention to the conflict between *LKL* and Anaxagoras' view staged at *An.* 1.2, 405b12–23, but he interprets *LKL* as being relativist rather than capturing something like the *Acquaintance/Contact Requirement* for a genuine knowing. For the relation to Protagorean relativism, see Sections 4.3 and 6.2.