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THE PERIPATETIC METHOD: WALKING WITH WOODBRIDGE, THINKING WITH ARISTOTLE

... thinking and walking are different ways of getting about in a common world which has a make-up agreeable to each of these ways.

Woodbridge, *The Realm of Mind*, 1926¹

PREAMBLE

Walking the streets of the Greenwich Village on a rather bitter, early January day, a year after defending my dissertation and months before receiving my first job offer, I stumbled upon one of those inconspicuous little bookstores tucked away from the bustle of things, just below street level. Descending three stairs, I entered, drawn more by the promise of warmth than by the hope of inspiration. As I made my way toward the Philosophy section, I was prepared to feel my reigning mood of uncertainty augmented by the daunting quantity of words to be read, new ideas somehow to be digested.

Almost immediately, I found myself addressed by a rather pathetic looking little volume: it seemed to be a photocopy of a text, bound in plastic with a spine of burnt orange and nothing to identify its content. Pulling it from the shelf, I was at first put off by its announced title, *Aristotle's Vision of*

Nature, so critical as I was at the time of the metaphysics of vision.

And yet, there was this name, Woodbridge, and another, Randall, that seemed to give the thing a kind of weight. Someone had taken care to photocopy these pages, to bind them together, to preserve them for posterity, perhaps, indeed, for me.

Plus, it only cost a dollar.

And so it was, with a certain hesitation, and yet in wonder, that I opened the book and began to read.

"This small volume is offered," wrote Randall in the introduction, "in the conviction that it is the most important writing on Aristotle's thought since the revolutionary study of Werner Jaeger in 1923."² The statement comes as a shock and one is tempted initially to dismiss it as nothing more than yet another one of those generous, but hyperbolic gestures of respect students tend to bestow upon their teachers.

However, somewhere along the paths of thinking Woodbridge traverses in these

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lectures, this initial impression gives way to the growing realization that Woodbridge, drawing upon his own great mentor, George Santayana, has indeed charted a methodological approach to Aristotle's thinking that *surpasses* that of Jaeger's developmentalism. Although Woodbridge offers only a rough topography of what I have elsewhere called Aristotle's peripatetic legomenology, to pursue the tack Woodbridge takes in these lectures is to be led back to an Aristotle who brings his thinking to life by allowing life to animate his thinking.³

PERIPATETIC LEGOMENOLOGY

To say more than human things with
human voice,
That cannot be; to say human things with
more
Than human voice, that, also, cannot be;
To speak humanly from the height or
from the depth
Of human things, that is acutest speech.
Wallace Stevens, "Chocorua to
its Neighbor"⁴

These lines from Wallace Stevens articulate something of the spirit in which Aristotle's thinking unfolds; for his philosophical endeavor involves precisely that "acutest speech" that attempts "to speak humanly from the height or from the depth of human things." But as the Stevens poem itself brings to language, the realm "of human things" is bound intimately up with the realm of natural things.⁵ This intimacy between human-being and natural being is at the very root of Aristotle's thinking. Thus, although Aristotle has sometimes been accused of seeking "to say more than human things with human

voice," in fact, everything he says is said in an attempt to give voice to the nature of things.⁶ The manner in which nature expresses itself is, for Aristotle, so deeply integrated into the power of human articulation that each genuine attempt to articulate the truth concerning the nature of things touches upon something of that nature however ultimately elusive.⁷ The attempt to speak humanly from the height and depth of human things is, then, to embark on a path of speaking and thinking that uncovers something of the highest and deepest truths of nature itself. This is precisely the path toward which Woodbridge's engagement with Aristotle points; it is the path that Randall recognizes as on par with the contributions of Jaeger, but it is also a path so deeply rooted in Aristotle's thinking that it remains discernible in Jaeger's own developmental approach.

In his seminal book, *Aristoteles, Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Werner Jaeger shows that "at the root of [the Aristotelian texts], there is a process of development."⁸ His great insight is the recognition that Aristotle's texts give voice to a thinking that lives and develops.⁹ The book's appearance in 1923 might best be traced along a line of scholarship that extends back through F. A. Trendelenburg to Hegel, who, a century earlier, argued in his *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* that Aristotle is not to be read as a "unspeculative empiricist" but rather as a great idealist whose thinking was alive to the life of thinking itself.¹⁰ If Hegel's interpretation excited his students because it challenged the "the axiom defended by Locke to Kant up to Schleiermacher, that Aristotle was an unspeculative empiricist," Trendelenburg, challenging Hegel's own tendency to privilege pure thinking, emphasized the organic interaction between the human mind and

the environment.¹¹ As Rosenstock puts it, Trendelenburg “views the role of reason in the context of its genesis and operation in nature.”¹² Situating Jaeger in this tradition at once accounts for a central tension in his reading of Aristotle and connects him to a tradition that had a deep influence on Frederick Woodbridge.¹³

The central tension in Jaeger’s work is between a certain tendency toward systematicity and an affirmation of the living context in which Aristotelian thinking unfolds. The developmental approach to Aristotle’s work resolves the tension beautifully by turning a specific biographical story about Aristotle into the organizing principle of his philosophy. More specifically, Jaeger appeals to Aristotle’s relationship to his teacher, Plato, and his alleged struggle to come to his own terms with the world in the shadow of Plato’s “unlimited genius,” in order to explain away the inconsistencies one encounters if one reads Aristotle’s work as the articulation of fully developed system.¹⁴ But the developmental approach, despite its great recognition of the living nature of Aristotelian thinking, ultimately reinforced the seduction of hermeneutical consistency: it remains animated by an attempt to explain away the apparent contradictions in Aristotle’s thinking. However, the appearing of contradiction is for Aristotle the very sort of diction that announces the presence of a matter for thinking. Aristotle attends to such dictions carefully, not as intractable contradictions, one side of which must be destroyed to allow the other to reign, but as indications of impassés to be navigated, oriented always by the beacon of the appearing of things.¹⁵ His is a thinking on the way. It is peripatetic, just as those who followed him as he walked the grounds of the Lyceum were called “*peripatoi*,” the ones who walk.

Although Woodbridge does not speak of Aristotle’s thinking as peripatetic, the great insight of his own engagement with Aristotle is precisely this attempt to walk with him as he “goes directly without preliminary to the subject-matter involved and follows where it leads him.”¹⁶ Like Jaeger, Woodbridge recognizes the living dimension of Aristotelian thinking; but unlike Jaeger, for Woodbridge, the deepest expression of this living thinking is experienced in Aristotle’s philosophical methodology. Here, “methodology” speaks with a decidedly Greek accent: it names a way of following along after, *meta-hodos*, the *logos* of things.¹⁷ But the *logos* of things expresses a structure accessible to the powers of the human soul, even if our finite powers can never capture the full depth of nature’s expression. John E. Smith at once articulates the meaning of the term “expression” that should be amplified here and emphasizes the dimension of inaccessibility that cannot be eclipsed:

In any present, something is expressed or made manifest, but much is not expressed. I do not mean that the manifest or surface is “appearance” and the depth “reality,” since both are equally real in relation to the individual expressing itself; it is rather that with respect to the expression of any individual in any specific situation, there is always “more to come.”¹⁸

For Smith as for Aristotle, the surface and the depth are part of the same reality at work expressing itself. Human access to the depth of things is, however, mediated by the power of human articulation that itself, as Smith rightly suggests, “is integral to Being.”¹⁹ Thus, the way to the depth of things is mediated by the human capacity for articulation that itself ought not to be understood to fundamentally distort the nature of things, but rather,

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to correspond to and with the expression of nature in ways that bring meaning to life. This sense of correspondence—Woodbridge speaks in terms of “cooperation,” “correlation” and even “conformation”—between the human power of articulation and the natural expression of things is at the root of Aristotle’s methodological approach.²⁰

In an early passage from the *De Anima*, Aristotle articulates the manner in which his investigation into the soul follows along after the things said beautifully about it:

While inquiring concerning the soul, going through the impasses (*diaporountas*) concerning which there is a need to find a way (*euporein*) in order to move forward, it is at the same time necessary to take up along the way the opinions of those who came before, however many showed forth (*arephēnanto*) something concerning the soul, in order that we may take hold of the things said beautifully, but, if any are not said beautifully, that we may beware of these.²¹

The peripatetic methodology is thus a legomenology: the things said, τὰ λεγόμενα, open a path into the nature of things. In this passage the appearance of words related to the Greek, *poros*—road, passage, way—testifies to the dynamic nature of Aristotle’s thinking as a thinking on the way. In the *Physics*, Aristotle has famously designated his way of thinking as a “natural road from what is more familiar and clearer to us to what is more familiar and clearer by nature.”²² In practicing a peripatetic legomenology, however, Aristotle recognizes that this natural path to nature is itself made possible by the nature of language. Woodbridge puts it this way:

Metaphysics thus follows and may refine the uses of common speech. We need not

be metaphysicians to claim mind and body as our rightful possessions. For just as it is natural for us to speak of a man who walks far and lustily, as a great walker, and to endow him with a strong body, so it is natural for us to speak of him who thinks profoundly, as a great thinker, and to endow him with a great mind. Thus common speech condenses into single words meanings which require many sentences for their full expression. Such words economize speech and give to language its wealth of significance.²³

From this perspective, it is unnecessary to posit two separate methodological approaches in Aristotle, the one empirical, dealing with the appearances of sense, the other, dialectical, dealing with the common manner in which people speak.²⁴ Rather, Aristotle’s naturalistic understanding of language roots the things people say in the very nature of things in a way that undercuts the standard dichotomy between naturalism and conventionalism. That dichotomy is predicated on a conception of human-being and human language fundamentally uprooted from the world of nature.²⁵ The wealth of significance endemic to human language is itself an expression of the wealth of significance endemic to nature.

Woodbridge emphasizes this deep correlation between language and nature in his lectures on Aristotle when he writes:

But [Aristotle] will not let the naturalness of language be natural in admission only. He makes it natural in nature. It becomes one of nature’s supreme products, the product in which all other products find articulated linkage. For things to go into language is a going, just as much of a going on their part, and just as natural, as their going into air or water, up or down, or from seed to flower.²⁶

Thus, when Aristotle speaks, again and again, of how things are said, when he attends carefully to the various ways they are said and when he rehearses what others have said about them, his manner of speaking must be heard as organically bound to a way of thinking rooted in the natural community of communication between the powers of the soul and things of nature. Aristotle's phenomenological attunement to the ways things express themselves and his assiduous attempts to get things said beautifully are thus two dimensions of a peripatetic legomenology that speaks with and attends to the language of nature in an attempt to do justice to the nature of things.

THE SURFACE OF THINGS

It is as if being was to be observed,
 As if, among the possible purposes
 Of what one sees, is the purpose to be
 seen,
 The property of the moon, what it evokes.
 Wallace Stevens, "Note on Moonlight"²⁷

Peripatetic legomenology is rooted in Aristotle's naturalistic understanding of the relationship between the powers of the soul and the things with which they cooperate. Woodbridge puts it this way: "The correlation between the powers of the soul and the natural conditions of their exercise is, perhaps, the one dominant and outstanding characteristic of Aristotle's psychology."²⁸ Yet, what Woodbridge identifies as the key to Aristotle's psychology, is in fact the organic enabling condition of Aristotelian thinking itself. His peripatetic legomenology is predicated on the recognition that the *logos* at work in nature is also somehow at work in the soul.

In DA II.5, Aristotle pursues a legomenology of perceiving, "τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι," in order to lend determination to the precise manner in which the power of perceiving cooperates with that which can be perceived. Attending first to the things said about *aisthēsis*, Aristotle identifies the limits of understanding perceiving in purely passive terms.²⁹ He proceeds then to consider the way perceiving itself is said. The articular infinitive that designates the activity of perceiving, "τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι," speaks in the middle voice and so points to perceiving as an active condition of the soul, a *hexis* with the power to actively receive what presents itself in perceiving. By attending to the way perceiving is said, Aristotle is himself able to hear the manner in which perceiving is itself the expression of a cooperation between the power of the soul and the nature of the thing perceived. He begins by delineating the two ways perceiving is said:

Since we say perceiving (τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι) doubly (for what has the potency of hearing and seeing we say hears and sees, even if it happens to be asleep, as well as what is already at-work [τὸ ἤδη ἐνεργοῦν] seeing and hearing), so too should the power of perceiving (ἡ αἴσθησις) be said doubly, on the one hand, as in potency, and on the other, as being-at-work; also similarly that which is perceived (τὸ αἰσθητόν) is a being both in potency and at-work.³⁰

The way we speak about perceiving suggests something decisive about the nature of the phenomenon itself: namely, that it must be twofold. Not only is the Greek word itself articulated in the middle voice, suggesting already that it is not simply passive, but we also speak about hearing and seeing as active powers even when they are not actively

at work. The cascading structure of this passage that moves from “τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι,” to “ἡ αἰσθησις” and ultimately, to “τὸ αἰσθητόν” itself illustrates beautifully the manner in which the way we speak about “τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι” uncovers something of the truth about the power of perceiving in its relation to what is perceived.

By the end of II.5, Aristotle is thus in a position to recognize on the basis of his legomenology of “τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι” both the limits of our ways of saying things and the insights we gain from attending carefully to the ways things are said:

But since these differences [with respect to the senses of potency] are without names, though it has been marked out that they are different and how they are different, there is a need to use the words “to be acted upon” and “to be altered” as though they were appropriate. And the ability to perceive is in potency such as the perceived thing is already in its being-at-work-staying-itself (ἤδη ἐντελεχεῖα), just as has been said. So it is acted upon when it is not like [the perceived thing], but when it has been acted upon (*peponthos*), then it has become likened (*hōmoiōtai*) to it, and is such as that is.³¹

Although the double nature of perceiving finds articulation in the ways perceiving is said, still, our ways of speaking about things do not always articulate clearly the differences heard in our ways of saying things. Aristotle here remains willing to use the common way of speaking about the nature of perceiving as a kind of being acted upon, but he emphasizes the limitations of understanding the encounter between the power of perceiving and what is perceived in purely passive terms. Indeed, his own careful language—and

here particularly his use of the perfect tense—gestures to the moment of perceptual encounter between the power of perceiving and what is perceived that cannot quite be captured in purely passive terms. The perfect tense—“*peponthos*” and “*hōmoiōtai*”—articulates the moment of perceptual encounter as having already happened; this Aristotle is forced to do here because as he himself says: “there is a need to use the words ‘to be acted upon’ and ‘to be altered’ as though they were appropriate.” The need to use these words that amplify the passive dimension of perceiving require Aristotle to speak in the perfect tense in order to give voice to the active side of the cooperative relationship that enables perceiving itself.³²

A legomenological reading of Aristotle as he himself pursues a legomenology of perceiving uncovers his teaching on the nature of perceiving as a cooperative activity between the power of perceiving and what is perceived. This teaching on the cooperative nature of perceptual encounter finds its correlate in Aristotle’s teaching on the nature of thinking itself. Woodbridge rightly makes the correlation between perceiving and thinking central to his own reading of Aristotle’s account of the soul. Thus, according to Woodbridge, the most significant sentence of the *DA* extends the correlation between the powers of perceiving and the perceivable things with which they cooperate to what Woodbridge calls the realm of mind: “just as the power of perceiving is to that which is perceptible, so too is the intellect (τὸ νοῦν) to that which is intelligible.”³³ Aristotle puts it this way in *DA* III.4 on the so-called passive intellect:

[Thinking] must be unaffected (*apathes*) but capable of being receptive (*dektikon*) of the form and in potency it must not

be the form, but such as it is, and it must hold similarly (*ὁμοίως ἔχειν*), with the result that as the ability to perceive is to the thing perceived, so too is thinking to the thing thought.³⁴

Although Aristotle here speaks of thinking as “unaffected,” he immediately refers to the specific capacity thinking has—it is “*dektikon*”—and indeed, to the manner in which it holds itself as similar—“ὁμοίως ἔχειν”—to the form in order to explain how thinking is itself possible. The model to which he gestures as he attempts to articulate the nature of thinking is, in fact, that of perceiving.

Woodbridge emphasizes how this analogy between the powers of perceiving and the power of the intellect articulates the manner in which each of these natural powers of the soul operates in “realms of being congruent with their exercise.”³⁵ Thus, just as vision may be said to operate in the realm of the visible, intellect is said to operate in a realm of the intelligible. Such realms, for Woodbridge, are *not* separate worlds independent of one another—the one bodily, the other mental—rather, they are different ways the natural world expresses itself, each of which is discernible to and by a corresponding power of the soul. Thus, Woodbridge writes:

Men think and reason as well as perceive and take nourishment. Both are equally natural activities on man’s part. But just as the taking of nourishment involves a field of food or food objects, so the exercise of reason involves a field of ideas or ideal objects. In other words, the rational life of man is not something superimposed on his other lives or growing out of them, but is life in a realm of being different from theirs. Nature in its own right must possess such a realm of being,

or man could not think at all, just as he could not see at all if nature in its own right were never visible.³⁶

What the mind thinks and what the eyes see are different aspects of the same natural world operating in what Woodbridge calls distinct “realms of being.” But for Woodbridge, a “realm” does not fragment the integrity of the natural world. Although an idea can no more nourish our physical bodies than a carrot can feed our mind, still the idea and the carrot remain natural expressions of a natural world to which our human digestive and intellectual capacities correspond. Even so, however, in speaking the language of “realms,” Woodbridge risks introducing a chasm between the nutritive, perceptive soul and the intellect that is nowhere present in Aristotle.³⁷

For Woodbridge, inquiry begins with the things we encounter in the world. He writes: “So men find rocks and trees, seas and stars, memories and fancies, and look to see what these things are and what can be said about them. All inquiry starts in this way and not with ‘phenomena’ or ‘experience’ or ‘sense-data.’”³⁸ To use the Aristotelian language of the *Metaphysics*, we begin “wondering about the strange things at hand.”³⁹ Yet for Aristotle, these are precisely the wholes “better known by perceiving” that lead somehow along a natural road to the nature of each thing.⁴⁰ By insisting that these things we encounter are not “phenomena” or “experience” or “sense-data,” Woodbridge seeks to emphasize that these encountered things are not at first encountered in philosophical terms. And even if this point resonates with Aristotle’s own starting point in the world of common human interactions, Aristotle’s thinking always already takes the things encountered themselves as phenomena;

not, indeed, as phenomena disjoined from being, but as appearances in and through which being expresses itself. Thus, although Woodbridge follows Aristotle in his attempt to begin with the things encountered, he nevertheless parts ways with Aristotle insofar as he refuses to pursue the manner in which thinking does in fact grow somehow out of perceiving even if perceiving and thinking operate in distinct, albeit parallel, "realms." Spinoza, it seems, has exerted a bit too much influence on Woodbridge in this regard, for the sort of parallelism Woodbridge seems to advocate is more at home in Spinoza than in Aristotle who, despite Woodbridge's claims to the contrary, sought to weave perceiving and thinking together into the fabric of nature.⁴¹

A PATH PHANTASTIC

The imagination loses vitality as it ceases to adhere to what is real.

Wallace Stevens⁴²

In *The Realm of Mind*, Woodbridge argues that walking, perceiving and thinking are thoroughly natural and yet also, that they belong to different "realms" within one "realm of being."⁴³ Woodbridge is careful to insist that to speak of a realm of mind found within *the* realm of being is neither to exclude nor to devalue the other realms in which being expresses itself differently. Yet his own tendency to insist that the realm of mind is incommensurable with the other realms of being threatens the organic coherence of nature. To put this in terms of the history of philosophy gestured to above, there remains in Woodbridge a residual segregation of mind and body that seems to be more the result of a Spinozistic response to Cartesian

dualism than that of a genuine engagement with Aristotle. Although Woodbridge does not speak of nature as an expression of God's infinite attributes, two of which are thought and extension, nevertheless, like Spinoza, Woodbridge insists that thinking can be neither derived from nor reduced to the operations of the body. If Spinoza calls thinking an attribute of God, Woodbridge designates it as an operation at work in a realm of mind as part of the overarching realm of being.

Yet, by introducing the spatial metaphor of the "realm," which itself, according to Woodbridge, names "neither a place nor an event" but rather a "region inhabited," Woodbridge reinforces the impression that the life of the mind is in some fundamental way divorced from the life of walking and perceiving.⁴⁴ This impression is augmented by Woodbridge's tendency to emphasize precisely the difference between the realms in which walking, perceiving, and thinking operate. In the *Realm of Mind*, for example, even as Woodbridge insists that thinking is also an embodied activity, nevertheless, he writes: "But when these bodies think, they do something incomparable with what they do when they walk."⁴⁵ The impulse to emphasize the difference seems animated by Woodbridge's desire to insist that what the mind discovers by means of its operation is not a mere construct of the mind, but a genuine discovery that belongs to the logical structure of nature itself.⁴⁶ In his admirable attempt to avoid the pitfalls endemic to the modern conception of the constructive, agent mind, however, Woodbridge relinquishes something of Aristotle's powerful but difficult understanding of the life of the mind as organically bound up with the perceiving life and the walking life.

Although Woodbridge insists, rightly, that the life of the mind is not superimposed upon the life of perceiving and walking, and

further, that there is in Aristotle no evolution of the powers of the soul, still, however, Aristotle himself is driven to account for the manner in which what is given in perceiving is itself ultimately also given to thinking, not as something expressed differently in different realms, but as something that emerges from or indeed grows out of our most rudimentary encounters with things. This can be felt already in Aristotle's account of perceiving, which is said to operate at its deepest level both according to a certain *logos* and indeed with a kind of discerning (*krinein*).⁴⁷ It can be heard in Aristotle's various attempts to delineate the operation of the *phantasia* or imagination as rooted in but somehow also different from perceiving even as it enables thinking. Somehow this community of powers operates according to a *logos* that belongs as much to them as to nature itself. Indeed, this is a community of communication, a joint accomplishment of the soul and the things it encounters made possible by a *logos* that lives an amphibious life, at home in the body as much as the mind.

To pursue this living *logos* as it makes the passage from perceiving through imagining to thinking possible is a longer, more complicated and yet more beautiful path than it is possible to take here.⁴⁸ Woodbridge, however, in his 1940 book, *An Essay on Nature*, has gone some distance down the path and has left us the following words that trace the contours of a difficult itinerary:

The only magic worth having is that born of a happy marriage of sense and intellect, the touch, not of Midas, but of metaphor, which so transmutes existence into speech that what things are and what they are said to be become increasingly a profounder intimacy with Nature. She is metaphor, pantomime punctuated with sounds, and is not out-of-doors waiting

to be admitted to conversation. She is jointly translating and translated.⁴⁹

Aristotle's peripatetic legomenology is rooted in nature's metaphorical power, and one of nature's most powerful metaphors is the human imagination. If, as Aristotle says in the *Poetics*, "a good metaphor is to theorize things that are similar," then the *phantasia* in Aristotle is a good metaphor indeed, for it enables Aristotle to theorize the manner in which that which is encountered in perceiving nevertheless gives itself to be thought.⁵⁰ The enigmatic account of the *phantasia* in Aristotle is enigmatic precisely because it attempts to articulate the manner in which what is given in perceiving can and in fact does become a matter for thinking.⁵¹ To understand the *phantasia* as a metaphor is to theorize it as that which carries perceivings *over* into thinking—*metapherein*—thus enabling a passage from one dimension into another without either reducing thinking to perceiving or perceiving to thought.

On the one hand, the *phantasia* in Aristotle is rooted in perceiving. Aristotle calls it "a certain motion and not to come into being without the power of perceiving." And he goes on to claim that "this motion would be neither possible without the power of perceiving nor present in beings that do not perceive. . . ."⁵² On the other hand, there is no thinking without an appearance (*phantasmatos*), as Aristotle says repeatedly.⁵³ As a metaphor in the sense suggested here, the *phantasia* is somehow capable of translating what is encountered in perceiving into the vernacular of thinking. In Aristotle, the metaphor that accounts for the metaphorical activity of the *phantasia* is that of the lever or joint. The intimate connection between the joint and articulation is heard in the Greek word "*arthron*," which means first of all, "joint,"

but then also “to articulate,” “*arthroun*.”⁵⁴ The joint, which for Aristotle functions like a lever insofar as small movements on one side of the fulcrum can cause greater movements further from the fulcrum, offers a powerful way to understand the manner in which two phenomena as different from one another as perceiving is from thinking can, nevertheless, be intimately and organically connected. The analogy would go something like this: just as the lever manifests the intimate connection between distance and weight or force, two phenomena that seem disparate and disconnected, so too, the *phantasia* manifests the intimate connection between perceiving and thinking.⁵⁵ That something like this is at work in Aristotle may be heard in this passage from the *De Motu Animalium*:

But appearances (*phantasia*) and sense-perceptions and ideas are ways of becoming-other. For on the one hand, sense-perceptions arise straight away, being a kind of becoming-other, on the other hand, being-appeared to (*phantasia*) and thinking (*noēsis*) have the power of the things (τῆν τῶν πραγμάτων . . . δύναμιν). For the form (*eidos*) that is thought of [the warm or cold] or pleasant or fearful happens to be in some way like each of the things themselves; and because of this those who are just thinking [these things] shudder and are frightened. All these things are affections (*pathē*) and ways of becoming-other. And when body parts become-other, some become larger, some smaller. It is not unclear, then, that a small change generated in the origin produces great and numerous differences at a distance—just as, if the rudder is briefly shifted, a great shift of the prow is generated.⁵⁶

The example of the rudder illustrates the point that small shifts close to the fulcrum

can widely alter the course of the ship. In this passage, Aristotle connects the phenomena of the rudder, which functions here on the lever principle, with the origins of perceiving, being appeared to (*phantasia*) and thinking in the things encountered in the world. Indeed, it is the power of the things themselves that moves us to shudder and be frightened not only when we perceive them but also when we imagine or think them. The vitality of the imagination and the life of thinking itself is rooted in the power of things expressing themselves.

Ultimately however, it is not simply, as the above passage suggests, the form or look, the *eidos*, of things that is taken up by perceiving, imagining, and thinking, but the *logos* expressing itself in and through the *eidos* that enables the cooperative connection between the powers of the soul and the power of things to move us in certain ways. This *logos* too is at work in the things encountered in perceiving, and it can be translated by the imagination into the vernacular of thinking precisely because it belongs to things as an expression of nature itself. To borrow from Woodbridge, perhaps it might be said this way: for things perceived to go into thinking is a going, just as much of a going on their part, and just as natural, as their going into air or water, or up or down, or from seed to flower, or, indeed, for a winter walk in the city. Thus, by attending to the *logos* of things, Aristotle’s own imaginative thinking is able to chart a path to a profounder intimacy with nature in which the things said are heard to give voice to the nature of things.

POSTAMBLE

The longer, more difficult and more beautiful path toward which I point here but

cannot follow further in this chapter has been marked by the words and poetry of Wallace Stevens. Stevens' writing gives voice to the recognition at the root of Aristotle's peripatetic legomenology and Woodbridge's naturalism: human-being is at home in nature even if nature remains always also alien to us. Stevens emphasizes the connection between human-being and natural being by focusing on the power of the imagination: "... absolute fact includes everything that the imagination includes. This is our intimidating thesis."⁵⁷ The thesis, however intimidating, implies that even the human imagination must be experienced as a way, perhaps as an extraordinarily powerful way, nature expresses itself. The thesis may indeed be intimidating precisely because it requires us to consider the degree to which we are bound intimately up with—now to use Woodbridge's words—the "whole vast scheme of things," which "seems to be engaged in expressing what it is."⁵⁸

The dialogue between the guitarist and his audience that opens Stevens' poem "The Man with the Blue Guitar" suggests the depth of the human connection with the things that are, even as it articulates the impossibility of reducing the reality of things to our attempts to articulate them well:

The man bent over his guitar,
A shearsman of sorts. The day was green.

They said, "You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are."

The man replied, "Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar."

And they said then, "But play, you must,
A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,

A tune upon the blue guitar
Of things exactly as they are."⁵⁹

Play, we must, a tune beyond us, yet ourselves: this indeed articulates something of the path along which Aristotle's thinking unfolds. And if the tune he plays attempts assiduously to say things exactly as they are, we too must recognize that things as they are are changed upon the blue guitar, not indeed by being rendered other than what they are; but rather, things are exactly what they are in relational dialogue with the things they encounter. One path toward this recognition was marked for me on that bitter January day when I encountered a strangely bound burnt orange volume on a walk through the streets of Greenwich Village.

Christopher P. Long

NOTES

¹ See Woodbridge, 1926.

² *Ibid.*, xvi.

³ The idea of a phenomenology of the things said is developed in Long, 2006. The term, "legomenology," however, was introduced first in an essay on Aeschylus and Hesiod as a way to articulate the methodological approach to reading the *Theogony* and the *Oresteia*. See, Long, 2007, 68.

⁴ See Stevens, 1997, 266–7.

⁵ Gyorgyi Voros mentions "Chocorua to Its Neighbor" when he speaks both about the degree to which Stevens "joyfully affirms human nature, while allowing nonhuman Nature its own integrity and domain" and, later in his life, "more and more sang of a self subsumed under a greater natural order." See Voros, 1997, 113, 151–2.

⁶ For one poignant example, see Dewey, 1958, 48. For a more detailed discussion of Dewey's misreading of Aristotle and of why Dewey, of all people, should have known better, see Long, 2011, 15–19.

⁷ A passage from book II of the *Metaphysics*, 993a30–b3, emphasizes at once the accessibility and the elusiveness of the nature of things. For a discussion of this passage, see Long, 2011, 50–6.

- ⁸ See Jaeger, 1923, 5. The translation is my own.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 4. The formulation seems to have been borrowed from Goethe.
- ¹⁰ Hegel thus writes in typical fashion: “The Platonic is the objective in general, but the living principle, the principle of Subjectivity is missing; and the living principle, Subjectivity, not in the sense of an accidental and merely particular Subjectivity, but rather pure Subjectivity is proper to Aristotle.” See Hegel, 1986, vol. 19, 153.
- ¹¹ Michelet reports that the students in Hegel’s seminars on Aristotle were eager to hear this new, living Aristotle. See, Michelet, 1837, 686.
- ¹² See Rosenstock, 1964, 20.
- ¹³ Trendelenburg is the connection between Woodbridge and Jaeger. As Suzanne Marchand notes: “Upon Jaeger’s induction into the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1924, Gustav Roethe claimed that the philosophically oriented philologist represented a link to the tradition of Schleiermacher and Adolf Trendelenburg as well as an unswerving defender of text-critical accuracy.” See Marchand, 2003, 320. Woodbridge’s own interest in Aristotle was cultivated during the period he spent in Berlin studying with Friedrich Paulsen. See, Lachs and Talisse, 2008, 345. In his book on the character and development of German Universities, Paulsen speaks in compelling and personal terms of the way Trendelenburg, “the restorer of Aristotelian philosophy,” gave “his pupils heart for the study of Aristotle.” See, Paulsen, 1895, 69, 147. There is, then, an important line of scholarship stemming from Trendelenburg that connects American pragmatic naturalism to a German philosophical and philological tradition that includes not only Jaeger but also Dilthey, Brentano, and Heidegger. The American tradition of naturalism can be traced from Trendelenburg to Paulsen to Woodbridge, George Santyana and George Sylvester Morris, and thus to Dewey and John Herman Randall. For its part, the philological side of the German tradition might be traced from Trendelenburg to Wilamovitz and Hermann Diels to Jaeger, while on the phenomenological side it might be traced from Trendelenburg to Dilthey, Brentano, and Heidegger. For an

- attempt to bring the tradition of American naturalism back into dialogue with German phenomenology via a reading of Aristotle that is informed by that German tradition of close philological attention, see Long, 2011.
- ¹⁴ See Jaeger, 1923, 11. There is no question that Aristotle was influenced by Plato and, indeed, that their relationship must have been a profound and perhaps, at times, a tense one. The issue is that reading Aristotle in the shadow of Plato eclipses the extent to which Aristotle, as Woodbridge insisted, sought always to address and pursue the things at hand (*Met.* I.1, 982b13).
- ¹⁵ Joseph Owens draws upon precisely this recognition of the important role such impasses or *aporiai* play in Aristotle’s thinking in his seminal study of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. See Owens, 1978.
- ¹⁶ See Woodbridge, 1965, 17.
- ¹⁷ See Long, 2011, 6–8.
- ¹⁸ Smith, 1971, 599.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 605. The difference between expression and articulation is important. Articulation, following Smith, “means the making of something distinct so that it stands out as an identifiable unit with its parts arranged in significant patterns. On the other hand, articulation means that the manner of making something distinct requires its being set in precise relations to other things. The term, therefore, focuses attention on what is individual and on the fact of its belonging to a system or world at the same time.” *Ibid.*, 602. For a more detailed discussion of expression and articulation, see Long, 2011.
- ²⁰ Woodbridge writes: “The correlation is . . . between an act and a field of action, and an act and a field of action are as different as can be, but it is only the cooperation of the two that is ever effective. The effect of this correlation in operation is the ‘conformation’ of the soul to what is perceives.” See Woodbridge, 1965, 46.
- ²¹ See *De Anima* 403b20–4. All translations are my own.
- ²² See *Physics* 184a16–8. For a further discussion of Aristotle’s path of inquiry in relation to the things said, see Long, 2006, 253–9. See too, Long, 2011, 1–20, 49–71.
- ²³ See Woodbridge, 1926, 6.

- ²⁴ See Irwin, 1988, 29–30. John Cleary argues the case for a unified methodological approach in Aristotle along the lines of the legomenology developed here. See Cleary, 1994.
- ²⁵ Deborah Modrak calls the traditional dichotomy into question when she insists that Aristotle advocates a conventionalism with respect to the relationship between phoneme and meaning and a naturalism with respect to the relationship between meaning and reference. See Modrak, 2001, 19.
- ²⁶ See Woodbridge, 1965, 24.
- ²⁷ Stevens, 1984, 449.
- ²⁸ Woodbridge, 1926, 45.
- ²⁹ DA 416b32–417a9.
- ³⁰ DA 417a10–14.
- ³¹ DA 418a1–6. The translation of *entelecheia* as “being-at-work-staying-itself” is drawn from Joe Sachs. See Sachs, 2001.
- ³² For another example of the use of the perfect tense to gesture to that moment of transformation that is difficult to articulate, see the discussion of praxis in *Met. IX.6*, in which Aristotle speaks of complete actions as actions in which we can say, at once, the same thing is seeing and has seen, or is thinking and has thought. *Met. IX.6*, 1048b30–5. For a discussion of that passage along lines similar to those pursued here, see Long, 2004, 98–103.
- ³³ See Woodbridge, 1965, 136, 45–6. Woodbridge calls this an “algebraic sentence,” but it is more geometric than algebraic insofar as, on Woodbridge’s own account, it establishes an analogy between terms that are correlated without being connected.
- ³⁴ DA III.4, 429a15–18.
- ³⁵ See Woodbridge, 1965, 46.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.
- ³⁷ To be sure, Aristotle distinguishes between various parts of the soul, but he thinks of these “parts” most often in terms of capacities or powers that may best be articulated in terms of various dimensions of the soul as opposed to segregated parts. Aristotle articulates the various dimensions of the soul, for example, in DA II.2, by talking about the various senses in which we speak about living: “thinking, perceiving, motion and stasis with respect to place, and the motion that results from nourishment, that is, perishing and growth.” DA 413a23–5. In II.3,

he speaks more explicitly of the “powers of the soul” (*τῶν δὲ δυνάμεων τῆς ψυχῆς*) as he delineates its nutritive, perceptive, locomotive and deliberative capacities (DA 414a29–32). To be fair, Woodbridge himself argues eloquently against the modern tendency to divorce the mind from the body. In his 1926 book, *The Realm of Mind*, Woodbridge draws on precisely this vision of nature in order at once to critique and explain the origins of the modern dichotomy between mind and body. There he shows how the modern assumption that the mind is an agent separable from but operating with the body, specifically the brain, leads to the notion that the immediate objects of the mind are “nervous processes in the brain.” But, he argues, this is patently untrue for although the tree may stimulate a brain, what the mind thinks is not these brain processes, but the tree. The recognition that the idea of the tree is different from the processes of the brain leads, on the assumption of the mind as agent, to the positing of a dichotomy between mind and body. See Woodbridge, 1926, 13–15.

- ³⁸ See Woodbridge et al., 1937, 163.
- ³⁹ *Met.* 982b13–14.
- ⁴⁰ *Phys.* 184a31–3.
- ⁴¹ Spinoza recognizes thinking and corporeality as two attributes of God’s infinite substance. This leads to a strict parallelism between ideas and things as expressed clearly in *Ethics*, book II, proposition VII: “The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things.” See Spinoza, 1985.
- ⁴² Stevens, 1997, 645.
- ⁴³ Woodbridge, 1926, 35.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 29, 34.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 137. Emphasis added.
- ⁴⁶ Woodbridge writes: “If, however, our thinking is to be wise and sane and correct, it is not the body which makes it so, but a genuine coherence among the things we think about. It is something we discover. We discover, that is, that there is in the realm of being a structure by virtue of which one fact or event in it may lead our thinking on to other facts and events what are involved, and opens us to the reaches of space and time and what they contain. This structure cannot be described as physical. It is logical.” *Ibid.*, 46.

- ⁴⁷ In an unpublished 1973 paper entitled "Aristotle on the Ontology of the Senses," John M. Cooper traces the connection between *aisthēsis* and *krinein* in order to account for the active dimension of perceiving in Aristotle. I am grateful to Professor Cooper for sending me a copy of this paper. See, Cooper, 1973. For a detailed discussion of the role of *krinein* in Aristotle's account of *aisthēsis*, see Long, 2011, 127–31. There are a number of important passages in which Aristotle introduces the capacity to discern—*krinein*—into the logic of perceiving. See, for example, *DA* II.10, 422a20–1, III.2, 425b20–2, 426b12–14, and 426b17–22; in *Parts of Animals*, Aristotle insists that animals too can discern the pleasant in what they taste. See, *Parts of Animals* 678b8–9.
- ⁴⁸ This is, in fact, the longer path that was pursued in Chapters 4 and 5 of Long, 2011.
- ⁴⁹ See Woodbridge, 1940, 242.
- ⁵⁰ *Poetics* 1459a7–8.
- ⁵¹ The nature of the *phantasia* in Aristotle has given rise to a long tradition of rich scholarship. In calling it a metaphor here, the intent is decidedly not to suggest that, as Philoponus has insisted, the *phantasia* is that which "carries off from things that are and constructs a representation of that which is not, for instance a centaur." See, Philoponus, 2000, 497, 24–6. Rather, metaphor here draws on the original Greek meaning of "*meta-pherein*," to carry from one place to another.
- ⁵² *DA* III.3, 428b10–19.
- ⁵³ See, *DA* III.7, 431a16–17 and III.8, 432a13–14. Freudenthal suggests that the difficulties associated with interpreting the meaning of the *phantasia* in Aristotle result from its position between perceiving and thinking. See, Freudenthal, 1863, 53. Wedin has suggested, to name only one scholar who has taken up the question of the *phantasia* as situated between perceiving and thinking in a serious way, that the *phantasia* ought not be understood as a "full fledged faculty" at all, but rather, it should be understood to serve the full faculties of *aisthēsis* and *noēsis*. See Wedin, 1988, 46–52. For a detailed discussion of these issues, see Long, 2011, 79–89.

- ⁵⁴ ἄρθρον, τό, see Liddell, 1968. For a discussion of this connection, see Whitney, 1981.
- ⁵⁵ For a discussion of the "lever principle" on which this analogy depends, see De Groot, 2008, 46.
- ⁵⁶ See Nussbaum, 1985, 701b16–23. For a justification of the translation of *phantasia* as "being appeared to," see Long, 2011, 82. See too, Lycos, 1964.
- ⁵⁷ Stevens, 1951, 61. For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Critchley, 2005, 53–4.
- ⁵⁸ Woodbridge, 1926, 62.
- ⁵⁹ Stevens and Stevens, 1984, 133.

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