Aristotle's Treatment of Phantasia

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Aristotle's treatment of φαντασία, one of the most original and remarkable features of his psychology, is also one on which it may still be possible to say something. Among the literature, it is still valuable to refer to the monograph of J. Freudenthal, "Ueber den Begriff des Wortes φαντασία bei Aristoteles" (Göttingen, 1863), which is the fullest treatment I know. J. Frohschammer, "Über die Principien der aristotelischen Philosophie und die Bedeutung des Phantasie in derselben" (Munich, 1881) is less important. Among other items in the literature I shall here mention simply the relevant articles in Bonitz's Index Aristotelicus (1870; thus not available to Freudenthal), G. Rodier's edition of the De Anima (2 vols., Paris, 1900), that of R. D. Hicks (Cambridge, 1907), esp. pp. liii-liv and 452 ff., and most recently the editio maior of Sir David Ross (Oxford, 1961), esp. pp. 38-39 and 281 ff., together with the relevant parts of his Parva Naturalia (1955) (pp. 32-33 and 268-9, with those parts of the introduction generally which deal with the De Memoria, De Insomniis and De Divinatione per Somnum). Ross wrote earlier on φαντασία in his Aristotle (1923; ed. 5, 1949), pp. 142-65. In addition, it is still profitable to consult what is said about φαντασία at various scattered points in E. M. Cope's commentary on the Rhetoric (3 vols., posthumous, 1877; none of it composed, it would appear, later than 1869).

Most of this paper will be concerned with De Anima III. 3 but other passages both in the De Anima and elsewhere would be relevant to any adequate study. Other relevant passages are E.N. VII. 1152 b 26-33, VIII. 1155 b 23-27, IX. 1166 a 2-19 and X. 1176 a 15-22.
In the Parva Naturalia the De Memoria, De Insomniis and De Divinatione per Somnum all involve Aristotle's conception of φαντασία, as to chs. 6-8 of the De Motu Animalium. Posterior Analytics II. 19 does not mention φαντασία by name (the Analytics do not do so anywhere), but it is relevant. Further, a special application is given to the terms τὸ φαντόμενον ἄγαθον and φαντασία τάγαθος in the field of ethics (E.N. III. 1113 a 15 - b 2 and 1114 a 31 - b 25). III. 8. 432 a 7-14 is important. Moreover, in his treatment of νόησις in De An. III. 4 ff. Aristotle insists on the necessity of φαντάσματα for thought, and in III. 9-11 φαντασία is presented as involved in desire and movement. There are also a few passages in the Rhetoric where φαντασία enters: e.g. I. 11. 6 (1370 a 27 ff.), I. 11. 14-18 (1370 b 32 - 1371 a 2 4), II. 2. 2 (1378 b 9-10), II. 5. 1 (1382 a 2 1 ff.), II. 5. 16 (1383 a 1 7), II. 6. 14 (1384 a 2 2, with 1383 b 12 ff.) and III. 1. 6 (1404 a 1 1).

Fortunately we do not need to concern ourselves about the chronology of Aristotle's works, beyond noting that his treatment of φαντασία goes markedly beyond anything to be found in Plato. Nuyens, in his L'Évolution de la Psychologie d'Aristote (Dutch edition, 1939; French edition, 1948), distinguished a phase in which soul was thought of as a vital force from Aristotle's final conception of it as an ἐνέργος or ἐνεργεία, and he has (in this respect rightly, I think) been followed, though with variations, by Lulofs in his edition of the De Insomniis and De Divinatione per Somnum (1947) and by Ross in his editions of the Parva Naturalia (1955), pp. 16-17 and of the De Anima (ed. maior, 1961), pp. 9-11, and in his paper on "The Development of Aristotle's Thought" (Proceedings of the British Academy, xliii (1958), pp. 63-78, esp. pp. 65-67). It is not easy to extract a single view
from Ross's pronouncements, but he clearly wishes to assign the whole of the Parva Naturalia to what he calls the biological (i.e., middle) period, and what he calls the central part of the De Anima to the last phase of Aristotle's work, that of his final stay in Athens. ("325-4" on p. 11 of his De Anima must be a misprint for "335-4"; whether the central part of the De Anima" (Proc. Brit. Acad., p. 66) includes III. 3 is not made explicit; p. 17 of his Parva Naturalia, in speaking of "De Anima 2", would seem at first sight to exclude it, but II may be understood as including III. 1-3.

Plato

I have spoken already of the originality of Aristotle's treatment. In order to see this, it is necessary to contrast him with Plato—a task rendered the more difficult by the relatively greater fluidity of Plato's language. (The word φαντασία seems not to occur in extant Greek literature earlier than the middle dialogues of Plato (plural at Rep. II. 382 E, singular at Thet. 152 C.))

Both Plato and Aristotle, naturally enough, contrast appearance (φαινόμενα) with reality (οντα) (cf. Pl. Rep. X. 596 E, and Aristotle on τό φαινόμενον ἀγαθόν: Ε.Ν. III, 1114 a 32). What has to be noted is the metaphysical employment of the distinction which is found in Plato but not in Aristotle, at any rate in his mature philosophizing. Kant, in the Critique of Pure Reason, undoubtedly had Plato in mind when he drew his distinction between phenomena and noumena, radically un-Platonic though the interpretation was that he gave to it in his own philosophy. If I am right, the contrast does not occur in Plato in those very words, but there are similar expressions (νοείσθαι — ἐρασθαί, Rep. VI. 507 B). The notion of φαινεσθαι was bound to appear in a different light when the theory of Ideas
had been abandoned, the Platonic χωρισμός denied, and substantiality (and with it the centre of intellectual interest) assigned to the physical world. The following passages in Plato may be noted briefly as having relevance of one kind or another:

(1) The simile of the divided line at the close of Republic VI, where Plato uses the imagery of shadows and reflections (τὰ ἐν τοῖς ὄδασι φαντάσματα, 510 A) to clarify the ontological and epistemological distinctions he is anxious to bring out; and the further imagery of the cave and its shadows at the beginning of Republic VII.

(2) The metaphysical treatment of representative art in Republic X (to 608 B). The relevant terminology is: φάντασμα 598 B; εἰδωλον 598 B and frequently; φαίνομεν ἀλλ' οὐκ ὄντα, 599 A (cf. 596 E, 598 A-B); ὁ τοῦ εἰδώλου ποιητής, ὁ μιμητής, φαμεν, τοῦ μὲν ὄντος οὐδὲν ἐπαίει, τοῦ δὲ φαίνομένου, 601 B; φαίνεται, 602 B; εἰδωλα εἰδωλοποιοῦντα, 605 C. With this distinction are significantly associated the distinction of ἐπιστήμη from πίστις ὤρη (δόξα ὤρη), 601 E ff., and δοξάζειν, 603 A.

(3) The characterization of time at Timaeus 37 D, where Plato says of the δημιουργός: εἰκὼ δ' ἐπενδεῖ κινητόν τίνα αἰώνος ποιήσαι, καὶ διαχομῶν ἀμα οὐρανὸν ποιεῖ μένοντος αἰῶνος ἐν ἐνὶ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἵσυσαν αἰώνιον εἰκόνα, τοῦτον δὲ θ' χρόνον ἰδιομάχαμεν.

(4) Plato characterizes the Sophist, in the dialogue of that name, as a maker of φαντάσματα. The φανταστικὴ τέχνη, he maintains, is one of two subdivisions of the μιμητικὴ or εἰδωλοποιικὴ, the other being the εἰκαστικὴ (235 B-D, 236 B-C, 264 C, 266 B-C (where the term employed is εἰδωλουργική) and 268 C-D). The sophist is also called a γόης (235 A), and it is noteworthy that a reference to δόξα ψευδῆς is introduced at 264 C. Cornford (Plato's Theory of
Knowledge (1935)) holds that 234 is a reminiscence of the Allegory of the Cave (p. 195), and on p. 198 points with especial force to the way the language of 232 recalls the treatment of μύηςις in Rep. X. At 264 B he speaks of φαντασία as σύμμειξις αίσθήσεως και δόξης.

(5) There are two passages in the Philebus which may be mentioned:
(a) what is said of μνήμη and ἀνάμνησις at 34 A-B, where μνήμη is defined as σωτηρία αίσθήσεως. R. G. Bury aptly quotes the parallel phrase in Gra. 437 B, ἡ μνήμη --- μονὴ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, in an etymologizing passage. (b) though the term φαντασία does not occur, the use of φαντάξεσθαι is relevant at 38 C-D: Τί ποτε ἄρα ἔστι τὸ παρὰ τὴν πέτραν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστάναι φανταξόμενον ὑπὸ τὴν δένδρα; ταῦτ' εἰπεῖν ἢν τις πρός ἐμνυτὸς δοκεῖ σοι, τοιαύτα ἂντα κατιδὼν φαντασθέντα αὐτῷ ποτὲ; the notion of "appearing" is clearly involved here.

On Plato's usage as a whole, one can, I think, hardly do better than quote the words of W. H. Thompson, in his article "On the Genuineness of the Sophist of Plato, and on some of its Philosophical Bearings" (Journal of Philology, vol. viii (1879), pp. 290-322); referring to Sph 264 B, he writes (p. 293): "A φαντασία is --- according to Plato a variety of δόξα." He goes on to quote Simplicius as stating that in the Sophist and Philebus Plato places φαντασία ἐν μίξει δόξης τε καὶ αἰσθήσεως (Simp. on De An. III. 3. 428 a 24, p. 211.33-34 in Hayduck's edition, 1882), and refers to Phlb. 38 C. (See above on Sph. 264 B.)

Further, what is said of εἶδωλα in the Republic and Sophist receives special point from Plato's sharply contrasting theory of εἶδή.

A few features of the treatment of imagination in later philosophy may deserve brief mention. (1) Descartes' stress on the
epistemological deficiencies of *imaginatio*, and his contrast of it with clear and distinct ideas, is very much in the Platonic tradition. (2) The words of Hobbes, "imagination therefore is nothing but decaying sense" (Leviathan, ch. 2) are quoted by Freudenthal (loc. cit., p. 24), who gives not only other passages of Hobbes but also the highly appropriate words of Aristotle, ἡ φαντασία ἐστὶν αἴσθησις τῆς ἀνθρώπης (Rhet. I. 11, 1370 a 28, a passage on which Cope has a lengthy note). (3) Two aspects of Hume's theory of knowledge are relevant, his use of imagination as a sort of faculty and his theory of "ideas" as products and copies of impressions, capable of differentiation from the latter mainly as having less vividness and force. This reminds one again of Aristotle's phrase αἰσθησις ἀνθρώπης. The part played by imagination in Hume's theory of knowledge is very large. (4) Kant's elaborate treatment of perceptual knowledge in the part of the Critique of Pure Reason called the "Transcendental Deduction of the Categories" makes imagination (*Einzahlungskraft*) an essential element in that. His treatment of sense-perception is in some respects far more elaborate than anything to be found in Greek philosophy.

In the passage on imagination in his Aristotle, pp. 142-45, Ross first of all marks off "the passages where Aristotle speaks of φαντασία as being at work in the presence of the sensible object" (p. 142), going on however to say "But for the most part Aristotle describes imagination in a way which involves no such reversal of his doctrine of sensation; and it may be doubted whether the passages just referred to represent his deliberate view. Usually φαντασία is described as operating only after the sensible object has gone" (p. 143). He goes on then to list the main functions of φαντασία as (1) the formation of after-images; (2) memory; (3) dreams;
(4) imagination in relation to desire, and (5) imagination in relation to thought. This classification is useful, though we may perhaps be reluctant to commit ourselves on the subject of what does or does not represent Aristotle's deliberate view. However, I shall attempt here a different approach, via an examination of the uses of the English word "imagination", which is regularly used to translate φαντασία, and the division I shall use will be, in the main, that between those cases where what is intended is the occurrence of a mental image, and those which, on the other hand, are propositional in character.

Φαντασία, then, is usually rendered in English by a word derived from the Latin "imaginatio", though we have also "fancy" and "fantasy", formed directly from the Greek. Coleridge, in his Biographia Literaria, drew what he regarded as an important distinction between "imagination" and "fancy" and assigned a marked superiority of status to the former in his aesthetic theory. (Professor Guido Calogero, incidentally, tells me that some recent Italian writers on aesthetics have reversed his usage.) However, it is difficult to see that the distinction amounts to more than a difference of range of application, which is purely a matter of degree; and in any case it belongs to the theory of artistic or poetic imagination, with which Aristotle does not concern himself when writing about φαντασία.

It will perhaps help if at this stage we examine some of the uses of the English words "imagine" and "imagination", which are exceedingly complex, in order to prepare the way for disentangling the senses which Aristotle gives to φαντασία.

(1) "Imagine" and "imagination" are sometimes used of our forming or having a mental image, as when we speak of imagining a certain possible view, or say (to use the Cartesian example) that a chiliagon is not something we can imagine.
(2) If, on the other hand, I ask you to imagine (or, if you like, envisage) the President's being killed in a motor crash, I am probably not asking you to form a mental image of a smashed-up automobile, but to form a supposition (not, be it noted, a belief as to any actual or future state of affairs) and draw from it, together with the rest of your body of knowledge about American and world politics, conclusions about what on that supposition (or hypothesis) would be likely to ensue. This is one form of "imagining that such-and-such is the case". When we express a moral criticism of some one for lack of imagination, what we are criticizing is a failure to put one's self in the other person's shoes, a failure to form the supposition of being oneself in the other person's position, and draw the consequences about what one would think and feel under those circumstances.

(3) To imagine is sometimes to form a tentative belief, which may be false or true, which is not indeed baseless but for which the evidence is not compelling. E.g. "I imagine that he has gone to the Post Office". "I cannot imagine that he would go out without paying" is clearly similar to "I cannot believe that he would go out without paying". This usage is particularly associated with the first person singular of the present tense; used in other persons, it tends to be used to report (or envisage) judgments of the form "I imagine --- ".

(4) To imagine is often to hold a belief which is false, and which moreover is baseless, or at any rate has little to support it. Such is the case of the man who imagines that he is Napoleon. With these may be classed those where the belief, though not known to be false, is, or is thought by the speaker, to be unlikely to be true; we may instance the case of the student with an optimistic view of his attainments who is said to imagine that he is going to pass his examination. In this use we do not employ the first person singular
of the present tense.

This usage is confined, I think, to factual beliefs, to that perhaps of which there could be a mental image, as distinct from beliefs which are purely or almost purely evaluative. But it is impossible to draw a sharp line.

One may wish to say that, when we see the obverse of a coin, we imagine the reverse; but perhaps this is a specialized use.

We need not concern ourselves about the extent to which mental imagery is involved, beyond noting that it frequently may be, that for most purposes (such as that of communication) its occurrence or non-occurrence is unimportant, and that people's mental imagery may differ enormously whether in quantity or in kind (in some cases it is primarily visual, in others primarily auditory). Aristotle, it may be noted, seems to concentrate his attention, as do most people, on visual imagery. Nor need we concern ourselves with philosophical controversies about the nature of belief as to the extent to which it can be analysed in terms of actual or hypothetical conduct.

Other relevant English terms to be borne in mind fall into the following groups:

(a) "imaginary", "imaginative", "unimaginative";
(b) "fancy" (both noun and verb), "fantasy", "fantastic", "fanciful";
(c) "appear" (including "it appears that"), "apparent"; "apparently";
(d) "to seem", "seemingly";
(e) "phenomenon", "phenomenal".

No doubt there are many others.

Some forms of imagination as understood in the modern world. Ross writes as follows: "In attempting to understand Aristotle's conception of φαντασία we must not think of the scientific or the poetical imagination. He was aware of these things, but he refers to them in
other terms. εὐςτοχία τίς ἐν ἀσκέτῃ χρόνῳ τοῦ μέσου (An. Post. 89 b 18) refers to the scientific imagination, and εὐφυοῦς ἢ ποιητικὴ ἑστιν ἢ μανικοῦ (Post. 1455 a 32) to the poetical imagination" (De Anima, ed. maior (1961), p. 38; cf. the similar passage on p. 32 of the introduction to his edition of the Parva Naturalia (1955)). The reminder is salutary, though the part which we think of imagination as playing in the formation of a scientific theory which must always be provisional and open to revision takes us a long way from the εὐςτοχία which is envisaged as leading to absolutely certain demonstrations (ἀποδείξεις). With the poetical imagination we may associate artistic imagination in general; neither of them comes within our purview while we are examining Aristotle's treatment of φαντασία. (Contrast, however, Longinus, De Sublimitate, ch. 15.) If we are to speak of a religious imagination distinct from a poetical or artistic, the same will be true of it.

De Anima III. 3.

In the early passages of this chapter what Aristotle has in mind when he writes of φαντασία seems to be, first and foremost, mental images. 427 b 3. ὢσπερ ἐνιοί λέγουσι πάντα τὰ φαίνομενα εἶναι ἀληθῆ. This is clearly an allusion to I. 2. 404 a 28-29, τὸ γὰρ ἀληθὲς εἶναι τὸ φαίνομενον, where Democritus is included. However, Rodier thinks Protagoras to be intended, and clearly he could be reckoned among the τίνες. It is difficult to know how widely to take the term φαίνομενα here; Hicks translates "presentations of the senses", and in view of the context this is probably safe. 427 b 14 ff. Here φαντασία is clearly the occurrence of a mental image. Aristotle distinguishes it both from αἴσθησις and from ὑπόληψις. φαντασία requires αἴσθησις, and ὑπόληψις in turn requires
fantasia. Fantasia is a πάθος, and by contrast with δόξα 'true' and 'false' do not apply to it. (Contrast what is said later.) Aristotle thinks that it differs from ὑπόληψις (here = belief) in being within our power, but this is clearly not always true.

There is a textual problem at 427 b 16-17, where the main witnesses read ὅτι δ’οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ αὐτὴ νόησις καὶ ὑπόληψις φανερόν. Hicks retains this, and takes νόησις to include fantasia, but this would be most misleading, in spite of 427 b 27 ff. and III. 10. 433 a 9-10. The reading which substitutes fantasia for νόησις is clearly an attempt as a correction. Rodier, following Schneider, brackets ἡ, but the most attractive suggestion is that of Madvig, followed by Ross, that νόησις should be excised as an intrusive gloss.

427 b 27 ff. Here νοεῖν is said to have two subdivisions, fantasia and ὑπόληψις. This is not very clear, though one may refer to 431 a 16-17: οὐδέποτε νοεῖ ἀνευ φαντάσματος ἡ ψυχή.

428 a 1 ff. Fantasia is here the having of a φάντασμα. The cases εἴ τι κατὰ μεταφορὰν λέγομεν are contrasted. But Aristotle raises the question of having the terms "true" and "false" applied to it -- i.e. of its being assimilated to judging. On this, however, holding that, if the terms "true" and "false" are applicable, it must be capable of equation with either αἴσθησις, δόξα, ἐπιστήμη or νοῦς, he rejects all these alternatives in turn.

428 a 5 ff. He first distinguishes fantasia from αἴσθησις, on the ground that the presence of an object is not required. Φαίνεται at 428 a 7 is clearly used of the occurrence of a mental image (cf. a 16 below).

428 a 11-12: εἴτα ἂι μὲν (sc. αἴσθησις) ἀληθεῖς αἰεί, ἂι δὲ φαντασίαι γίνονται ἂι πλείους ψευδεῖς.

This is difficult. We seem to be verging on a propositional
interpretation of φαντασία, or at any rate on an interpretation of it that includes judgment. Or is it rather that mental images are thought of, in some cases as being, in others as not being, accurate copies of an original? As for the contrast with αἴσθησις, this is a considerable over-simplification of the view put forward in II. 6, and even in the case of τὰ ἰδία Aristotle modifies his language later when he writes ἢ αἴσθησις τῶν μὲν ἰδίων ἀληθῆς ἐστιν ἢ ὅτι ὀλίγιστον ἔχουσα τὸ ἴδεος (428 b 18-19). It must be remembered that Aristotle, though he makes a serious attempt to deal with the problems of perceptual error, did not achieve a satisfactory solution. Modern treatments in terms of sense-datum and interpretation, or of sensation and perception, no doubt have difficulties, but nevertheless they have advantages over what is to be found in him. To put one point briefly, whether a sensation or a mental image (i.e. some other mental image) is in question, the sensation or image is not in itself true or false, and must be distinguished from propositions about it or about that which has given rise to it. Further, whenever the mental image (i.e. in the case of a φαντασία in the narrower sense, whether it is an accurate copy of some possible perception or not), a proposition about it may be true or false. Aristotle's language at 428 a 14, φαίνεται τούτῳ ἡμῖν ἄνθρωπος, is clearly propositional.

428 a 16. He contrasts φαντασία with νοῦς and ἐπιστήμη, as he does with αἴσθησις at a 11-12 above, on the ground that it may be false.

428 a 19. On the other hand, he contrasts it with δόξα, to which he might have seemed to be assimilating it, on the ground that δόξα involves conviction (πίστις). This is difficult. He may be thinking once again of having a mental image, and this is supported by his attribution of φαντασία to animals (a 21, with the alternative version at a 23-24; cf. a 9-11 above). The other possibility would be to
think of the formation of a possible belief which is suggested by the appearances but to which one does not commit oneself, as in the case of the size of the sun at 428 b 2-4.

428 a 24. Hicks refers to δόξη μετ’ αἰσθήσεως at Tim. 52 A and to σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης at Sph. 264 B (with 264 A). Aristotle is dissociating himself from both these views. The text has given rise to some doubts, but these do not affect the main problem of interpretation. When Aristotle is objecting that the phrases are inadequate, since it needs to be added that the αἰσθήσις and the δόξα must have the same reference, he is not saying anything that controverts Plato's actual view. But he alludes also to his earlier objections (διὰ τε ταύτα, 428 a 26-27), and draws from the Platonic view a conclusion, τὸ οὖν φαίνεσθαι ἐστὶ (ἔσται Trendelenburg) τὸ δοξάζειν ὅπερ αἰσθάνεται, μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός, 428 b 1-2, which he goes on to argue to be unacceptable.

Timaeus 52 A does not use the term φαντασία when speaking of the sensible world as δόξη μετ’ αἰσθήσεως, περιληπτόν, but φάντασμα occurs a little later, within the relevant context, at 52 C.

428 b 2 ff. Here, in φαίνεται μὲν ὁ ἡλιος πολιαῖος, though sensation lies at the basis we have a propositional use of φαίνεσθαι, and "appears" (or perhaps "seems") will be the most obvious English translation. It is surely impossible to speak of a mental image as being a foot across, though that may be what Aristotle meant. Otherwise, and more plausibly, we have a contrast between a tentative judgment which the speaker feels he might, on the evidence, be at first inclined to make, but which he rejects, and the judgment to which he commits himself on the basis of fuller consideration. In any case, the English verb "to imagine" scarcely helps, except perhaps in the form of words "One would (or might) imagine that the
sun was a foot across".

428 b 10 ff. Here, in his physiological account of the nature of 
phantasia, Aristotle is simply considering mental images.

It will be seen then that this chapter does not provide 
any clear single view.

Other passages of the De Anima do not materially alter 
the picture, though they show phantasia in further aspects. Aristotle 
says that to phantastikon cannot be fitted into a Platonic analysis 
of the soul, whether a tripartition into a rational element, a 
spirited and an appetite, or a bipartition into a rational element 
and an irrational (III. 9. 432 a 31 - b 3). At I. 1. 402 b 23 kata 

tijn phantasia means "in accordance with what appears to be the case". 
At II. 2. 413 b 21-23 phantasia is associated with ὤρεξις. At II. 
8. 420 b 31-32 it signifies a mental image generally (not necessarily 
auditory); so too at III. 2. 425 b 24. In III. 7 there are frequent 
references to the part played by phantasmata in the operation of 
νόησις (cf. III. 8. 432 a 12-14). It clearly represents a mental 
image also at III. 8. 432 a 10-12. III. 10 and 11 deal with the 
part played by phantasia in the origination of movement and action 
(433 a 9-12, a 20, a 26-29, b 11-12, b 28-29 and 434 a 4-10.) In 
one way the most interesting problems arise out of this last section, 
which Aristotle approaches by dividing phantasia into that which is 
αισθητική and that which is βουλευτική or λογιστική (433 b 29, 434 a 
5 ff.).

What sort of phantasia is that which is βουλευτική or 
λογιστική? Is a mental image involved? That seems to be envisaged 
in the brief and cryptic account of deliberation at 434 a 7-10, which 
ends with the words δύναται (sc. ὁ λογισμός) ἐν ἑκ πλεῖονων 
phantasmátov ποιεῖν. Now deliberative imagination seems to supervene 
on perceptive, and Hicks translates "Hence we have the power of
constructing a single image out of a number of images". Ross does not seem to dissociate himself from this version, though he adds the interpretation "i.e. 'so that they are able to imagine a course of action which combines the advantages of two or more other courses'". Philoponus in a comment (p. 592. 35 - 593. 2, ed. Hayduck, 1897) interprets Aristotle's meaning as the unification of a plurality of mental images.

The compresence of these two aspects is important and is underlined by the phrase, ὁ φαντασμένος ἀγαθόν, which occurs at 433 a 28-9 and which is familiar in the Nicomachean Ethics and in the analysis of action in De Motu Animalium, ch. 6, 700 b 28-29. Here the notion of φαντασμένος is simply that of "appearing to be the case", and it carries with it the force of φαντασία in the relevant context. How the difference appeared to Aristotle -- i.e. how far he thought that mental imagery was essentially involved -- it is difficult to be certain. The problem is not confined to him, and is not confined to Greek; it occurs, as we have seen, equally in English, involving the term "idea" equally with "imagine". The old term "ideo-motor action" may be cited as bringing the problems out.

The relevant passages in the De Motu Animalium are ch. 6, 700 b 17-22, 28-29, 701 a 4-6; ch. 7, 701 a 29-36, 701 b 16-19; ch. 8, 701 b 34-35, 702 a 18-19; ch. 11, 703 b 9-11, 18-19.

What I have said applies also to the relevant passages of the Nicomachean Ethics: III. 1113 a 15 - b 2, 1114 a 31 - b 20, VII. 1149 a 32, 1150 b 28, 1152 b 31-33, VIII. 1155 b 23-27, IX. 1166 a 2-19, X. 1176 a 15-22. (VII. 1147 b 5 is more strictly epistemological.) The most interesting passage, as using φαντασία in connexion with
Postscript on Longinus.

I mentioned that Aristotle does not use the term φαντασία to denote the aesthetic imagination. That usage seems to be much later. There is a passage in Philostratus' Life of Apollonius of Tyana, where he writes μίμησις μὲν γὰρ ὑμιουργηθείς, ὃ εἶδεν, φαντασία δὲ καὶ ὃ μὴ εἶδεν, ὑποθέτεται γὰρ αὐτὸ πρὸς τὴν ἀναφορὰν τοῦ ὄντος (b. 19). If Philostratus was writing about A.D. 200, he seems to be later than the writer On the Sublime, who is particularly noteworthy (ch. 3. 1 and ch. 15), using the term both in the singular and in the plural (to mean "images" or "imagery"), and connecting it with εἰδωλοποιία.

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