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Zeit und Seele. Eine Studie zum Vermittlungsproblem zwischen Zeit und Seele bei Aristoteles (Phys. IV 10-14) und dessen Rezeption bei Paul Ricoeur

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Abstract (English)

The title of this paper is 'Time and Soul. A study of the mediation problem between Time and Soul in the works of Aristotle (Phys IV 1014) and its reception in the works of Paul Ricoeur'. The goal of this paper is to show that, using Aristotle as a starting point, new perspectives open up regarding the interpretation of the Aristotelian concept of time, so long as it is subjected to a Relecture by utilizing the concept of ψυχή. This paper will proceed as follows: first, a brief summary of Aristotelian natural philosophy will be provided, in order to facilitate the study of Aristotle's treatise on time. A close reading of the treatise will follow in chapter 2. Aspects which are central to the flow and aims of the paper will be emphasised (concept of nature, concept of motion, theory of the four principles). Chapter 3 contains a close reading of the Aristotelian concept of time as it is presented in the work 'Time and Narrative' by the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, as well as a short introduction to this work. This chapter already contains hints regarding the differences between Ricoeur's interpretation and the one presented in chapter 2. The fourth chapter, entitled 'Conflation', offers a more in-depth discussion of these differences as well as an alternative interpretation of the concept of time - particularly regarding the question of its foundation – with respect to the term ψυχή. This is built on the premise that the question of the foundation of time - in both ψυχή and φύσις – loses its edge if the term ψυχή is considered in conjunction with the term φύσις. These two terms could only really be considered as opposing one another if a contemporary perspective concerning the phenomena of consciousness and nature/cosmos/world is adopted, which presents a clear anachronism if used in the context of Aristotle's work. The argument which aims to achieve a re-orientation of the Aristotelian term of ψυχή towards Plato's concept of the world-soul can be countered by pointing out that for one, the movement away from myths takes a new form with Aristotle, and that time is not interpreted as a representation of eternity. This paper aims to illustrate how Aristotle achieves a continuation of the traditions on which his philosophy is built, whilst also moving away from them. Finally, the concluding section of this paper aims to establish Aristotle as the main source of the current discourse surrounding the concept of time in both philosophy and theology, as well as questioning the view which utilizes his theories to establish an idea of time as an endlessly flowing stream in which any single event is rendered more or less meaningless.