

## CHAPTER 7

The Second Argument: The Generation of Generation

Change of change was considered above in two ways: either as change being directly subjected to change or as change terminating ~~not~~ in change. So it will be considered again in the last argument, which treats of motion of motion in the strict sense. However, for a reason which will be manifested in the course of the following argument, the generation of generation can be considered only in the second sense, ut termini, ascertaining himself to the generation as term of another generation, Aristotle will treat the hypothesis genetically. Basing himself on a tacit analogy to substance, the term of generation, Aristotle will first examine the generation of generation in so far as the generation of generation is also generated. This is the production of generation in being and forms the second argument. Then he will turn to the demise of generation asking if generation, since it is generated, can also be corrupted. Finally, he will consider the hypothesis from the intrinsic constitutions of generation and substance, namely, the matter and the termini ad quod. In all, these form three distinct arguments, the first of them being the second in the whole series.

It is, like the first, a reduction to absurdity. Here there are two conditional propositions. The first conditional is if this is a generation of generation per se we shall run into an infinite regress. The reason is that if the generation of generation is a generation in the same sense that generation itself is, it must, as generation itself, have been generated, else it could never have come into existence. The reason is that since the generation of generation is, as it were, the unknown quantity in our equation, it is impossible to consider it as differing essentially from generation itself. But generation is generated per se, that is, necessarily, for nothing can exist without one of its per se attributes. We cannot, therefore, endow the generation of generation with any kind of attribute whereby it differs essentially in this respect from generation itself, without running the risk of not being able to construct any sort of argument about it at all. An equation with two unknowns cannot be solved for both at the same time. Hence, the generation of generation must be generated, and its generation must in turn be generated and so on to infinity, for each is a generation in the same sense as the one before it.

The second conditional proposition is the following. Suppose a series of generations one of which is the generation of the other, then the first must exist if the last is to exist.

This proposition is explained by the following example. If simple generation, Aristotle says, became at one time, and if the substance of which this simple generation is the generation also became, it is obvious that while the substance was being generated it did not exist. The reason is simple. What passes from non-being to being does not exist before it has accomplished the passage to being. During the passage it is still in non-being. Likewise generation could not be so long as it is being generated. And again the generation of generation did not as yet exist while being generated, so that the generation of generation must be completed before generation can begin to be and again its generation must be completed before the generation of generation can begin to exist. This is the proof of the foregoing conditional proposition.<sup>1</sup>

Now, Averroes, following Simplicius, presents us with an entirely different division and interpretation of the argument.<sup>2</sup> According to Averroes, Aristotle breaks off his proof by infinite regress and gives us a separate, independent reduction to absurdity. First, let us see his text:

Beinde dixit: "Verbi gratia, etc." intendit per hanc sententiam demonstrare generationem habere generationem, et universaliter tunc ubi tunc. Et fundatur super duas propositiones,

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book V, 226 a 1

<sup>2</sup> Simplicius, *op. cit.*, p. 344, 10, of. Appendix, entry 4

quarum altera est, quod res generata, cum fuerit in generatione, nondum est illa res generata, verbi gratia quoniam homo, cum fuerit in generatione, nondum est homo; et hoc manifestum est per se: secunda autem est, quod cum generatio simpliciter fuerit generata, tunc generatur. Si igitur aliquis posuerit quod generatio generatur, sicut generatur individuum substantiae sequitur ex prima propositione ut generatio non sit, dum generatur: sicut homo non est homo, dum generatur: et sequitur ex secunda quod, cum generatio simpliciter existat, completa non erit. Quia positum est ipsam generari, cum fuerit, et ipsam non esse, cum generatur: ex quo sequitur ut sit, et ut non sit in eodem instanti, quod est impossibile.<sup>3</sup>

Averroes gives us two propositions: (a) what is being generated does not exist so long as it is being generated; (b) simple generation, once it has been generated, is being generated. Naturally these two propositions lead to a contradictory conclusion, one being the contradiction of the other. However, if we consider the matter carefully, both these propositions can be applied to substance itself. The result is that substance will not be, because it is being generated and will be generated because it is. At the present juncture,<sup>4</sup> unless I am grossly

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3 Averroes, In V Physic., tex. comm. 13

4 We might also distinguish between generation which is the term of a process of generation and generation as including the process of alteration and the generation proper which is the term of a notion of alteration. It is the process of alteration which is called fieri properly, and in this sense of fieri, quod fit nondum est. But in those things which come into being instantaneously, i. e., which are generated, the thing is said to become in the first instant of its being, i. e., fit et simul factum est. The reason is that there is no ultimate instant in which the thing is not, so the first instant of being is taken improperly to be the termination of the time going before. But this is improper and hence, in this sense, it is no longer true to say quod fit nondum est, but rather quod fit iam est. Averroes could be interpreted as using fieri in the proper sense in the first proposition and improperly in the second proposition, but (1)

mistaken, this is tantamount to saying that in its generation substance both is and is not. Surely there must be some confusion here.

Averroes's text can be explained if we assume that he is taking one generation as the subject of another generation. But this is clearly impossible, namely, that generation be the subject of generation. For generation is here assumed to be generated in the same way as substance. However, substance is not the subject of generation, but its term. The reason is that generation is a passage from non-being to being. Hence, what is generated does not exist while it is being generated. If generation were the subject of generation, since generation has its being in the becoming of substance,<sup>5</sup> then generation would exist. But it would be being generated, because it is subject to generation, and hence it would not exist. This is impossible. But it is likewise impossible for substance to be the subject of generation, because substance would be, as all subjects must be in order to be subjects of accidents, and it would not be, because it is being generated. And this appears

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this would not involve a contradiction as he wishes, and (2) he would be guilty of a periphrasis. At any rate the distinction of *fiat* belongs properly to the sixth book and cannot be introduced here. Cf. St. Thomas, *2. 2. de Veritate*, c. 20, art. 9, ad 10; In VI *Physic.*, lect. 5, n. 644; In IV *sent.*, d. 11, q. 1, art. 1.

<sup>5</sup> St. Thomas, *2. 2. de Virtutibus in Communi*, c. 1, art. 13, ad 10: "Natura esse est in fieri, quodam facto esse, non a se."

to be what Averroes means.

However, the so-called second proposition which Averroes found in the text is not there at all. Nor is that the sense in which Aristotle takes the generation of generation. It is not necessary to make a long reduction to absurdity if something is immediately and patently false. Generation as the subject of generation is patently false and impossible. The hypothesis cannot be understood in this sense. Hence, the hypothesis must necessarily be interpreted as generation which is the act in turn of another generation. Our interpretation of the text derives support from Iapaxius, a commentator quote by Iapaxius himself.<sup>6</sup>

Assuming that our interpretation is correct, we may continue the argument. If generation is generated per se, generation must have been generated if it is to be, and the generation of generation must in its turn have been generated, and so on to infinity. But if the last generation, i. e., the generation of Socrates, is to be, the first generation of the series must have been and been already completed. However, of an infinite series a prima causa there is no first, hence there will be no last. But this contradicts experience, because the last generation is the generation of Socrates and he is and has been generated. Hence, if there is generation of generation per se there will be no generation, nor action nor change of any

<sup>6</sup> Iapaxius, op. cit., p. 315, 19, cf. Appendix, entry 5

kind, for all motion in any category involves generation.<sup>7</sup> But generation and motion do exist, as is proven by our experience of Socrates who was generated. Therefore, there is no generation of generation per se.

It may be noticed that the infinite series here is infinite only a parte ante. There is a "last", the generation of Socrates, but no "first" generation which was not previously generated. Still it may be wondered why an infinite series of generations is impossible for Aristotle, who held that the world was infinite in time. The answer is that an infinite series of generations related per accidens is not impossible for Aristotle, because none of the generations is necessarily generated, that is, a generation which is generated per accidens does not depend necessarily for its existence on the preceding generation. But once we posit that generation is generated per se we mean that it cannot be without having been generated. Thus, we see that the hypothesis of a generation of generation per se involves a contradiction apart from any consideration of whether

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<sup>7</sup> St. Thomas, de Principiis Naturae, Caput I, n. 111: Generatio vero et corruptio simpliciter non sunt nisi in generibus substantiis, generatio vero et corruptio secundum quid sunt in omnibus aliis generibus."

the world is infinite in time or not. On the one hand since every generation must be generated it involves an infinite regress a parte ante of which there is no first term, although there is a last. Secondly, if generation is generated per se, its generation must have been completed before generation itself could begin to exist, whence the contradiction of the necessity of a first generation gotten by the second proposition and the impossibility of having it gotten by the first proposition. It is also noteworthy that St. Albert and St. Thomas who held in conformity with the Catholic faith that the world is not infinite in time and Averroes who, contrary to his own faith, held for the eternity of the world all give the same interpretation as we have on this point.

Finally, we must remark that the reader should not be led astray by our example of substance and the generation of Socrates in the proof and think that the argument is valid only for generatio simpliciter. The argument would work just as well if white or anything else were substituted in place of substance. The proof is valid for all kinds of generation.

## CHAPTER 6

The Third Argument: The Corruption of Generation

The second argument is taken from what happens to a generation before it begins to exist; the third argument is taken from what happens when generation ceases to exist. If the hypothesis of a generation of generation can be understood in such a way that it does not immediately and patently involve a contradiction, i. e., if it necessitates a rational discourse to draw out the contradiction, the hypothesis may be considered from different aspects. Hence, if generation can be generated, it seems that generation can also be corrupted. And so, this third argument considers the hypothesis from its contrary, the corruption of generation.

First Aristotle argues to the principle. Generally speaking contrary notions and rest are of the same subject,<sup>1</sup> so that what moves up, for example, can move down, and what moves down can rest in the upward place, that is, theoretically or considering not a concretum which is what we are doing here, a body may rest in an upward place, though concrete experience does not bear this out. Resting in the terminus

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<sup>1</sup> St. Thomas, in 7 Physic., lect. 3, n. 673

a gen is contrary to motion, rest in general being the mere privation of motion.<sup>2</sup> The proposition is to be understood of contraries which have the property of both affecting the same subject, not, certainly, at the same time nor with equal propensity in nature,<sup>3</sup> but as the definition of contraries suggest, one contrary may inhere if the other does inhere. Contraries are defined as being in the same matter,<sup>4</sup> so that if one contrary inheres in a given matter, it is logically possible for its opposite to inhere likewise.<sup>5</sup> But generation and corruption are contrary changes.<sup>6</sup> Hence what is generated can be corrupted.

The only question is "when".<sup>7</sup> Aristotle argues in the following manner. If generation is generate it can also be corrupted, so that the substance which is "coming to coming to be" determinately, i. e., if one process of generation comes to be per se by another process, the substance will be corrupted when it "has come to coming to be", i. e., while it is in the

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2 *Ibid.*, lect. 9, n. 727 seq.

3 *Simplicius*, op. cit., p. 249, 6; cf. *Appendix*, entry 6

4 *Aristotle*, I *Metaphysics*, 1055 a 29

5 Cf. *St. Thomas*, in *Post. Analyt.*, lect. 50, n. 171

6 *St. Thomas*, in *V Physics*, lect. 8, n. 725

7 *St. Albert*, in *V Physics*, tex. comm. 13: "Est autem per se actus et alibi probatur, quod idem subicitur contrariis, et idem idem oportet esse quod generatur, et quod corrumpitur, et quod quiescit, et quod creatur. Adhuc autem inductione patet: et in libro de *caelo* probatur, quod esse quod generatur corrumpitur in eodem tempore determinato."

process of becoming, it will be corrupted. This is the conclusion, and it is manifestly absurd because it implies that substance will be and not be simultaneously.

Aristotle proves this conclusion to follow from the premisses in the following lines. Generation possesses its being in the becoming of substance, hence, generation may not be corrupted *εὐλογημένον* i. e., while it is becoming generation, because while it is becoming it does not exist. Nor can it be corrupted *ἐστέρον*, i. e., later on, after the generation of substance has taken place, because generation, as is evident from the fact that it exists only when a substance is being generated, does not exist after substance has been generated. The principle is simple. Corruption is a passage from being to non-being, hence what is corrupted must exist. Hence, if generation is to be corrupted it must exist. Therefore while substance is being generated, substance will be corrupted and the end of these two changes will be the simultaneous being and non-being of substance.

Although this conclusion is attested to by Simplicius as being the correct interpretation of Aristotle,<sup>9</sup> it does not seem to follow consistently from the premisses. We are arguing about the corruption of generation, not of substance. Yet we

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, entry 8

concluded that substance would be generated and corrupted simultaneously. Furthermore, Averroes clearly arrives at an entirely different conclusion. If generation is generated, he says, generation, not substance, is corrupted. But generation cannot be corrupted, because one contrary cannot be the subject of its opposite, just as blackness cannot become whiteness, though black can become white.<sup>10</sup> The distinction between blackness and black consists in this: the contrary itself cannot be the subject of its opposite, but the contrary taken together with its subject can become its opposite. Blackness is only the form of black which besides blackness contains the subject body. Body, of course, can become white.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, generation can be considered in itself as a process or together with its subject substance. By itself, i. e., apart from its subject, generation cannot be subjected to corruption, although the subject of generation, substance, can and does corrupt.

Averroes's error, as pointed out above, consists in taking generation as the subject of generation. Above in the

<sup>10</sup> Averroes, in V Physic., text. com. 11: "Tunc igitur per se ipsum quod generatio habet generationem sequitur et habet corruptionem et cum habet corruptionem acquiritur ut ipse generatio recipiat corruptionem; et sic contrarium recipit eum contrarium, quod est impossibile. -- Si igitur generatio corrumpitur, tunc contrarium eius subiectum sui contrarii.

<sup>11</sup> St. Thomas, in I Physic., lect. 11, n. 82

second argument he was able to lead to a definite absurdity, although his interpretation did not fit into the general lines of the argument. Here, however, if we follow through his point of view, the entire argument seems to take on a doubtful aspect, as St. Thomas notes in the *Physics*: quod videtur inconueniens, an argument which only seems absurd may not actually be so.

The doubt consists in this. If generation is the subject of generation (we leave out of consideration the strict impossibility involved in this point of view), generation will also be the subject of corruption. But, since generation exists only in the becoming of substance, once a substance has become, generation will have passed from being to non-being, that is, it will have been corrupted. There is an absurdity in this at all.

We should then be able to argue back to the generation of generation by the same principle. What is susceptible of the contrary is susceptible of the other. Hence if generation is corrupted, it is generated. Of course, this does render the argument doubtful because it is the exact opposite of what Aristotle is expressly trying to prove.

The answer is, as we have shown above, that generation cannot be the subject of generation, for this would involve

an immediate contravention. Hence, we must confine the hypothesis to one generation being the term of the foregoing generation. This is what St. Thomas says in correcting Averroes's point of view.

Est autem considerandum quod generatio est ut terminus  
eius quod generatur sicut substantia, quia generatio est  
transiens ad substantiam; quod autem est generationis  
subiectum, non est id quod generatur, sed materia ejus.  
Unde Aristoteles non recedit a suo proposito, quo intendebat  
ostendere quod materia non est mutabilis ut terminus.<sup>12</sup>

Generation, whether substantial or accidental, is the production of the terminus ad quem whereby the terminus ab quo, be it substance or white, passes from non-being to being. But the matter of generation is not generated; it does not pass from non-being to being, for in some way it is, that is, in potency. Thus, since the opposition of non-being and being is an opposition of contravention, there can be no middle, i. e., between being and non-being, no time in which generation proper can be before the immediate production of substance. In such, generation is the term of the process by which a thing passes from non-being to being.

<sup>12</sup> St. Thomas, I: V Physic., lect. 3, n. 673

Thus the phrase "if generation can be generated" means, if generation follows immediately (i. e., per se) on generation, is the passage from being to non being, so that as soon as substance has been generated it will be corrupted and it will be and not be simultaneously. The reason is that generation exists only in the coming to be of substance. Therefore generation cannot be corrupted, i. e., followed by corruption, until substance is being generated; nor after substance has been generated, because then generation has ceased to exist. Hence, generation must be corrupted while substance is being produced, i. e., generation and corruption must take place simultaneously in substance and terminate simultaneously, for however small a lapse of time between the two, generation and corruption would be related per accidens.

Thus once again we see, as in the first argument, that the notion of motion per se implies the simultaneity of opposed changes in the subject and the being and non-being of the subject at the same time. For this reason the notion of motion both in general and in particular implies a contradiction and is impossible.

## CHAPTER 9

The Fourth and Fifth Arguments

The following section is divided by Simplicius into two distinct arguments, namely the fourth and the fifth.<sup>1</sup> Rather than change this denomination, which is also reproduced by St. Thomas in the *Physics*, we have left the numeration. This should not turn the reader's attention away from the fact that we take this section to form one single argument. Still there are basically two parts. Aristotle first argues from the matter of which the generation that is generated should be made, and then from the terminus ad quem. Both of these arguments are summed up in the so-called fifth argument which is in reality nothing but a continuation of the second part of the fourth argument. This is the way Averroes, St. Albert, and St. Thomas understand it in the *Metaphysics*. In the *Physics* St. Thomas has the same division as Simplicius.

Matter must underlie every generable or changeable thing, as is evident from what change is. Hence, if generation is generated, it must come from some matter which enters into composition

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<sup>1</sup> Simplicius, op. cit., p. 354, 20; cf. appendix, entry 9

with generation.<sup>2</sup>

What though, in this matter, Aristotle asks. He exemplifies his meaning by the body or soul which can alterable are the matter for bodily or spiritual affections such as thought and white. There being no meaning of the word 'matter' such that there would be a matter that can be generated, he concludes that there is no matter out of which generation itself may be generated.

It will be readily objected that this is a rather poor showing for a reduction to absurdity. That there is no matter which can become generation is an unsubstantiated premise. Matter is not something that is necessarily given in experience. The fact is, though, that this is not a reduction to absurdity, but a direct proof and we will have to wait until the so-called fifth argument has been reached before we can substantiate Aristotle's statement that there is no matter out of which generation can be generated.

And again, Aristotle says, what is the terminus ad quem? Nominally, of course, generation is the terminus ad quem of another generation, or so the hypothesis supposes. But this is

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 353, 4; cf. Appendix, entry 10

impossible. The terminus ad quem of the passage of matter from this form to that one is a definite being in act and not generation or motion.<sup>3</sup>

This is likewise an unsubstantiated direct proof but its substantiation in the "fifth" argument is at hand, so let us pass right on to it.

So, Aristotle asks, how is there to be a generation of generation? It is obvious that learning, taken as what is to be learnt and what is had when one has learnt, is not the same as the process of acquiring learning. Else, to know something would be the same as coming to know something. Now, so long as one is in the process of coming to know, one does not yet know simply. Hence, if coming to know were the same as knowing

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3 David Carteron in his critical edition of the *Physics* (*Physique d'Aristote*, V - VIII - Paris, 1931) interprets this line (126 a 13) as an interrogation. As "one shows, the weight of textual evidence is against this. (cf. Ross, W. D., *Aristotle's Physics*, (Oxford - 1960), ad locum.) Ross (cf. *Commentary*, 92, cit., p. 63b), citing Alexander's interpretation (cf. *Simplificus*, 92, cit., p. 63b, 16-27), says that this line should read: "the motion or generation should be from one term to another," i. e., leaving out the precise stipulation that the terminus ad quem be a definite being in act. Introducing a reference to a definite being in act would be, according to Alexander, anticipating the next argument. Our answer is that the next argument is not separate from the present. The whole point here is, as is obvious on a little reflection, that the terminus ad quem is a definite being in act. If this point is not made, I see no other plausible interpretation of the argument.

already, then to know and not yet to know would be the same.<sup>4</sup>

The argument can be treated in two ways. St. Thomas takes it as a direct negative statement.<sup>5</sup> For it is obvious that the process of teaching is not the same as the process of acquiring knowledge, although what is being taught and what is being learnt are the same. So, if there were generation of generation, it would be like identifying what is already learnt with the process of acquiring it. The argument when drawn out turns into a reduction to absurdity, and so Averroes takes it. If the process of teaching is identified with the process of learning, one process of learning terminates in another process of learning that is, learning the alphabet, for example, turns into learning the alphabet. At the term of the process of learning one would be not in knowledge of the alphabet, but still in the process of learning the alphabet. The process of learning begins in ignorance

<sup>4</sup> Simplicius (Of. co. sive, p. 865, 15; Appendix, entry 11) appends that line 220 a is to be interpreted thus: neither generation as a universal is generated (universals are not generated at all) nor is a singular generation generated, an interpretation which I find interesting, though I cannot make it part of my own. Rather, it seems to me, the distinction should be between generatio simpliciter and generatio secundum quid, but I am far from determining the sense of this line.

<sup>5</sup> St. Thomas, In I. Physic., lect. 1, n. 875: "Nunc se habet genus ad genus, sicut et species ad speciem, et ista generatio est generatio, oportet enim etiam doctrinae generatio est doctrina. Sed hoc apparet manifeste falsum: doctrina enim est generatio scientiae, et non generatio doctrinae. Ergo necesse est doctrinae potest esse generatio."

as of the thing learned, hence, if there is generation of generation per se, the person who is learning the alphabet would, when he has learnt it, be still in ignorance of the alphabet. Similarly, if there is generation of generation per se the term of generation will be, not being, but rather still the very non-being from which the subject was moved, so that the generation of which there is generation would never be generated. But nothing can be moved per se between two negations. Hence there can be no generation of generation per se. This reasoning is similar to that of Averroes.

Quoniam generatur est illud, quod nondum est in actu perfecto, scilicet quod est in via generationis. Nam si esset in actu, non esset illius generatio: cum generatio est actus ejus quod est in potentia in actu, et est esse non completum. Si igitur notus haberet generationem, tunc esse in via generationis esset esse perfectum in actu: et sic res, quod est jam completa generata, generatur. Et hoc inter-  
 dubium cum dixit: impossibile enim est ut scientia fiat scientia, ita est impossibile ut generatio generetur.

6 Averroes, in 7<sup>a</sup> phisic. tex. com. 16. The reserve with which Averroes should be read here has been noted above; he seems to be always thinking of generation as the subject of generation.

Now, we can return to the fourth argument and first to the second part. Generation is change from non-being to being. Naturally the terminus ad quem of generation is definite being in act, no matter what category it is reduced to. But in the hypothesis, generation is the per se term of generation. It is impossible that there be two per se terms to the same process both of which are of the same order, for per se in the proper sense means "not attained through another." Hence, if generation is the per se term of generation, substance cannot be produced. That it cannot be produced per se is evident, but it cannot be produced even per accidens. The reason is that substance is simply being in act and, as such, defines the terminus ad quem of generation. Actually we are in the presence of a tautology—generation is a passage from non-being to being. The generation of generation per se implies a passage from non-being to non-being, or in other words, is the negation of any change whatsoever. In other words, as a being is produced, it is simultaneously not produced; or, for a thing to become is to become the negation of itself.

It may be argued that the generation of generation differs as to its term, and hence escapes the above absurdity. But this is either completely arbitrary or impossible. It is impossible because change is denominated by its term. The final

term of the series of generations is a definite being in act in a single category. Hence, the generation of generation must either be in the same category or in another. If it is in another it is not essentially to the final generation; the generation of white does not imply the generation of rabbit. Hence, it must be in the same category and the same term. If it is the generation of white which is the final generation, the generation of generation must also be the generation of white. If this is true, our argument holds good.

From the viewpoint of matter the absurdity is less plain, though not less universally admitted. Matter, as we have taken it, is in itself pure potency to being. As such it comes to be only through the actuality of form. Stripped of all form it would be utter non-being. It is potency to be only in so far as though subject to a given form it is in potency to another form. As such matter cannot be conceived as ever existing without form, as Averroes himself holds.<sup>7</sup>

But if matter is always subject to form, how is it possible

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<sup>7</sup> Averroes, Metaphysics, 120. Zusatz: "Es ist somit nur der abstrahierende Verstand, welcher die Materie in ihrer Isolierung und als an sich Formlos fixiert, wohingegen in der That der Gedanke der Materie das Prinzip der Form durchaus in sich schliesst und damit auch in der Behauptung nirgends eine formlose Materie als existierend vorkommt."

for generation to come about? The answer is that the generation of this thing is the corruption of the other, both in the substantial and the accidental order. If therefore generation is generated, it is generated out of a matter which goes into composition with the terminus ad quem which, in this case, is generation itself. But generation implies the corruption of the preceding form, so that matter will be subjected to a process of generation as devoid of all form. That is, matter as pure potency to being and to non-being will be subjected to a process of generation. Whence there follow two absurdities: (a) since matter without form is utter non-being, non-being will become being and enter into composition with it as a constituent part. The terminus ad quem will be the coincidence of being and non-being (b) Pure potential being will be subjected to a process from non-being to being, which is a process only in so far as non-being excludes being from simultaneous co-existence in the subject. But opposites in potency do not exclude each other. Hence, it is impossible for generation to be generated, for, in being generated, matter is stripped of its form without, however, another form being introduced. Devoid matter is not the subject of change, because matter could never be subjected to action or change unless subjected to privation in so far as privation is noted in the contrary form from which there is action, as St. Albert says:

Matéria nunquam subiectetur materi nisi subiectetur  
 privationi et secundum quod privatio recedat in forma  
 contrarii ex qua est motus, privatio est contraria materi,  
 non simpliciter sed quoadmodum.

Thus from the point of view of matter there is a three-  
 fold impossibility: substance would be and not be at the same time,  
 matter would exist without a form, and the whole reason for  
 motion, determinate opposition, would be gone. And so we see once  
 again that the notion of motion per se involves the determinate  
 coincidence of opposites in act and is therefore impossible.

St. Albert, I Physic., text, comm. 70

### The Ninth Argument

After Aristotle has treated the hypothesis of motion of motion from the viewpoint of change, the genus of motion, and generation in the generation of generation, he turns to consider the hypothesis from the viewpoint of motion in the strict sense. As pointed out above, the hypothesis may be understood in two ways: either of motion as subject of motion or of motion as a term of motion. In this last argument Aristotle does not bring in any new reductions to absurdity. His only point is to limit the hypothesis to the three manifest species of motion, thereby showing that the motion of motion is not something possible but unknown to us, but that it is necessarily a motion of the same order as motion itself and that it is therefore impossible.

His argument is the following. If there are three species of motion, he says, it is necessary that one of these be the nature which is subjected to motion and the terminus ad quem to which the motions are moved. But this is obviously absurd, because local motion would be subjected to a change in quality or another local motion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, Book 3 226 a 10-12

The major objection to this argument is simply that Aristotle is here assuming what he wishes to prove. The proofs concerning the motion of motion are ordered to proving that there is no motion in action and passion. Hence, we cannot assume that there is no motion in action and passion to prove precisely that there is no motion in action and passion.<sup>2</sup>

The definitive answer to this objection is that action and passion are themselves the very same act that motion itself is.<sup>3</sup> Hence, a motion to action as to a term would be a motion to action as to a term. Motion is in the same genus as its term, so that the motion of motion must be either in the same genus as motion itself or in a different genus. But it cannot be in a genus in which there is no motion at all, that is, in a genus other than action and passion. Hence, since motion in action and passion does not differ ~~and~~ reduced to its terminating act from any of the known motions, one of these known motions must be the nature subjected to motion or the term to which motion is moved. The absurdity is manifest in itself; either local motion will be changed in quality, but this is impossible because local

<sup>2</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, Aristotle's Physics, (Oxford - 1960), p. 624.

<sup>3</sup> St. Thomas, I pers., c. 15, art. 1, ad 2.

motion cannot be turned white or green or any other color, nor can it be moved to another place per se, but only in so far as its subject is moved simultaneously by two antagonistic local motions, that is, in so far as one motion is moved per accidens or in so far as its subject is simultaneously moved by another motion.

Thus the idea of possible unknown motion in no way related to experience is excluded forever. There is no other motion besides those that are found in the categories of quantity, quality, and "where". Hegel's passage from Qualitative, the last category of quality, to quantity in the logic<sup>4</sup> may therefore be questioned precisely because it is, on his own admission, not given in Erststellung or experience. However, we have a further, more general, question to raise in regard to the entire dialectic.

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<sup>4</sup> Hegel, Encyclopedia, 98