

In the end of the section 219a 10-21 of the eleventh chapter of the fourth book of *Physica* Aristotle describes the 'before' and 'after' in movement as follows:

is the before and after in movement *hó pote ón* movement, but *tò eínai* it is other, not movement (ll. 19-21).

These lines convey the answer to the question whether 'before' and 'after' are the same thing as movement or not: in one sense, *hó pote ón*, they are, in another sense, *tò eínai*, they are not. More precisely, the fact that the 'before' and 'after' are in the movement, make them, just in respect of which they are in the movement, identical to this latter. *Hó pote ón* is meant this respect. But first and foremost, the opposition of *hó pote ón* to *tò eínai* is very useful to Aristotle to solve the main aporia of the eleventh chapter (from IV, 11, 217b 29 ff.) about the contradictory - at a first sight - and concurrent diversity and identity of the 'instant', *tò nûn*.

Therefore, this aporia will be solved, if only *hó pote ón* and *tò eínai* mean two really opposing points of view. But what are these points of view? What do they really mean?

As well known, the utterance *hó pote ón* is one of the most enigmatic in the whole Aristotle's work, and yet one of the most important in his physical research as concerning the nature and definition of time. The first scholar in modern times who drew attention to this utterance was Torstrik in 1857, since then the scholarly literature on it grew up in a striking way and the debate has not been extinguished, even flared up with greater force, the lower was the agreement among scholars. In spite of that, I do not think he is right who has decided not to enter into the endless question (*langwierige querelle*), or even he who saw no need to dwell upon its meaning, for a correct reading of *hó pote ón* cannot be set aside in order to understand the whole movement analysis by Aristotle and, accordingly, the entire *Physica*.

An alternative way for attempting to successfully tackle the problem is take in consideration the occurrence of the same utterance in other works than *Physica*, since the other occurrences of it in the eleventh (219b 9 - 28; 220a 6 -8) and fourteenth chapter (223a 27) of the fourth book are of no help. It is present in only two other works: *De generatione et corruptione*, I, 3, 319b 3 and *De partibus animalium*, II, 2, 649a 15; II, 3, 649b 24. That will be the purpose of my paper, since at a first reading it appears to be easier to grasp the meaning of these passages, for they are within a context far less bristling with difficulties than this one regarding the question of time. Just in the end we will mention the two principal positions of the scholarly literature about *hó pote ón* and see how our results in principle agree with them.