

LUCIA URBANI ULIVI\*

ROOTS IN THE EARTH, ARMS AND LEAVES IN THE SKY

Dupré, Bertolaso, Corvi, Diodato, Marconi and Vitiello through their dialogue have provided useful insights for a better understanding of our staying in the world as human beings, also giving a contribute to a fruitful collaboration between scientific theories and philosophical enquiries.

Philosophers may notice that what has been said so far is not very distant from what Aristotle claimed in his *De anima*. It is true. It is not distant because Aristotle asserted that philosophy must have solid roots in the empirical world, well grasped by the sciences. In respect to this issue we can follow his line. Although we cannot simply be 'Aristotelians' nowadays, since many centuries of philosophical work and of scientific progress have totally changed our cultural equipment, thus making a work of comprehension and subsequent theorization indispensable. Still to be grasped and framed within suitable theories is the following asymmetry, which was already clear to Aristotle and is still actual today: human behaviours are phenomenically observable activities, but what motives and causes them is neither empirical nor immediately given, and by consequence it has to be inferred.

Aristotle established a theoretical transition from visible behaviours to the invisible operator governing them, whom he called «psyché», or «principle of activity». The connection between the visible and the invisible world was granted by the so called «metaphysical inference», not to be intended as a strictly logical deduction. If this kind of inference is not accepted, one remains confined to the empirical realm and the human being is reduced to his/her behaviours. Both philosophical thinking and scientific enquiries, as also these conversations have made clear, can cooperate to account for what is present to us, for a better understanding of the world we live in and to which we belong. This is the common endeavour of philosophers and scientists – pursued through different paths of research and verification – to which this conference aimed at giving a contribution, thus pointing to a line of inquiry finally free of many conflicts and prejudices that have often hampered and limited our comprehension capability.

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*Abstract*

Aristotle stressed the importance for philosophy to stay connected with the empirical world. Nowadays both philosophy and the sciences have expanded their knowledge and their experience, which must be put in common to acquire a general comprehension of the world that as human beings we share.

*Keywords:* Aristotle, Science, Philosophy, Metaphysical inference, Empirical world