

‘Aristotle on Intellectual Pleasures’

Jean-Louis Labarrière

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, VII, 13, 1153 b 33 - 1154 a 1, Aristotle wrote one of his most strange sentence (for us?): « The bodily pleasures have taken over the name (*onoma*) because people most often aim at them, and all share in them ; and so, since these are the only pleasures they know, people suppose that they are the only pleasures » (Irwin trans.). The meaning of this phrase is clearly that it exists others pleasures that the bodily pleasures, as Plato had already assumed in his *Republica* or, more over, in his *Philebus*. It’s a pity that the modern scholars have forgotten this phrase (see, for instance, the acts of the Symposium Aristotelicum on *Aristotle’s Nicomecheans ethics*, Book VII). My purpose will be to save this sentence. I’ll assume that the intellectual (or spiritual) pleasures are a reality. Aquinas was very acute on this point.