1. *Status Quaestionis*

Within the broader context of ongoing research in Philosophy, academic studies on ancient philosophy have flourished especially strongly and notably over the past several decades. New editions and translations in all the major languages of scholarship, especially in English, now the strongly preferred language for publication in this field, as well as running commentaries, myriads of papers and monographs, have regularly come out these past fifty years or so, ranging from work on Pre-Socratics, through the more than thousand year history of philosophy as a major intellectual force in Greece and Rome, all the way to the late-ancient and Byzantine commentators on Plato and Aristotle. As both a cause and a result of this outpouring of scholarly work, there are now special PhD programs in ancient philosophy in philosophy and classics departments at many British and US universities, the earliest of which being the Interdepartmental PhD Program in Classical Philosophy at Princeton. None of these programs existed before 1960. In connection with this development, philosophy departments in the US have expanded dramatically the representation in their faculties of professors with degrees focused on ancient philosophy, so that nowadays virtually every serious university (and even college) faculty feels the strong need to have at least one specialist in this field (at Princeton there are 4 such appointees in Philosophy, out of a total of around 20, with a further two in Classics and Politics respectively who work in this area). Before 1960 that was very far from the case.

These developments in the sociology of the philosophy profession provide a clear sign of the importance of and the sustained academic interest in ancient philosophy. It is also worth emphasizing the peculiar place of this area among philosophical studies overall. As a matter of fact, ancient philosophy plays a double role in academic philosophical studies. On the one hand, philosophy has always been deeply involved in reassessing itself by considering its first foundations, and ancient philosophy is involved in this process in a double sense: it represents philosophy’s first *temporal* foundations, as philosophy emerged for the first time in ancient Greece as the particular intellectual activity we know as philosophy through its long subsequent history right up to the present day, but it also represents its *grounding* or *theoretical* foundations in the sense of providing philosophy with its main conceptual tools and basic moves in its self-assigned effort to provide a general explanation of what there is, what is to be known, what it is to be taken as beautiful, or how to evaluate moral
activities, only to mention some of philosophy’s central issues. In this connection, and of special relevance for ancient philosophy’s place in contemporary philosophy, dominated as it is by “analytic” approaches and methods, ancient philosophy, especially with Plato and Aristotle, quickly evolved as an analysis of our language and our various commitments displayed by it as we reason logically, and argue for or against a thesis. This was expressly acknowledged by Plato as he describes in the _Phaedo_ the Socratic _deuteros plous_, or second navigation, concerning the explanation of natural objects and events as in an important sense a study of our language about what the things are and how they come about, such that the _logoi_ (the things that we say) themselves become the starting-points and focus of the philosophical enquiry; or again, when Plato defines thinking itself as a dialogue of the soul with, and within, itself, as he delves into the very notion of thought in the _Sophist_ and in the _Theaetetus_. The same is true for Aristotle, who is always keen to distinguish the many senses of a word, is deeply sensitive to argumentative forms, and is particularly interested in charting the language of each domain of things he wishes to investigate. Now, these features of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas mean that much of their work consists in philosophical enquiry and analytical examination, of just the kind we find in much contemporary philosophy, at least in the English-speaking world. We have thus a sort of convergence of two basic philosophical attitudes in Ancient times, notably in Plato and Aristotle: an acute sense of the role played by language in the many forms of the reasoning we display as we want to go deeper in the explanation of things, and the realization that philosophy is basically concerned with grounding or basic moves and foundations, in a way that chimes in with contemporary analytical philosophy’s conception of the task of philosophy.

Now, this may certainly help explain the special place nowadays of the study of Ancient Greek thought among other academic studies on philosophy. Such a study has of course its own historic interest, as any other period of philosophy has, but it is fundamentally an attempt to re-assess the very grounding of the philosophical attitude, as we go from contemporary issues to those founding moments which gave those issues their characteristic accents and possibly some of their under- and overtones. And this is especially true with Plato and Aristotle, as they hold that arguing in philosophy requires a careful attention to language, which is methodologically akin to the analytical shift that characterizes contemporary philosophy. Doing philosophy is in an important sense going back to its foundations, and this means, for many issues, going back to Plato and Aristotle as sources of the moves that still guide our own attempts to deal with them.

2. Workshops on Ancient Philosophy
One important aspect of the vast expansion over the past 50 years or so of published work in ancient philosophy approached from the perspective of analytical philosophy, and of graduate training in this field, has been seen in the widened coverage in current research and teaching in this field. Previously it was only pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle who were written and taught about. Nowadays the Hellenistic philosophers (Stoics, Epicurus, and ancient skeptics both Academic and Pyrrhonian) and the philosophers of revived Platonism of the 1\textsuperscript{st} through 6\textsuperscript{th} centuries AD (e.g. Plotinus) get equal attention, though Plato and Aristotle retain their traditionally recognized central place in ancient philosophy studies, as the originators of comprehensive systematic philosophy in antiquity and the most important perennial influences throughout the history of philosophy in the medieval, post-Renaissance and even contemporary periods. It makes good sense, therefore, that this proposed joint faculty-student research program focuses on Plato’s and Aristotle’s philosophies, and aims at fostering academic studies on these philosophers’ works by means of the organization of a series of workshops in which central topics of their philosophical thought will be presented and discussed in an intense common reading among faculty members and graduate students of the two Universities. Similar workshops have been held for the past several years in the northern summer in Greece, organized and funded by the Princeton Program in Classical Philosophy, and (see below) last month in São Paulo with one-time funding by FFLCH and other USP sources whose aid was solicited by Marco Zingano, plus some additional funding from Princeton professors’ individual research accounts, as a first step toward establishing the ongoing Consortium envisaged in this application. These workshops, as they have evolved on the basis of experience in the Princeton-Greece series, function quite differently from standard conferences, colloquia and other similar meetings in the field of philosophy. In these other events papers are always presented as already completed analyses of topics and texts, the conference often having multiple papers of different authors devoted to a larger common topic with discussions in which the members of a group of scholars junior and more senior, exchange ideas and insights, with involvement often also of a larger public of attending participants. By contrast, in the planned workshops a single continuous passage is chosen (as, for example, Book I of Aristotle’s \textit{Physics}, the topic of the recent one in SP: in this introductory book of the \textit{Physics} Aristotle discusses methodological issues concerned with the “first principles,” or most fundamental concepts for the philosophy and science of nature and natural phenomena, and then himself proposes a set of such fundamental concepts as governing all more particular inquiries in this realm) and studied from beginning to end in a common, progressive reading of the whole book or section of a book, as the tenets and arguments appear in the text. This requires from all participants a common effort to come up with a coherent interpretation
of the whole short passage to which a session is devoted, in its relationship to what has preceded in the longer passage of which it is a part. The aim is thus not to share and discuss the results of individual prior research and writing, but to start afresh upon the study and philosophical exploration of an important central text already well known at least to the faculty members involved, as well as to some of the more advanced students, with the aim of discussing together and working toward individual and common deeper understanding of the progress of the argument step by step and of the way that through those steps and their accumulation the ancient author accomplishes the agenda he sets for himself in the segment of the work that the given whole workshop is devoted to. This sort of intensive work in reading ancient texts is the indispensable center for any and all good research, from that of beginners to the most advanced scholarship, in the field. It is however usually conducted individually in the privacy of one’s study or sometimes in graduate seminars dominated by a single instructor. What we propose to do is to take it to a higher level of effectiveness both in the education of graduate students and in the enrichment of our own knowledge and subsequent research. The workshops we propose will thus gather professors, graduate and perhaps some undergraduate students from both universities to work together on these texts and topics. It is worth mentioning that the workshops will include students and scholars principally (but not exclusively) from Philosophy and Classics, as the researchers in ancient philosophy in USP and Princeton alike mostly work in these two Departments.

One important feature of these workshops is that they involve reading the chosen passages line-by-line through from beginning to end, taking into account the philological contexts in which the philosophical issues to be discussed are imbedded, as well as these very tenets. Thus such close textual readings involve philological and philosophical considerations and arguments. A second, but no less important, point is that, once the text to be discussed is divided in advance into chunks, the chunks are assigned to the graduate students, in such a way that each segment is presented jointly at a single session by a pair of students, one from Princeton and one from USP. Such a practice requires the students to be in touch one with another a good time before the actual meeting, so as to engage in preparatory discussions for the official presentations that are required of them. By the time of the official meeting, the students are supposed to come up with a common plan for guiding the reading and discussion, as well perhaps as a common overall interpretation of the passage in its context, or at least an agreed understanding of the main organization and main issues to be found in the text, even if they may disagree about certain points, which disagreements may then become the focus of the general discussion that ensues. During and after the presentation, all other participants – students and professors – are supposed to join the discussion with a view to an agreed reading based on discussion of the main points brought about by the
passage in question, or if that cannot be reached, then at least a deepened individual grasp of the text on the part of each participant.

The main idea behind this practice, beyond the bare increase and deepening of understanding just referred to is to promote common work among the faculty and student participants and to strengthen the ties among the students themselves of the two universities, and to prepare them to present orally and discuss their readings of ancient philosophy texts, as students and as teachers, as well. It is also worth noticing that the texts to be chosen for discussion in the workshop are representative of the main positions held by Plato and Aristotle in some of their most difficult and challenging texts. Our current tendency is to favor topics on Plato’s moral psychology, as, for instance, the tripartition of the human soul in Book IV of the Republic, and topics from on Aristotle’s metaphysics and physics, such as issues on the universality or particularity of form as it shapes matter in the constitution of material objects (in such works as Metaphysics VII-IX, De Anima, etc.), or the constitution of physics as second philosophy (in such works as Physics and Metaphysics). This is not to preclude studies in subsequent workshops on epistemology, biology or any other field which these two philosophers addressed themselves, but it gives an idea of the current interests that prevail among the researchers involved in this joint proposed project. Whatever be the texts chosen, however, they will always cover central issues for these authors, and therefore they will be on crucial foci of recent and current research in our field.

The workshops, if we obtain the financing necessary, will take place once a year, most probably in mid-January, over three or four days, depending on the length of the text to be worked on. They are each to be carried out in an intensive way: two presentations in the morning, two or three meetings in the afternoon, three or four days in a row. Each presentation has two parts. In the first part, the two students to whom a chunk has been previously assigned present their reading and interpretation, focusing on the central issues concerning philosophical and philological questions. In the second part, every participant takes part and discusses the issues raised, the points made, the translations proposed. Each part is planned to last for about one hour, the two-part presentation lasting for two hours.

We are agreed that the topic of each workshop is to be decided at the end of the current one. The workshops are to take place in Princeton and at USP alternately. As a preliminary meeting has already taken place at USP, the first one under the proposed PU-USP consortium is planned to take place in Princeton, on Plato’s moral psychology, according to the main outlines of this doctrine laid down in Republic’s Book IV. Hence, at the end of this first workshop to be sponsored by the Princeton-USP agreement, a text from Aristotle will be decided, on in order to give continuity to our USP preliminary
workshop on *Physics* Book I, and so successively, as we hope that the Consortium will continue to obtain funds to extend the series of workshops beyond the currently applied for funding for 2 Academic Years.

### 3. Prospects of Internationalization

For several years, individual scholars from both groups have met and worked together, at common conferences, delivering lectures or seminars (for example at the triennial international Symposium Aristotelicum in Munich in 2011 and the upcoming one in 2014 in Delphi, Greece). Most recently, prof. Hendrik Lorenz came to São Paulo in October 2013 to present a two-day lecture series on the topic of *akrasia*, as part of the seminar run that semester by Prof. Marco Zingano in USP for graduate students. In the same vein, as noted above, a three-day meeting took place in São Paulo in mid-January 2014 (from 17 to 19/01), assembling professors and graduate students from Princeton and USP, to discuss the entire book I of Aristotle’s *Physics*, under our favored format of a workshop for close reading. Four professors and four graduate students from Princeton came to this workshop (John Cooper, Christian Wildberg, Benjamin Morison and Hendrik Lorenz; Georgina White, Brennan McDavid, Adam Crager and Daniel Wolt), meeting at USP, plus seven professors (Marco Zingano, Daniel Lopes, Fátima Evora, Paulo Ferreira, Fernando Gazoni, Fernando Puente and Gisele Amaral), three post-doctoral fellows (Evan Keeling, Simon Olmos and Jean-Louis Hudry), and three graduate students (Eduardo Wolf, Fernanda Izidório and Bruno Mancini) from USP and elsewhere in Brazil. Everyone involved, both the graduate students and the professors expressed great satisfaction with the process and the results of this collaboration. One Princeton professor, who is working on a paper on *Physics* I for the Symposium Aristotelicum to be held this July in Delphi Greece which will be eventually published by Oxford University Press in its series of volumes derived from the SA meetings, said that, as a result of the workshop he “has the clearest picture I have ever had of the argument of Physics I.” As this indicates, we have reason to hope and expect that by approving our application the PU-USP cooperation will advance in significant ways both the education of our graduate students through their interaction with one another as well as with our two faculties, and the progress of our own research and publications in our field.

As we have explained above, the planned workshops are thus the best and most effective way to bring together the two research groups in ancient philosophy and to advance research and graduate education at the two universities, by having each year a common discussion of a central text in the field carried out among professors and students. At the same time, the host team may invite researchers of other institutions (as
happened at USP in the “trial run” meeting in SP last month) to take part in the discussions, thus amplifying the ties and connections with other researchers in ancient philosophy in the host countries. In addition, with the funding that we are applying for, larger numbers of the faculty and graduate students of the “visiting” team can obtain the benefits: as noted above at the trial meeting last month in SP there were funds to enable only 4 of the 6 Princeton professors working in ancient philosophy to participate, and only 4 of the more than 15 graduate students doing their degrees in the Program in Classical Philosophy. Moreover, it is highly expected from all of us that these workshops will provide occasions for other meetings and different types of contributions that put together members of these two groups, and promote more intense academic activities among them as well: as one instance of this, Prof. Amaral of the university of Natal who took part at the SP workshop and Prof Cooper of Princeton got to know one another and about one another’s work, leading to a plan for him to go to the University of Natal to give lecture/seminars in the next AY. Moreover, professors and researchers from other universities may be invited to join the workshop, whenever their published work is particularly relevant and directly connected to the issues and the text being studied.

It goes without saying that we expect to produce from these meeting a series of papers, books, and other contributions, in which the topics and discussions raised in them are reassessed and rethought in academic fashion. We do not want to foresee or to put a figure to these contributions, as they will come naturally from our reflections and discussions, but we do commit ourselves to individual publications and related academic activities growing out of these workshop meetings. This is in addition to the benefits accruing to graduate students as they undertake their own papers and dissertations as they proceed through their PhD programs.

4. Princeton / USP partnership

Both research groups, from Princeton and USP, consider that this format of meetings, by means of workshops conceived as close reading of very precise passages and texts from Plato and Aristotle, carried out in common effort by professors and graduate students, is an invaluable tool for researching and discussing philosophic topics. As a matter of fact, in both Universities the programs regularly involve just such meetings between professors and their own students: in Princeton there is a regular Classical Philosophy Reading Group meeting once a week during the 12 weeks of the teaching semester, which functions very much in the way we envisage for the Consortium. Thus the planned PU-USP workshops can be seen as a natural way of
establishing the international outreach we are seeking between philosophy and ancient philosophy in the US and Brazil.

It is important to highlight that the ancient philosophers at both Princeton and USP take such academic working together by means of workshop of close reading to be so rewarding, that, as mentioned above, we decided to carry out the organization of a trial run meeting, in mid-January 2014 (on Aristotle’s Physics), even though no special funding had been assigned to it. This was due to the fact that our initial attempt to apply for funding from the Princeton-USP inter-university cooperation agreement was dismissed because of a too late sending of the forms and documents required for the application. We made an effort to raise funds from different sources in order to begin our research cooperation, even if we had to cope with financial restrictions. We would like to underline that we count heavily on the success of this application so as to be able to organize in better conditions new meetings of the same sort, on which, as we have said, we set the greatest value.

5. Sketch of the first workshop

As mentioned above, we are agreed to organize a next workshop on Plato’s tripartition of the soul, around mid-January 2015, in Princeton. This is a central and hugely important issue in Plato’s moral psychology that has attracted attention from many a commentator these last years, and to which some of the members of these two research groups have themselves made significant contributions. Very roughly, we want to read afresh and without advance commitments the main passages in Book IV of Republic, with a view to reassessing the entire argument based on which Plato wants to propose a tripartition of the soul, and, in consequence, to locate conflicts inside the soul, so that phenomena such as knowingly acting against what one believes to be best, which was ruled out by Socratic intellectualism, have now a clear and stable (even if controversial) conceptual framework. The soul’s three parts – the logistikos (calculating), the thumoeides (spirited), the epithumetikon (appetitive) – have a big impact on Platos’s thought, and, from the vantage point of a theory of action, they make a decisive turn in his philosophical career. It is not easy to evaluate the exact impact of this change in his views as we read his later dialogues, nor to assess exactly how Plato conceives of these parts. Interpreters have different views on it, and these different, and at some extent incompatible, views have direct consequences on the way one should construe Plato’s theory of action, and accordingly interpret Plato’s political philosophy.

Here is a provisional division of the text in chunks that correspond to sessions to be prepared and presented by a pair of graduate students of Princeton and USP, in our workshop format (the numbers indicate sessions presented by a pair of students). The
main passage comes from Book IV, in which the criterion for dividing the soul is presented three times, and the parts are introduced and examined as such; at the end of this Book, the virtues corresponding to each of the soul’s parts are defined, and some connections are provided with the previous arguments, as well as some directions are given for the coming arguments. We also add a chunk from Book X, where the criterion for dividing the soul is twice alluded to, and the issue of whether the human soul is simple or complex is reconsidered, for it is closely connected to what is going on in that part of Book IV which is the main object of our analysis:

(a) Book IV

(i) 434a3 – 436a7: the charting of the soul’s parts based on the State’s three classes
(ii) 436a8 – 437a10: determination of the basic oppositions within the soul: establishing the principle of opposites as the criterion for dividing the soul
(iii) 437b1 – 438a6: assent and dissent, attraction and repulsion; simple and complex appetites
(iv) 438a7 – 438e10: relatives taken alone, relatives taken as qualified
(v) 439a1 – 439e1: the appetitive part of the soul and its opposition to the rational part
(vi) 439e2 – 441c3: the thumoeides as a third part of the soul, naturally allied to the rational part
(vii) 441c4 – 442d6: relations obtaining among the parts of the soul; definition of courage, temperance, and wisdom
(viii) 442d7 – 444a3: justice as harmony in the soul
(ix) 444a4 – 445e4: inner states of the soul and political constitutions

(b) Book X

(x) 608d3 – 610c5: proof of the immortality of the soul
(xi) 610c6 – 612b6: revisiting the issue whether soul is simple or complex

The workshop will likely take three days of intensive work, from 9am to 6pm, each session taking two hours, as described above.

The ensuing second workshop of the proposed Consortium, scheduled to take place in mid-January 2016 again in São Paulo, will have an Aristotelian topic, to be decided at the end of the workshop on Plato’s moral psychology.