

# **Aristotle's *Nous Poiêtikos*: Another Modest Proposal**

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## *Summary*

My “modest proposal” is to pay attention to a sentence usually neglected of Aristotle's *De anima* III 5, 430a19-21, following which the actual knowledge, which absolutely is prior to the potential knowledge even in time, is identical with its object. If this sentence can be applied to the *nous*, as it results from the context and from other passages (e.g. *Metaph.* XII 9, 1075a3-5), we may conclude that the famous *nous poiêtikos* is the knowledge of the principles of the sciences, which is available for the human kind since the eternity. This hypothesis will be tested by the analysis of the whole chapter 5 of *De anima* III and by the discussion of the main interpretations of *nous poiêtikos*, i.e. those by Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Thomas Aquinas and Averroes.