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Character, voice and the limits of dietetics in Hippocrates' De victu I 36

Summary – In this paper I mainly deal with two questions. Firstly, I examine the human characteristics that cannot be influenced by regimen as presented in ch. I 36 of De victu and especially the reasons why the Hippocratic author placed them outside the reach of dietetics; within this inquiry I will make an excursus on the theory of perception in ch. I 35. Secondly, I analyse the text of the voice analogy and offer an interpretation that suits the author's intention.

1. Introduction

At the end of Book I, after explaining the philosophical foundations of medicine, the author of De victu presents in ch. I 35 a detailed typology of human intelligence. This contains eight categories of persons, differentiated according to their soul's composition of fire and water.¹ The author claims that the degree of intelligence depends on the soul's composition. Since the latter can be influenced by regimen, it follows that intelligence improvement is fundamentally possible by means of dietetics. Accordingly, he gives dietetical prescriptions aiming to balance the soul's composition of fire and water and raise the degree of intelligence. Ch. I 36, the last chapter of Book I, is more or less an appendix to ch. I 35, containing three distinct parts.² In the first part (= ch. I 36, 1), the main results of ch. I 35 are summed up. In the second part (= ch. I 36, 2), the author mentions several characteristics of the soul, or rather of man, which, unlike intelligence analyzed in ch. I 35, do not rely on the soul's composition of fire and water and, consequently, cannot be modified by a particular regimen. The third part of ch. I 36 (= ch. I 36, 3) is an analogy introducing the voice; its purpose is to illustrate the difference between characteristics that can be modified by regimen and those that cannot. Although the purpose of this analogy is obvious, its argumentative

¹ I have discussed this topic in a previous article: C. Enache, The intelligence typology in Hippocrates' De victu I 35, Wiener Studien 128 (2015), 37–48.

² I am hereby referring to the three paragraphs of the CMG edition.

structure is anything but clear, due to some textual difficulties. In fact, the voice analogy in ch. I 36 is unintelligible the way it is rendered in the major text editions of Littré, Jones and Joly.³

In the present paper⁴ I will discuss the two main topics of ch. I 36. Firstly, I will deal with the human characteristics that cannot be influenced by regimen presented by the Hippocratic author in ch. I 36,2 (section 2 to 4 of the paper). In section 2 I will address the reasons why the author of *De victu* placed these characteristics outside the reach of dietetics. Within this inquiry, an excursus on the theory of perception in ch. I 35 will appear necessary (section 3). The conclusions of this excursus will then shed new light on the limits of dietetics (section 4). Secondly, I will examine the voice analogy in ch. I 36,3 and offer an interpretation that suits the author's intention (section 5).

2. Character

In ch. I 36, the author of *De victu* emphasizes once again the power of regimen to improve intelligence. This power, he argues, is due to the fact that intelligence depends on the mixture of fire and water. He doesn't specify which mixture of fire and water he is talking about, but he probably means the *soul's* mixture of fire and water.⁵ Thus, the key words in the first sentence of ch. I 36 are soul (ψυχή), intelligence (φρόνησις), mixture (σύγκρησις), cause (αίτια) and regimen (δίαιτα).⁶ The mixture (of the soul) is the cause of a specific property of the soul. Since it is possible to dietetically change the percentage of fire and water in the (soul's) mixture by strengthening the weaker element, it is also possible to increase the degree of intelligence, because this rises with the balance of the elements. To make his point clear, the author additionally mentions some aspects on which regimen, by contrast, has no effect. His examples, which within ch. I 36 give the impression of an explanation of *obscurum per obscuriora*, have a theoretical

³ Œuvres complètes d'Hippocrate, traduction nouvelle avec le texte grec en regard par E. Littré, Paris 1849, tome sixième; Hippocrates with an English translation by W.H.S. Jones, vol. IV, London 1931 (Loeb); Hippocrate, Du régime, édité, traduit e commenté par R. Joly avec la collaboration de S. Byl, Berlin 1984 (²2003) (Corpus medicorum Graecorum). Throughout this paper I will cite the Greek text of R. Joly (CMG). All translations are my own, unless otherwise mentioned.

⁴ I am grateful to Monika Poschner for diligently proof-reading this paper.

⁵ See C. Enache, *The intelligence typology* 43/44.

⁶ The author's use of the Greek term δίαιτα allows two translations: "regimen" and "dietetics" (= science of the right regimen).

importance that goes beyond the immediate context. As far as I know, this is the only place where a fundamental impossibility of dietetics to change something related to man is referred to in De victu. For someone who claims that the human body and soul are made of fire and water, on the one side, and that the compositional structure of anything made of fire and water can be fundamentally influenced, on the other side, this is indeed a remarkable concession.

But what are these aspects that do not depend on the (soul's) composition? According to the author of De victu, one is not only intelligent or stupid, but also irascible (ὀξύθυμος), relaxed (ῥάθυμος), cunning (δόλιος), naive (ἄπλοῦς), mischievous (δυσμενής) or benevolent (εὔνους). It seems that this enumeration includes three pairs of antonyms, irascible being the opposite of relaxed, cunning the opposite of naive, and mischievous the opposite of benevolent. It is not easy to say whether the Hippocratic author regarded these characteristics as properties of the soul – the way he regarded intelligence as “intelligence of the soul”⁷ – as long as they do not depend on the (soul's) composition. Admittedly, they do have something to do with the soul, but their real cause (αἰτία) is something else, namely the nature of the passages (ἢ φύσις τῶν πόρων) through which the soul passes. The characteristics mentioned appear to be, so to speak, a matter of hardware and, consequently, should probably be regarded as properties of the whole man. I suggest to summarize the difference between intelligence as a property of the soul and the six characteristics (of man) in the following manner:

property	cause αἰτία	influence by regimen δίαιτα
intelligent or stupid soul φρόνιμος ἢ ἄφρων ψυχή	(soul's) composition σύγκρησις (τῆς ψυχῆς)	possible
irascible or relaxed (man) ὀξύθυμος ἢ ῥάθυμος (ἄνθρωπος) cunning or naive (man) δόλιος ἢ ἄπλοῦς (ἄνθρωπος) mischievous or benevolent (man) δυσμενής ἢ εὔνους (ἄνθρωπος)	nature of the passages ἢ φύσις τῶν πόρων	not possible

Figure 1

⁷ See the introductory words to ch. I 35: *περὶ δὲ φρονήσιος ψυχῆς ὀνομαζομένης καὶ ἀφροσύνης ὧδε ἔχει*, “this is the truth about the so-called intelligence and stupidity of the soul” (CMG 150, 29).

As can be seen, the nature of the passages is the cause of character⁸ the same way the soul's composition is the cause of intelligence. But if it is clear enough for anyone who reads ch. I 35 that the soul's composition can be dietetically influenced, the reason why the nature of the passages makes it impossible for the character to be affected by regimen is in my opinion the main difficulty in the second part of ch. I 36. It is not that the author doesn't provide an explanation, but rather that his explanation is, at first sight, unintelligible. The text goes as follows:

τῶν δὲ τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ σύγκρησις αἰτίη· οἶον ὀξύθυμος, ῥάθυμος, δόλιος, ἀπλοῦς, δυσμενής, εὖνους· τῶν τοιούτων ἀπάντων ἡ φύσις τῶν πόρων, δι' ὧν ἡ ψυχὴ πορεύεται, αἰτίη ἐστί. δι' ὁποίων γὰρ ἀγγείων ἀποχωρεῖ καὶ πρὸς ὁποῖά τινα προσπίπτει καὶ ὁποίοισι τισι καταμίσγεται, τοιαῦτα φρονέουσι. διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δυνατὸν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐκ διαίτης μεθιστάναι φύσιν γὰρ μεταπλάσαι ἀφανέα οὐχ οἶόν τε.

"The mixture is not the cause for someone's being irascible, relaxed, cunning, naive, mischievous or benevolent. The cause of all this is the nature of the passages through which the soul passes. These features⁹ depend on what sort of vessels the soul goes out through and what sort of things it applies itself to and what sort of things it commingles with. This is why it is not possible to modify all this by regimen. For it is impossible to change the invisible nature." (ch. I 36, CMG 156, 23–28)

The first impulse that comes to mind when reading this passage is to understand the term "invisible nature" in the last sentence as a clarifying reference to the "nature of the passages" through which the soul passes:¹⁰ the author seems to mean that the nature of the passages, being invisible, cannot be modified by the regimen. The reason for this impossibility, however, would then remain obscure, since the explanatory sentence in between concerning "the vessels the soul goes out through" and "the things the soul applies itself to" or "it commingles with" doesn't really explain why "the invisible nature of the passages" cannot be modified. Moreover, this reading is actually inconsistent with the philosophical context of *De victu*, as I will

⁸ From now on I will simply use the term "character" for the six characteristics mentioned by the Hippocratic author as opposed to intelligence.

⁹ In translation, we have to avoid any allusion to the connection between φρονέω and φρόνησις: the former describes character, while the latter denotes intelligence, i. e. precisely its opposite.

¹⁰ R. Joly, CMG 262, comm. ad l. For W. A. Heidel, *Hippocratea I*, Harvard Studies in Classical Philology 25 (1914), 162, "the φύσις ἀφανής is of course the ψυχή". This assumption is arbitrary, as it flagrantly contradicts the immediate context. In the preceding chapter and also at the beginning of ch. I 36 the Hippocratic author has just stated that the (composition of the) soul can be dietetically modified.

try to prove. Firstly, there are a lot of invisible things which, according to the author, can be modified by regimen. One of them is the natural constitution of men (φύσις), as described in ch. I 32.¹¹ Or is the body composition of fire and water something visible? Another one is the soul. This is also invisible and its (compositional) nature can be modified by regimen, as described in ch. I 35. Secondly, anything made of fire and water, whether visible or invisible, can be fundamentally modified by regimen. Should we believe that the passages through which the soul passes are not made of fire and water? Thirdly, according to ch. I 6/7, a man is composed of body and soul, which can both be modified by regimen. Should we believe that the passages through which the soul passes are not part of the body or the soul?

All these difficulties arise from the assumption that the term “invisible nature” in the last sentence of ch. I 36, 2 refers to the nature of the passages understood as the vessels the soul goes out through. In my opinion, however, this assumption is not necessary. I think that it is possible to understand the reasons why the author of *De victu* regarded character as being outside the reach of dietetics without having to assume that the nature of the passages through which the soul passes cannot be (at least partially) modified. Admittedly, such a hypothesis seems very improbable in the light of Figure 1, which illustrates precisely the parallel between the causes of intelligence and character and explains the possibility or impossibility of a dietetical influence of intelligence and character through the influenceability of their causes. As I see it, however, the author of *De victu* nowhere claims that the nature of the passages cannot be (dietetically) modified at all. This is only a conclusion that follows from the assumption that the term “invisible nature” refers to the nature of the passages and that these passages mean the vessels the soul goes out through. I will therefore look for the reasons why character cannot be influenced by regimen, taking for granted only the fact that the nature of the passages is the cause of character, as the text explicitly states, but not that the nature of the passages cannot be (dietetically) modified. In my view, the clue to the correct understanding of the passage is to be found in the explanatory sentence concerning “the vessels the soul goes out through” and “the things the soul applies itself to” or “it commingles with”. This sentence offers some important details about the physiology of perception which are very similar to explanations found in ch. I 35. To clarify the meaning of these details, I will postpone for the moment the

¹¹ See C. Enache, *The typology of human constitutions in Hippocrates' De victu* 1, 32, *Wiener Studien* 124 (2011), 39–54.

solution to the questions raised by character in ch. I 36 and take a brief look at the theory of perception suggested in ch. I 35.

3. Perception

For the author of *De victu*, perception is a cognitive act by which a human soul commingles with exterior data.¹² In ch. I 35 the intelligence level depends mainly on the quality of perceptions.¹³ The meeting between soul and exterior data takes place if both sides play an active part: the soul has to move towards the senses and the sensible objects,¹⁴ while the sensible objects come from the opposite direction to affect the senses and the soul.¹⁵ A question of particular importance for the present discussion concerns the place where this meeting takes place. As a matter of principle, there are three possibilities to be considered: either the soul leaves the body to meet the sensorial data outside (1); or the soul and the sensorial data meet on the boundaries that separate man and sensorial environment (2); or the sensorial data penetrate man and meet the soul inside the body (3). J. Jouanna, to whom we owe not only a lot of prestigious contributions to the history of Greek medicine, but also the most detailed analysis of the theory of percep-

¹² See the description of the fourth intelligence category: *κατὰ βραχὺ τι προσπίπτουσιν αἰ αἰσθήσεις ... καὶ ἐπ' ὀλίγον συμμίσγονται* “the senses apply themselves for a short time and commingle just a little” (ch. I 35, CMG 152, 30/31). In ch. I 6 knowledge is also connected with some kind of mixture: *συμμισγόμενα δὲ ἀλλήλοισι γινώσκει, πρὸς ὃ προσίζει* “they mix with one another and know what they join” (CMG 130, 13).

¹³ Most of the descriptions of intelligence categories contain significant details about the perceptions received by the soul, e. g. *φρόνιμοι μὲν καὶ οὗτοι, ἐνδεέστεροι δὲ τῆς προτέρας, διότι ... τὸ πῦρ ... νοθρότερον προσπίπτει πρὸς τὰς αἰσθήσεις* “these people are also intelligent, but inferior to the afore mentioned, because the fire applies itself more slowly to the senses” (ch. I 35, CMG 152, 9–11); *αἰσθάνονται ἢ τι ἢ οὐδέν, ὡς προσήκει τοὺς φρονέοντας* “they perceive practically nothing of what intelligent people perceive” (ch. I 35, CMG 154, 10/11); *φρόνιμος ἢ τοιαύτη ψυχὴ καὶ ταχέως αἰσθανομένη* “such a soul is intelligent and perceives quickly” (ch. I 35, CMG 154, 14/15). We might also add that in ch. I 23 the author enumerates seven senses (sic!) and equates knowledge with perception: *δι' ἐπὶ σχημάτων ἢ αἰσθησὶς ἢ ἀνθρώπων ἀκοή κτλ. [...] διὰ τούτων ἀνθρώποισι γῶσις* “human perception has seven forms: hearing etc. [...] These are the sources of human knowledge” (CMG 140, 20–23). Considering these opinions, one is inclined to deem the author of *De victu* agnoseological empiricist.

¹⁴ *ὀξυτέραν ... εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν ... καὶ πρὸς τὰς αἰσθήσεις θάσσον προσπίπτειν ... ἐπὶ πλείονα ὀρμάται* “the soul is sharper and applies itself more quickly to the senses ... it rushes upon more things” (ch. I 35, CMG 154, 22/23).

¹⁵ *ἦν γὰρ μὴ σεισθῆ ἢ ψυχὴ ὑπὸ τοῦ προσπεσόντος, οὐκ ἂν αἰσθοίτο* “if the soul is not stricken by what comes from outside, it is not able to perceive” (ch. I 35, CMG 154, 1).

tion in *De victu*,¹⁶ was of the opinion that, according to the Hippocratic author, external objects emit small particles that penetrate man through the senses and meet the soul inside the body. He based his interpretation on the following passage, that can be found in the description of the fourth intelligence category:

ἄτε γὰρ βραδέης ἐούσης τῆς περιόδου κατὰ βραχὺ τι προσπίπτουσιν αἰ αἰσθήσεις, ὁξέαι ἐούσαι, καὶ ἐπ' ὀλίγον συμμίσγονται διὰ βραδύτητα τῆς περιόδου. αἰ γὰρ αἰσθήσεις τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅσαι μὲν δι' ὄψιος ἢ ἀκοῆς εἰσιν, ὁξέαι, ὅσαι δὲ διὰ ψαύσιος, βραδύτεραι καὶ εὐαισθητότεραι. (ch. I 35, CMG 152, 30–33)

His translation, adopted by R. Joly in his CUF edition of *De victu*,¹⁷ goes like this:

“Étant donné, en effet, que la révolution (de l'âme) est lente, les parcelles sensibles n'ont qu'un court instant à chaque fois pour s'y précipiter quand elles sont rapides et, par conséquent, ne peuvent s'y mêler qu'en petite quantité à cause de la lenteur de la révolution. C'est que les parcelles sensibles saisies par l'âme, quand elles pénètrent par le canal de la vue ou de l'ouïe, sont rapides, alors que, quand elles y pénètrent par le canal du toucher, elles sont plus lentes et plus facilement saisies.”¹⁸

It is worth mentioning that W. H. S. Jones had translated this passage as follows:

“For as the circuit is slow, the senses, being quick, meet their objects spasmodically, and their combination is very partial owing to the slowness of the circuit. For the senses of the soul that act through sight or hearing are quick; while those that act through touch are slower, and produce a deeper impression.”

¹⁶ J. Jouanna, *La théorie de la sensation, de la pensée et de l'âme dans le traité hippocratique du Régime: ses rapports avec Empédocle et le Timée de Platon*, *Aion* 29 (2007), 9–38. The paper had a difficult birth, which is told by the author himself in the first pages. It originates in a lecture given in 1966 and summarized in a small article of four pages published in *Revue des Études Grecques* the same year. This small article had a great influence on R. Joly, who in his CUF edition of *De victu* published in 1967 adopted Jouanna's translation of the difficult passage CMG 152, 30–33. However, in his CMG edition of *De victu* published in 1984, R. Joly reconsidered his decision and attenuated the translation of J. Jouanna, arguing that it reflected too much the peculiarities of a particular interpretation. In the paper I am citing, written in 1996 but published in 2007, J. Jouanna thoroughly explains his interpretation from 1966 and defends it against the arguments brought forward by R. Joly in the CMG edition. An English version of this paper has been published in J. Jouanna, *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen: Selected Papers*, trans. by N. Allies, Leiden 2012, 195–228.

¹⁷ Hippocrate. Tome 6. P. 1. Du régime. Texte établi et traduit par R. Joly, Paris 1967 (*Les belles lettres*, CUF).

¹⁸ J. Jouanna, *La théorie de la sensation* 21.

The key word in this passage is the term αἰ αἰσθήσεις, which according to Jouanna is supposed to denote not the senses, but the sensible particles emitted by external objects. The arguments mentioned by Jouanna in favour of his interpretation are twofold: he cites other ancient sources which confirm this meaning of αἰσθήσεις (let's call this external evidence) and examines the theory of perception in *De victu* (internal evidence). I will not deal here with the external evidence brought up by Jouanna, but focus only on the passages in *De victu* that have to do with perception, since my intention is not to deny that this special meaning of αἰσθήσεις is fundamentally possible, but to prove that Jouanna's interpretation of perception in *De victu* is untenable.

As I see it, the internal evidence mentioned by Jouanna is mainly negative.¹⁹ He doesn't give decisive reasons that force us to assume that αἰ αἰσθήσεις mean in *De victu* "sensible particles emitted by external objects", but chiefly argues that the translations "senses" and "sensations", which he admits are the common meanings of the word, lead to contradictions and absurdities if used in ch. I 35. Let us examine what are these absurdities.

J. Jouanna claims that αἰ αἰσθήσεις cannot denote the sense organs, because the Hippocratic author says in the above cited passage CMG 152, 30–33 that αἰ αἰσθήσεις pass through the visual, auditive or tactile channels and the senses cannot pass through the senses. But does the text of *De victu* really say what Jouanna wants it to say? The words he refers to are these:

αἰ γὰρ αἰσθήσεις τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅσαι μὲν δι' ὄψιος ἢ ἀκοῆς εἰσιν, ὀξείαι (ch. I 35, CMG 152, 32).

I see no difficulty at all in reading here that a sense or a sense organ is sharper or quicker than another, since the reference to sight and hearing only explains what senses the author is talking about. This is the way Jones also understood the text in his translation. To object here that a sense cannot pass through the senses is a self-made difficulty. On the contrary, I find Jouanna's translation "penetrate" for the neutral εἰσιν tendentious, because it introduces into the text an idea which is not there. Moreover, the phrase αἰ αἰσθήσεις τῆς ψυχῆς, which is clear enough for anyone who can read Greek, is distorted by Jouanna to fit his interpretation. In my opinion, there is no chance that a Greek author might refer to sensible particles emitted by external objects by the phrase αἰ αἰσθήσεις τῆς ψυχῆς, especially if they are nowhere else explicitly mentioned. When Jouanna interprets the genitive τῆς ψυχῆς as an agent or logical subject in the passive translation "the αἰσθήσεις grasped

¹⁹ J. Jouanna, *La théorie de la sensation* 19/20.

by the soul”, he actually has another text in mind, something like ἡ ψυχὴ αἰσθάνεται τῶν αἰσθησίων.²⁰ Needless to say, the Hippocratic author didn't write this. In fact, a reference to the soul would make no sense in this sentence, if the αἰσθήσεις – understood as objective particles – were to preexist their actual meeting with the soul, as Jouanna claims, and the Hippocratic author were talking here about their entering the body through the sense channels. Instead, one would expect a reference to their objectivity, i. e. to the objects they are coming from. To sum up, I regard Jones' translation of this passage as accurate and consider Jouanna's reading a *petitio principii*, since he tries to infer from it conclusions which he himself put in.

Jouanna also excludes the meaning “sensations” for αἰσθήσεις, because he doesn't see what the sensations are supposed to mix with when applying themselves to the objects and how they can be quick precisely when the movement of the soul is said to be slow.

The first question concerns the (grammatical) object of the verb συμμίσγονται at CMG 152, 31, which is absolute in the text. Jones obviously read αἰσθήσεις συμμίσγονται τοῖσι χρήμασι, while Jouanna wants to read αἰσθήσεις συμμίσγονται τῇ ψυχῇ. As can be seen, the object of συμμίσγονται depends essentially on the meaning of αἰσθήσεις, as well as on the direction one is associating with the preceding προσπίπτουσι. If the αἰσθήσεις (= senses) move outwards, they will commingle with the sensible objects; if the αἰσθήσεις (= sensible particles emitted by the objects) move inwards, they will commingle with the soul. Both readings make sense and the question cannot be decided on grammatical reasons. But, what presently matters is that the reading “the senses commingle with the objects” contains no absurdity and this passage cannot be considered an objection against the common meaning of αἰσθήσεις which is “senses” or “sensations”.

The second question concerns the relation between the movement of the soul and the movement of αἰσθήσεις. Jouanna believes that the movement of sensations has to depend on the movement of the soul and regards the fact that in the above cited passage CMG 152, 30–33 the αἰσθήσεις are said to be quick when the soul is slow as an argument against the identification of αἰσθήσεις with the sensations. In reality, the author of De victu only claims that some senses (and sensations) are quicker than others, which has to do with the nature of the sensorial channels, not with the movement of the soul. The assertion that sight and visual sensations are quicker than touch and

²⁰ To be more precise, this should be a passive construction, i.e. Jouanna is forced to make use of some other verb (“saisir”), since αἰσθήσεις αἰσθάνονται ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς is not possible. This certainly takes him another step further from the Hippocratic text.

tactile sensations is true for all humans, irrespective of their soul's composition, soul movement speed or intelligence level, because it describes human nature as it is.²¹ When the Hippocratic author says that a slow movement of the soul means that the sharper αἰσθήσεις have just a short time to apply themselves and, consequently, the act of visual and auditive perception is either deficiently accomplished or fails entirely, he describes an incompatibility between the slow movement of the soul and the sharp senses which represents a rather speculative edge case. I admit that his explanation of this incompatibility is not easy to understand, but in my opinion this is due to the fact that he obviously wasn't interested in offering an elaborate theory of perception. If I had to give an account of this edge case, I would first of all consider the possibility that the sharpness of sight and hearing also had to do with their larger operating area, which a slow soul is probably not able to cover even if it has a functional sensorial equipment available. But I see no point in extending our guesses so far beyond what the Hippocratic author wanted to tell us, as long as we have no means of control in this domain.

To sum up, I can find in Jouanna no decisive argument against the assumption that αἰσθήσεις denote in *De victu* the senses and also no Hippocratic passage that would better be explained by his interpretation than by the usual meaning of the word. Furthermore, I think that his interpretation forces the meaning of the text on one occasion and that the external evidence brought forward by him cannot compensate for the poor internal evidence. Therefore, it is not surprising for me that R. Joly preferred to return to the old translation αἰσθήσεις = senses in his CMG edition of *De victu*, abandoning Jouanna's "sensible particles":

"Etant donné, en effet, que la révolution (de l'âme) est lente, les sensations n'ont qu'un court instant à chaque fois pour y arriver quand elles sont rapides et, par conséquent, ne peuvent s'y mêler qu'en petite quantité à cause de la lenteur de la révolution. C'est que les sensations saisies par l'âme, quand elles y pénètrent par la vue ou l'ouïe, sont rapides, tandis que quand elles y pénètrent par le toucher, elles sont plus lentes et plus facilement saisies."

I will not go here into the details of Joly's argumentation and of Jouanna's answer to it, since in my opinion they don't make any substantial

²¹ If the αἰσθήσεις were objective (particles), the author of *De victu* would describe in this passage the things as sources of emitted particles, i.e. the things as they are, irrespective of the (human or animal) perceiving soul. The question why external objects emit particles that precisely fit our sense organs would then, of course, remain obscure. In my opinion, however, the author of *De victu* is talking here not about the external world, which, according to Jouanna, would consist of particles moving at different speeds, but about man and his perceptive apparatus.

contribution to the understanding of the text itself.²² To conclude this part, I will just note that Joly's CMG translation of the above cited passage CMG 152, 130–133 is still tributary to Jouanna, since (1) it suggests an inward movement of the senses in the translation of (αἰ αἰσθήσεις) προσπίπτουσι; (2) it takes for granted that the object of συμμίσγονται is the soul; and (3) it maintains the unnecessary verb "saisir" (= grasp) in the translation of αἰ αἰσθήσεις τῆς ψυχῆς as well as the tendentious "penetrate" for εἶσιν (which, of course, is almost harmless in the new context).²³ Therefore, I propose the following translation for this passage:

"Since the (soul's) circulation is slow, the senses, being sharp, apply themselves only for a short time and commingle just a little (with the objects), due to the slowness of the circulation. For the sensations of the soul due to sight or hearing are sharp, while those due to touch are slower and can be perceived more easily."

In my view, the author of *De victu* regarded αἰσθήσεις = senses as channels through which the soul comes in contact with the outside world. The subject of perception is fundamentally the soul, which by way of the senses reaches external objects. The Hippocratic author seems to have made no difference between the expressions "the soul applies itself to the senses" and "the senses apply themselves", both describing an outward movement of the soul towards the sensible objects. If, therefore, the senses are some kind of extension of the soul which operates outside the body by commingling with external objects, we are entitled to assume that, in a way, the soul circulates not only within the body, but also around it, namely as far as the sensorial tentacles reach.²⁴ Such a movement could still be considered a

²² H. Bartoš, *Philosophy and Dietetics in the Hippocratic On Regimen. A Delicate Balance of Health* (Leiden 2015) appears to me to be the only scholar who fully agrees with Jouanna on this point. Without going into the details of this debate and without explicitly taking sides, he extensively cites Jouanna's "remarkable interpretation" (197, see also 145, n. 188, and 236). However, when referring to the Hippocratic text he uses neither Jouanna's nor Joly's translation (see note 23 below), but Jones' version (194).

²³ An English version of the CMG translation can be found in Ph. van der Eijk, *Modes and degrees of soul-body relationship in On Regimen*, in: *Officina Hippocratica. Beiträge zu Ehren von Anargyros Anastassiou und Dieter Irmer*, hrsg. von L. Perilli, C. Brockmann, K.-D. Fischer, A. Roselli (Berlin 2011), 264, who adjusted Jones' translation to fit Joly's interpretation: "For as the circuit is slow, the sensations, being quick, impinge (on the soul) spasmodically, and their mixing (with the soul) is very partial owing to the slowness of the circuit. For the sensations of the soul that act through sight or hearing are quick, while those that act through touch are slower, and produce a deeper impression."

²⁴ In the embryological account found in ch. I 9/10 the author of *De victu* refers to διέξοδοι "outlets" made by fire when creating the body. Such outlets are for instance αἰ διέξοδοι

circular movement as long as the soul comes back to itself after perceiving.²⁵ Accordingly, we can now give an answer to the question concerning the place where soul and sensorial data meet: they meet outside the body,²⁶ the

τοῦ πνεύματος “the orifices of breath” (ch. I 9, CMG 132,29), which in ch. I 23 are counted along with the senses among the sources of human knowledge (see note 32 below). In ch. I 35 perception and intelligence explicitly depend on the outlets. For instance, the third intelligence category is characterized by a soul composition in which water dominates (to some extent) fire, i. e. by a rather slow movement of the soul. In such a case improving intelligence means to make sure that the outlets and the passages through which the soul passes are not stuffed with surfeit and do not hinder the movement of the soul: τοῖσι περιπάτοισι συμφέρει χρῆσθαι ... ὅπως αἱ διέξοδοι κενῶνται τοῦ ὑγροῦ καὶ μὴ φράσσωνται οἱ πόροι τῆς ψυχῆς “it is useful to take walks ... so that the outlets eliminate the humidity and the passages of the soul do not get stuffed” (CMG 152, 19–22).

²⁵ I suppose that this backward movement of the soul which returns to itself after collecting sensorial data is meant by the Hippocratic author when he says that the soul must be “stricken by what comes from outside” in order to perceive (ch. I 35, CMG 154, 1, see note 15 above). At any rate, it is clear that both the outward and the backward movements are equally important, since perception consists of both. This would explain why the author alternatively mentions both of them when referring to the act of perception. At least, I see no other reason for the apparent difference between the two sharper senses sight and hearing introduced by him in a totally different context, viz. within the discussion of natural effort in ch. II 61: ὄψιος μὲν οὖν δύναμις τοιῆδε· προσέχουσα ἢ ψυχὴ τῷ ὀρεομένῳ κινεῖται καὶ θερμαίνεται [...] διὰ δὲ τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐσπίπτοντος τοῦ ψόφου σείεται ἢ ψυχὴ καὶ πονεῖ, πονέουσα δὲ θερμαίνεται καὶ ξηραίνεται “these are the effects of sight: the soul that focuses on a visual object moves and gets warmer [...]; when a sound comes in through hearing, the soul is stricken and makes an effort, and by making an effort, it gets warmer and drier” (CMG 184, 9–12). This description gives the impression that only visual sensations presuppose a soul activity, while auditive sensations may arise even if the soul has an absolutely passive attitude, provided that it is affected by a stimulus coming from outside. However, according to ch. I 35 (CMG 152, 30 – CMG 154, 2), the fact of being stricken or affected by an outside stimulus (σεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ προσπεσόντος) essentially depends on the soul’s composition, speed and consistency (παχύτης), not on the presence of sensorial stimuli (which, it is to suppose, are some way or another always present). In other words, it depends on the soul whether a sound gets in (“penetrates”) or not, since the perceptive capacity decreases with the soul’s circulation speed, a slow soul being penetrated by just a few (auditive) stimuli, if at all. Thus, auditive perception amounts to the same circular movement, i. e. activity of the soul, even when the Hippocratic author wishes to emphasize only its backward component. I also regard the reference to the effort (πόνος) made by the soul when receiving auditive sensations as a hint to this activity (on this point see also note 33 below).

²⁶ In ch. IV 86 the Hippocratic author explains the difference between waking and sleep as follows: ἡ ψυχὴ ἐγρηγορότι μὲν τῷ σώματι ὑπηρετεύουσα, ἐπὶ πολλὰ μεριζομένη, οὐ γίνεται αὐτῇ ἐωυτῆς, ἀλλ’ ἀποδίδωσι τι μέρος ἐκάστω τοῦ σώματος, ἀκοῆ, ὄψει, ψαύσει, ὀδοιορίῃ, πρήξει παντὸς τοῦ σώματος· αὐτῇ δὲ ἐωυτῆς ἢ διανοίῃ οὐ γίνεται. ὅταν δὲ τὸ σῶμα ἡσυχάσῃ, ἢ ψυχὴ κινεομένη καὶ ἐγρηγορέουσα διοικεῖ τὸν ἐωυτῆς οἶκον καὶ τὰς

soul going out by way of the senses to gather the information it needs.²⁷ This conclusion, which follows from the examination of ch. I 35, throws new light on ch. I 36 and, in its turn, receives an important confirmation from it. I will now corroborate the results obtained so far from the analysis of the theory of perception in ch. I 35 with the author's considerations about character in ch. I 36 in order to understand the reasons why he claims that character cannot be modified by regimen.

4. The limits of dietetics

As I have shown above, the author of *De victu* regards the nature of the passages through which the soul passes as responsible for character. He then explains this cause by the following words:

τοῦ σώματος πρήξιας ἀπάσας αὐτὴ διαπρήσσειται. τὸ μὲν γὰρ σῶμα καθεύδον οὐκ αἰσθάνεται, ἡ δὲ ἐγρηγορούσα γινώσκει πάντα, καὶ ὀρῆ τε τὰ ὀρητὰ καὶ ἀκούει τὰ ἀκουστά, βαδίζει, ψαύει, λυπείται, ἐνθουμεῖται, ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐοῦσα “the soul serves the body when this is awake: by dispersing itself in many directions, it never comes to itself, but applies itself with one part or another to different aspects of the body, e. g. to hearing, sight, touch, walk or other activity of the whole body. Anyway, the thought doesn't come to itself (when the body is awake). But when the body is sleeping, the soul, being awake and moving, manages its household and performs all the activities of the body. For the body doesn't perceive when asleep, but the soul is awake and apprehends everything: it sees visible things, hears audible sounds, walks, touches, feels pain, deliberates. It does all this in a small place” (CMG 218,4–11). Perception during waking is described here as an act of alienation of the soul due to its task of administering the relationship between body and environment. Moreover, the body is described as the soul's home (οἶκος). In my opinion, this metaphor also suggests the spatial freedom of the soul: a home is not only the place where one grows up or lives, but also the condition of possibility of going forth and back. Since no home confines its dwellers to its walls, the freedom of movement is obviously an essential feature of the relation between soul and body thus pictured. In addition, the author of *De victu* claims that the soul only takes care of itself and of its home when the body is asleep, by which he means to say that the difference between waking and sleep equals the contrast between exterior and interior (soul activity). This interpretation also accounts for the hint to the “small place” occupied by the soul during sleep: the home can only be called small by comparison with the soul's activity range during waking. We might suppose that, as far as sensorial perception is concerned, the Hippocratic author was not far away from Aristoteles' dictum ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ ὄντα πῶς ἐστὶ πάντα “the soul is, in a manner of speaking, everything (it perceives)” (*De an.* 431b21).

²⁷ This mainly concerns the sharper senses. As to the others, e. g. touch, we are to presuppose that the soul doesn't have to leave the body in order to perceive. That is to say that a meeting between soul and sensorial data on the boundaries between body and sensorial environment should also be possible.

δι' ὁποίων γὰρ ἀγγείων ἀποχωρεῖ καὶ πρὸς ὁποῖά τινα προσπίπτει καὶ ὁποίοισί τισι καταμίσγεται, τοιαῦτα φρονέουσι.

“One is like this depending on what sort of vessels the soul goes out through and what sort of things it applies itself to and what sort of things it commingles with.” (ch. I 36, CMG 156, 25–27)

The key word in this sentence is in my view the verb ἀποχωρεῖ (sc. ἡ ψυχή), which has been taken by the translators and commentators to mean “(the soul) passes”²⁸ and understood in connection with the circular movement of the soul within the body. However, the precise meaning of this word is “(the soul) leaves” or “goes out”, which is for me a plain reference to the outward movement of the soul in the act of perception. Consequently, the things “the soul applies itself to” and “commingles with”²⁹ must be external objects and not its own parts, as in ch. I 6.³⁰ If this inference is right, then character, whose cause was in the previous sentence the nature of the passages, is due not only to the vessels (= sense channels) the soul circulates (= goes out) through, but also to the external objects it interacts with. That means that we have to differentiate between the πόροι “passages” referred to in the previous sentence as the cause of character and the ἀγγεῖα “vessels” mentioned here along with external objects in the explanation of the passages: the vessels are just one moment or aspect of the passages, the other one being the external world. In other words, the passages referred to before and explained here have a subjective as well as an objective component: the former are the vessels, the latter are the external objects. Thus, character appears to have a twofold cause, one side of which depends on man, while the other on the external world. This conclusion explains why character both differs from man to man and cannot be modified by regimen. It differs from man to man because the vessels through which the soul goes out are individually different. We have no reason to doubt that these vessels, i.e. the subjective component of the passages, are a part of the body, are made of fire and water and, consequently, can be modified by regimen. However, this wouldn’t affect the character, because this also depends on the external world, i. e. on the objective component of the passages, with which dietetics

²⁸ “tels sont les vaisseaux qu’elle [sc. l’âme] traverse” (E. Littré 525), “such dispositions of the soul depend upon the nature of the vessels through which it passes” (W. H. S. Jones 293), “on a de tels caractères selon les vaisseaux par où (l’âme) passe” (R. Joly 157).

²⁹ This diction is undoubtedly a hint to the processes described by the author in ch. I 35.

³⁰ ἐκάστη δὲ ψυχή μέρω καὶ ἐλάσσω ἔχουσα περιφοιτᾷ τὰ μόρια τὰ ἑωυτῆς “every soul has bigger and smaller parts and visits its own parts” (ch. I 6, CMG 130, 8/9).

surely has nothing to do. This objective aspect of character must have been meant by the Hippocratic author when he said that “it is impossible to change the invisible nature”. The nature of things which is responsible for the character cannot be modified by regimen, therefore character cannot be modified by regimen.

The real meaning of the comparison between intelligence and character in ch. I 36, i. e. the similarities and differences between these two properties now also become clear. In both cases, the soul goes out through the sensorial channels to apply itself to and commingle with external objects. The speed of this movement which depends on the soul's composition of fire and water is responsible for its intelligence. At the same time, the nature of the vessels through which the soul goes out and the (invisible, i. e. “real”) nature of the things it perceives (both are covered by the concept πόροι “passages”) are responsible for individual features like irascibility or relaxedness etc. which concern the dispositions, inclinations and feelings that (might) accompany the act of perception. These characteristics, which describe the manner of interacting with the outer world,³¹ are independent of the intelligence level and cannot be regulated like intelligence by means of regimen. It was obviously important for the Hippocratic author to emphasize at the end of

³¹ It is not easy to say why the Hippocratic author chose precisely these character features to illustrate the limits of dietetics, what these have in common and why they should depend on the outer world to a greater extent than intelligence. H. Bartoš, *Philosophy and dietetics* 222–225, claims that the human characteristics mentioned in ch. I 36 point to a certain domain of knowledge, namely ethics, politics and social relations, and that the author's intention was to clearly separate this domain from dietetics. However, while it can be argued that the Hippocratic author wanted to emphasize the limits of dietetics, it is far from obvious that characteristics like irascibility and relaxedness, cunningness and naivety or mischievousness and benevolence do describe a unitary domain of knowledge that can reasonably be contrasted with intelligence. On this point, Ph. van der Eijk, *Modes and degrees* 266 has already remarked that cunningness and naivety cannot easily be separated from intelligence. One might also refer to the sixth intelligence category in ch. I 35, depicted by the Hippocratic author as a “good soul” (ψυχή ἀγαθή, CMG 154, 16), or to people of the seventh and eighth categories, whose intelligence level also influences their daily business (τὰς πρήξιας πρήσσειν CMG 156, 1; τὰς πρήξιας ποιείσθαι CMG 154, 17). These hints clearly indicate that intelligence also contains social aspects in *De victu*. Moreover, irascibility and relaxedness do not necessarily characterize interhuman behaviour, since these features also become manifest in situations where no other individuals are involved. As a matter of fact, relaxedness is the only character feature mentioned in *De victu* outside ch. I 36 as well. However, it is always used as an antonym to “effort”.

the philosophical foundation of medicine that some aspects of man lie outside the reach of dietetics, i. e. that dietetics cannot solve everything.

5. Voice

I will now examine the voice analogy by which the author intended to make clear the difference between properties that can and properties that cannot be dietetically influenced. The last part of ch. I 36 (= ch. I 36, 3) was edited by R. Joly like this:

ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τῆς φωνῆς, ὅποιή τις ἂν ἦ, οἱ πόροι αἴτιοι τοῦ πνεύματος· δι' ὁποίων (γὰρ) ἂν τινων κινῆται ὁ ἀήρ καὶ πρὸς ὁποίους τινὰς προσπίπτῃ, τοιαύτην ἀνάγκη τὴν φωνὴν εἶναι. καὶ ταύτην (ταῦτα θΜ) μὲν δυνατὸν καὶ βελτίω καὶ χεῖρω ποιεῖν, διότι λειοτέρους (πλειοτέρους θ) καὶ τρηχυτέρους (βραδυτέρους θ, βραχυτέρους Μ) τοὺς πόρους (*om.* θ, πόνους Μ, *corr.* χFHa) τῷ πνεύματι δυνατὸν ποιῆσαι, κείνο δὲ ἀδύνατον ἐκ διαίτης ἀλλοιωῶσαι. (ch. I 36, CMG 156, 28–32)

In my opinion, to understand this passage means to be able to specify the key words therein and the relations between them in a manner similar to Figure 1 above. But before doing that, let us make clear what voice has to do with perception. In ch. I 23 the author of *De victu* mentions seven senses, through which man gets acquainted with the environment: hearing, sight, smell, taste, language, touch and warm or cold breath.³² Moreover, in ch. II 61 he explains what he means by natural effort: it is the effort of sight, hearing, voice and thought.³³ From these chapters it follows that (articulated)

³² δι' ἑπτὰ σχημάτων ἢ αἰσθησις ἢ ἀνθρώπων· ἀκοὴ ψόφου, ὄψις φανερῶν, ῥῖνες ὀσμῆς, γλῶσσα ἡδονῆς καὶ ἀηδίας, στόμα διαλέκτου, σῶμα ψαύσιος, θερμοῦ ἢ ψυχροῦ πνεύματος διέξοδοι ἕξω καὶ ἔσω. διὰ τούτων ἀνθρώποισι γνώσις “human perception has seven forms: hearing for sounds, sight for visible things, nostrils for smell, tongue for pleasant and unpleasant things, mouth for speech, body for touch, entrances and exits for warm or cold breath. These are the sources of human knowledge” (ch. I 23, CMG 140, 20–23).

³³ οἱ μὲν οὖν κατὰ φύσιν αὐτῶν [sc. τῶν πόνων] εἰσιν ὄψις πόνος, ἀκοῆς, φωνῆς, μερίμνης “natural effort is the effort of sight, hearing, voice, thought” (ch. II 61, CMG 184, 8/9). About the vocal effort, he adds: ὅσοι δὲ πόνου φωνῆς ἢ λέξεως ἢ ἀναγνώσεις ἢ ᾄδαί, πάντες οὗτοι κινέουσι τὴν ψυχὴν “the effort of voice or speech or reading or singing always moves the soul” (ch. II 61, CMG 184, 14/15). We might add that for Platon thinking also involves some kind of effort which can be more exhausting than physical exercises: πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀποδελιῶσι ψυχαὶ ἐν ἰσχυροῖς μαθήμασιν ἢ ἐν γυμνασίοις· οἰκειότερος γὰρ αὐταῖς ὁ πόνος, ἴδιος ἀλλ' οὐ κοινὸς ὢν μετὰ τοῦ σώματος “the soul shrinks from hard learning even more than from physical training, because this is its specific effort which it has to make alone, without help from the body” (*Politeia* 535b). Furthermore, Aristoteles regards sensorial activity as an effort as well: ἀεὶ πονεῖ τὸ ζῷον,

voice is for the Hippocratic author a form or medium of interaction with the world similar to the senses. It is this similarity that justifies the mention of voice in ch. I 36, within the discussion of the opposition between intelligence and character, i.e. between two properties related to perception.

In ch. I 36, 3 the author undoubtedly describes a difference between two terms, one of which can be dietetically modified, while the other cannot. This is the meaning of the last sentence of this chapter (ταύτην/ταῦτα μὲν δυνατόν ... κείνο δὲ ἀδύνατον) and no interpretation can ignore this. The question is, however, which terms the Hippocratic author had in mind. Littré, Jones and Joly unanimously believed that in ch. I 36, 3 the author contrasted voice (the modifiable term) and character (unmodifiable).³⁴ They regarded ταύτην/ταῦτα at the beginning of the last sentence (= the first term of the opposition) as a reference to the voice and κείνο (= the second term of the opposition) as a reference to the characteristics mentioned in I 36, 2. In other words, they regarded the paragraph I 36, 3 as a description of a (new) property, which – just like intelligence in I 36, 1 – can be dietetically modified. According to their translations, the difference meant by the Hippocratic author in the last sentence of the chapter is a contrast between I 36, 3 and I 36, 2, and this difference is supposed to exemplify the similar contrast that exists between I 36, 1 and I 36, 2. Of all three translators, only Jones admitted that the text doesn't really support such an interpretation; nevertheless, he stuck to it, giving a translation which he didn't believe in,³⁵ because "it made good sense logically" (295, note 1). However, as I will try to prove, this interpretation doesn't make any sense.

First of all, the adverb ὡσαύτως "similarly" at the beginning of I 36, 3 cannot possibly introduce an opposition between I 36, 2 and I 36, 3. The word usually expresses a continuity illustrated by a similar term or an exam-

ὥσπερ καὶ οἱ φυσιολόγοι μαρτυροῦσι, τὸ ὄραν, τὸ ἀκούειν φάσκοντες εἶναι λυπερόν
 "animals make effort all the time; the nature philosophers confirm this opinion when they say that seeing and hearing are toilsome" (Nicomachean Ethics 1154b7).

³⁴ "il est possible de l'améliorer et de l'empirer [sc. la voix], parce qu'il l'est de rendre pour l'air les tuyaux plus lisses ou plus rudes. Mais les dispositions signalées plus haut ne se changent pas par le régime" (E. Littré 525); "in the case of voice, indeed, it is possible to make it better or worse, because it is possible to render the passages smoother or rougher for the breath, but the aforesaid characteristics cannot be altered by regimen" (W.H.S. Jones 295); "il est possible de la rendre meilleure ou pire [sc. la voix] parce qu'on peut rendre les pores du souffle plus doux ou plus rudes; mais par le régime, il est impossible de changer cela" (R. Joly 157). See also Ph. van der Eijk, *Modes and degrees* 265/266 and H. Bartoš, *Philosophy and dietetics* 221.

³⁵ In the last sentence he edits κείνο but translates κείνα.

ple, and we have no reason to doubt this here. Secondly, the structure and terminology of the first sentence of I 36,3 actually reflects the structure and terminology of I 36,2: passages (οἱ πόροι) are mentioned as a cause (αἰτία), and the explanation of this fact includes a reference to the outward movement (of the soul or the voice) in the act of perception (δι' ὀκοίων ἀποχωρεῖ or κινεῖται, πρὸς ὀκοῖά τινα/ὀκοίους τινὰς προσπίπτει). To suppose that the πόροι have in I 36,3 precisely the opposite function than in I 36,2 is an assumption without any support in the text.³⁶ Thirdly, the conclusion concerning the influence through regimen is the same in I 36,2 and I 36,3: character cannot be dietetically influenced, while voice is “necessarily” (ἀνάγκη) the way it is. It is incomprehensible for me how all three translators of *De victu* could so radically misunderstand these words as to infer from them a conclusion that contradicts the very letter of the text.³⁷ For if something is “with necessity” the way it is, then it obviously cannot be modified by regimen, and if voice has to have a place in the opposition between properties that can and properties that cannot be dietetically modified, then it definitely belongs to the latter category. Fourthly, at the beginning of the second sentence of I 36,3 the Hippocratic author mentions something (ταῦτα) that can be made better or worse (by regimen), therefore he cannot possibly refer to the voice, which he has just compared with character in the preceding sentence and described as being “with necessity” the way it is. This means that the reading ταύτην by which Jones and Joly replaced the neutrum plural ταῦτα transmitted in the main manuscripts θ and M at the beginning of the second sentence of I 36,3 has no place in the text.

But if the contrast between the ταῦτα that can be dietetically modified and the κείνο that lies outside the reach of dietetics in the last sentence of ch. I 36 is not the contrast between voice and character, as the translators thought, what is it about? I think that the answer is not difficult to find once we have left behind the common misinterpretation. The search for the reference of ταῦτα is facilitated by two hints given by the immediate context. The pronoun must refer to something that has been mentioned in the preceding sentence and whose influenceability through regimen is explained in

³⁶ Littré and Joly implicitly assume and Jones explicitly states that, according to the Hippocratic author, the πόροι can be modified in I 36,3 (where they mean “voice passages”), although they cannot be modified in I 36,2 (where they mean “soul passages”). In other words, the same argument that in I 36,2 proves the impossibility of a dietetical influence is supposed to prove the contrary in the next paragraph. See more on this point below.

³⁷ They are followed by Ph. van der Eijk, *Modes and degrees* 267, and H. Bartoš, *Philosophy and dietetics* 221.

the first part of the last sentence of ch. I 36 (διότι ... δυνατόν ποιῆσαι). These requirements are fulfilled by τὸ πνεῦμα “the breath”, also called ὁ ἀήρ „the air“.³⁸ it is the only thing mentioned besides the voice in the preceding sentence and it is the object of the explanation concerning the influenceability through regimen. This conclusion is confirmed by the comparison of the first sentence of I 36, 3 with I 36, 2: the air flux goes out through the (voice) vessels and applies itself to external objects just like the soul goes out through the (soul) vessels and applies itself to external objects. Both of them can become better or worse by human influence. The latter, because its proportion of fire and water can be dietetically modified. As to the former, the reason is stated by the author in the last sentence of ch. I 36:

διότι λειοτέρους (πλειοτέρους θ) καὶ τρηχυτέρους (βραδυτέρους θ, βραχυτέρους M) τοὺς πόρους (*om.* θ, πόνους M, *corr.* χFHa) τῷ πνεύματι δυνατόν ποιῆσαι (ch. I 36, CMG 156, 31/32).

This explanation has to be read in the version given by the main manuscripts, leaving aside unintelligible readings and conjectures which have only found their way into the text editions because the editors have been misled by a false conception of the voice analogy. It makes no sense to read here τοὺς πόρους instead of τοὺς πόνους, since the passages (due to their objective component) are not only in I 36,2 the reason why the character cannot be dietetically modified, but are also mentioned in the first sentence of I 36,3 as the reason why the voice is “with necessity” the way it is. It is, therefore, absurd to read in the next sentence that the (voice) passages can be modified. Fortunately, the text of M is clear enough: vocal air can be modified by conscious effort. What the author must have had in mind here is not the natural effort of voice and language he discusses in ch. II 61, but a voluntary effort to control breath rhythm, amplitude and intensity. Such an effort would affect some aspects of the air flux so as to make it “better” or “worse”, as the Hippocratic author puts it, but not the voice (identity) itself, which, being due to the air passages, is not for man to control. It is to be supposed, however, that these voluntary breath modifications do somehow influence the voice, causing its usual modulations when speaking or singing, and that the author rather means the so-called timbre when he says that voice cannot be modified by regimen. Accordingly, the explanation of the influenceability of vocal air must be:

διότι πλειοτέρους καὶ βραχυτέρους τοὺς πόνους τῷ πνεύματι δυνατόν ποιῆσαι

³⁸ Whence probably the plural ταῦτα.

“for it is possible to make more or less effort when breathing.” (ch. I 36, CMG 156, 31/32)

Since the opposite of air flux is in I 36, 3 the voice, this is also the only possible reference of κείνο in the last sentence of the chapter. That means that the voice analogy in I 36, 3 doesn't introduce a new term (the voice as *comparatum*) that is supposed to clarify by its similarity another term that has been mentioned before (character as *comparandum*), but describes a pair of opposites (air flux vs. voice) which are opposed to one another in the same way as the two terms of another pair of opposites mentioned before (intelligence vs. character). The *tertium comparationis* which allows the comparison between the pair of opposites intelligence vs. character as *comparandum* (ch. I 36, 1/2) and the pair of opposites air flux vs. voice as *comparatum* (ch. I 36, 3) is certainly the contrast between the possibility and the impossibility of controlling by human (dietetic) means one term or the other in each pair of opposites.

If we now fill in the key words of the voice analogy in a figure similar to Figure 1, we may summarize the contents of ch. I 36, 3 in the following manner:

property	cause αἰτία	human influence ἀλλοίωσις
better or worse air flux (breath) βελτίων ἢ χειρόων ἀήρ (πνεῦμα)	effort οἱ πόνοι	possible
voice φωνή	passages of breath οἱ πόροι τοῦ πνεύματος	not possible

Figure 2

The meaning of the voice analogy is a comparison between Figure 1 (*comparandum*) and Figure 2 (*comparatum*). The author of *De victu* was obviously of the opinion that these aspects related to voice are more intuitive and easier to grasp than abstract (soul) properties like intelligence or character. Consequently, he regarded this analogy as an appropriate instrument of illustrating his views about human properties that can be influenced by regimen and those that cannot. His intention becomes clear if we compare Figure 2 with Figure 1, as the introducing ὡσαύτως “similarly” at the beginning of ch. I 36, 3 invites us to do. In both cases, a “fluid” leaves the body to apply itself to external objects. We might call this the subject or agent of each figure, since it is all about its properties. In Figure 1 it is the soul, in

Figure 2 the air flux or breath. In both cases, some properties of this “fluid” can be controlled by man and others cannot. It is certainly important to know which properties can be influenced and by which means such an improvement might be accomplished (see ch. I 35). The point of ch. I 36, however, is to emphasize the properties of the “fluid” that cannot be modified by human intervention. Properties like character or voice cannot be modified because they depend on the vessels through which the “fluid” leaves the body and also on the external objects it then applies itself to, i. e. it depends on the passages through which the soul passes. Since man cannot change the outside world (or at least its “invisible nature”), it follows that he has no power over his own properties that are connected with it either.

To be honest, there are also details of the voice analogy which even within the framework of De victu do not really support a comparison between soul and air emission. For instance, it is not clear to me how the voice applies itself to external objects and why this fact should be responsible for its identity, i. e. for the timbre. What might be true in the case of the senses doesn't have to be true in the case of the voice, although, as we know from ch. I 23, for the Hippocratic author voice is a channel of communication with the outside world similar to sight, hearing and all other senses. Moreover, if the soul leaves the body through the sensorial channels and the voice is itself some kind of sense, shouldn't we suppose that the soul leaves the body through the voice channel as well? In this case, we should expect the subject of Figure 2 to be the soul, not the breath. In fact, “warm and cold breath” is also mentioned by the Hippocratic author in ch. I 23 among the senses through which man gets acquainted with his environment. How is it then that in ch. I 36 voice is a property of breath? I have no answer to these questions and I do not think that the anonymous Hippocratic author would have easily found one in his treatise either. However, I believe that they do not affect the meaning of ch. I 36 as I have presented it here.

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