Ontological Multivocity in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*

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Contents

Abstract 3

Acknowledgments 4

Introduction 5

I. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Γ2 20

II. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Δ7 56

III. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Z1 117

IV. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysic*s Z4 156

Conclusion 190

Bibliography 200

Abstract

This thesis examines Aristotle's claim that being is said in many ways, which I refer to as 'Ontological Multivocity' or 'OM'. It focuses on four occurrences of this claim, to be found in *Metaphysics* Γ2, Δ7, Z1, and Z4. Across these chapters, Aristotle endorses two different versions of OM, which I will call 'Focal OM' and 'Global OM'. My overall aim is to determine how these two versions of OM should be understood and how they relate to one another. Since Focal OM receives the lion's share of Aristotle's attention, my central aim is to offer a textually supported and theoretically plausible interpretation of this particular version of OM. Roughly put, Focal OM states that substances are called 'beings' primarily whereas non-substances are so called derivatively. This view is first introduced in Γ2 and then progressively refined over the course of Δ7, Z1, and Z4. In Γ2, Focal OM may be interpreted in either of two ways, namely as a claim about existence or about predication. In Δ7, it is presented as a claim about predication: substances are *per se*, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*, non-genuine, or derivative subjects of any old type of predication. In Z1, it is presented as a claim about a certain type of predication: substances are *per se*, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*, non-genuine, or derivative subjects of essential predication. In Z4, it is presented as an even more definite claim about predication: as long as they meet certain baseline requirements for unity, essential predications qualify as definitions; subject to this proviso, substances are *per se*, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*, non-genuine, or derivative objects of definition. Aristotle's argument for this view in Z4 displays certain shortcomings: however, these can be overcome by employing predicational principles which are clearly available to him in this chapter; subject to these adjustments, Focal OM makes for a plausible theory of definitional priority, which Aristotle explicitly expounds in the adjacent Z5.

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Introduction

This thesis examines Aristotle's claim that being is said in many ways (τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς). This claim, or the philosophical theory which it encapsulates, has been traditionally referred to as 'the multivocity of being'. In what follows, I will refer to it as 'Ontological Multivocity' or, for short, as 'OM'. My aim is to offer a textually supported and philosophically plausible interpretation of this claim by focusing on four selected chapters of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. In the paragraphs below, I will introduce my chosen topic, present the main motivations behind this study, identify the key issues which I will address, outline my intended approach to their solution, and summarise the main exegetical claims which I aim to defend.

1. Topic

Aristotle recurrently endorses OM across many of his writings.[1] These various occurrences of OM are not obviously equivalent.[2] Moreover, they do not obviously serve the same argumentative purpose.[3] It would be very tempting to examine all of them. Indeed, this would be necessary, if one were to aim at a full exposition of Aristotle's views on this subject. In this thesis, I will pursue a much more modest objective and narrow my focus to the *Metaphysics*. In fact, I will be even more selective and exclusively examine four occurrences of OM, to be found in Γ2 [1003a33-b10], Δ7 as a whole, Z1 [1028a10-20], and Z4 [1030a17-b13].[4]

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[1] For instance, he unequivocally does so in: *Phys.* I.2 [185a20-27], I.3 [186a22-27], and III.6 [206a14-16, 206a21-25, and 206a29*a*-33]; *DA* I.5 [410a13-16] and II.1 [412b8-9]; *EE* I.8 [1217b25-35].

[2] Some are more recognisably tied to some or other version of the Aristotelian scheme of the categories (which I briefly outline below). Others are more recognisably tied to the Aristotelian distinction between potentiality and actuality.

[3] Some are invoked in more introductory contexts, where Aristotle discusses past reputable views and related puzzles concerning his chosen subject-matter. Others are invoked in more advanced contexts, where he presents his own views and attempts to resolve such puzzles.

[4] Hence, I gloss over several other occurrences of OM within the *Metaphysics*, some of which are undeniably important for the study of OM and of the *Metaphysics* more broadly. These are E2 [1026a33-b2], Θ1 [1045b27-1046a1], and Θ10 [1051a34-b6]. (E4, 1028a4-6, is excised by most editors.) I also gloss over the following two fairly well known though extremely difficult passages: A9 [992b18-20], on which see Owen (1960), and H2 [1042b25-28], on which see Owen (1965). Moreover, I gloss over the following lesser known passages: Γ5 [1009a32-36]; Δ10 [1018a35-37] and Δ11 [1019a4-11]; M2 [1077b12-17]; N2 [1089a7-15; 1089a15-19]. Lastly,

What sets these four texts apart is that Aristotle here takes incomparably great care to clarify what he means by OM: a case in point is Δ7, which is unequivocally intended as sustained discussion of the number of ways in which being is said, in which 'being' is used, or in which something may be called a 'being'.[5]

These four occurrences of OM are not obviously equivalent. However, they are undoubtedly interconnected, as testified by their clear reliance on a shared set of assumptions. First, they all presuppose familiarity with the Aristotelian scheme of the categories. This looks very much like Aristotle's considered stab at a classification of the highest or most abstract types of being which there are. Overall, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of being, namely substances and non-substances: paradigmatic types of substance are ordinary objects of discourse or subjects of predication, like a particular human being; paradigmatic types of non-substance are the attributes or properties which we ordinarily ascribe to or predicate of those subjects, like colours (which are a type of quality) and dimensions (which are a type of quantity).[6] Secondly, at least three of the aforementioned chapters (namely Γ2, Z1, and Z4) unequivocally presuppose familiarity with an intimately related tenet of Aristotle's ontology, namely the ontological primacy of substance. This is the view that substance is the primary or, in other words, the most fundamental type of being among those which make up the scheme of the categories. It is a notoriously difficult task to establish whether, and if so how, this makes for a philosophically plausible claim: indeed, this is one of the guiding concerns of this study. For the time being, suffice it to point out that the three aforementioned occurrences of OM are intimately connected to, and indeed quite plausibly presuppose, the ontological primacy of substance: in each of these

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I ignore K3 [1061b11-17] and K8 [1064b15-17], the authenticity of which is widely disputed, as well as several other portions of the *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle may implicitly but does not explicitly endorse OM.

[5] For the purposes of this introduction, I assume that '"being" is used in many ways' and 'something is called a "being" in [one out of] many ways' are both legitimate paraphrases of 'being is said in many ways': I motivate this assumption in §I.1.1.1.

[6] For the purposes of this introduction, I ignore several possible points of textual and philosophical controversy surrounding the Aristotelian scheme of the categories, such as its nature, ground, and scope: on which points, see Judson (2019: 44-45).

three chapters, Aristotle claims that being is said in many ways; in order to clarify this, he claims that substances are called 'beings' primarily or, in other words, in a more fundamental way than non-substances.[7] Third, at least three of the aforementioned chapters (namely Δ7, Z1, and Z4) unequivocally presuppose familiarity with the distinction between something's being genuinely or *per se* (i.e. in its own right) and something's being non-genuinely or *per accidens* (i.e. in virtue of something else). A case in point is Δ7, most of which consists in a discussion of the following distinction: something is called a 'being' or said to 'be' in either of two ways, namely *per se* or *per accidens* [1017a7-30]. That said, Δ7 moves beyond Γ2, Z1, and Z4, since Aristotle here goes on to draw two further distinctions: in one way, something is said to 'be' in virtue of being true, or not to 'be' in virtue of being false [1017a31-35]; lastly, something is said to 'be' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually [1017a35-b9].[8]

For notational convenience, I will refer to the version of OM which we encounter in Γ2 [1003a33-b10], Z1 [1028a1020], and Z4 [1030a17-b13] as 'Focal OM', and to the one which we encounter in Δ7 as a whole as 'Global OM'. The overall aim of this thesis is to establish how these two versions of OM should be understood and how they relate to each other.

2. Motivations

The four aforementioned occurrences of OM are fascinating for a variety of reasons. First, they all invite reflection into three evidently fundamental aspects of Aristotle's general philosophy, namely the distinction between substance and non-substance, between truth and falsity, and between potentiality and actuality. Moreover, they all seem to somehow contribute to a series

[7] Admittedly, this is a simplification of the version of OM which Aristotle endorses across these three chapters. Indeed, Aristotle makes the further claim, that different types of non-substance (e.g., qualities and quantities) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another. In this thesis, I will largely overlook this aspect of OM and occasionally address it through *ad hoc* footnotes.

[8] It is a matter for dispute whether the *per se* v *per accidens* distinction has the same import across Δ7, Z1, and Z4: if so, it would seem natural to assimilate the *per se* to the primary use of 'to be', which applies to substances, and the *per accidens* to the derivative use, which applies to non-substances. At any event, this is how I will interpret this distinction.

of more specific philosophical projects which Aristotle sees himself as undertaking throughout various parts of the *Metaphysics*.[9] (1) In Γ1, Aristotle announces the existence of a science which investigates being *qua* being: for lack of a better name, we may call this science 'first philosophy'; his endorsement of Focal OM, in Γ2, looks like part of a longer attempt to ward off a possible threat to the unity of this discipline and to bring into clearer focus its primary subject-matter, i.e. substance [1003a33-b22]. (2) Aristotle's endorsement of Global OM in Δ7, and later on in E2 [1026a33-b2], seems to set the stage for a series of dedicated inquiries into different types or perhaps ways of being, including: *per accidens* being (E2–E3); truth and falsity (E4 and Θ10); *per se* being, which on a possible reading corresponds to substantial being (ZH); potentiality and actuality (Θ1–Θ9). (3) Aristotle's endorsement of Focal OM, in Z1, looks like part of a longer attempt to identify substance as the primary subject-matter of ongoing debates about being and thus to usher in his own dedicated inquiry into substance [1028b2-7]. (4) In Z4, Aristotle sets out to clarify the notion of substance by inquiring into the notion of essence: in particular, he asks whether substances are the only or rather the primary types of essence-possessor within his ontology; his endorsement of Focal OM looks like part of a longer attempt to introduce one out of two competing answers to this question, according to which substances have essences primarily or, in other words, in a more fundamental way than non-substances. Aristotle is not entirely clear as to how the aforementioned inquiries relate to each other: for example, one may wonder whether all four inquiries which branch off from E2 should be thought of as parts of the same philosophical project; one may also wonder how ZH's inquiry into substance relates to Θ's inquiry into potentiality and actuality; in fact, one may even wonder whether Aristotle sees himself as undertaking the same sort of inquiry into substance across the whole of ZH; if not, one may wonder how different sorts of inquiry into substance relate to each other. In addition, there is certainly a question as to how Aristotle is using OM

[9] For the purposes of this introduction, I gloss over several possible points of textual and theoretical controversy surrounding the various portions of the *Metaphysics* which I go on to mention.

across these various texts. Sometimes, as for example in E2 [1026a33-b2], Θ1 [1045b27-1046a1], and Θ10 [1051a34-b6], he seems to invoke it in order to announce that, and to explain why, he plans to engage in some or other sort of inquiry into being. Sometimes, as for example in Γ2 and Z1, OM seems to serve an additional purpose, namely to indicate which sorts of inquiry into being are primary or, in other words, more fundamental than others. Sometimes, as for example in Γ2 and Z4, OM seems to serve an even more demanding function, namely to contribute to the formulation and perhaps to the resolution of problems which lie within the purview of first philosophy and, more specifically, of the study of substance. Whatever their answers might be, the four aforementioned occurrences of OM clearly give rise to a series of fascinating questions concerning the structure and aims of the *Metaphysics*. It is well beyond my aims to engage with these issues within the bounds of this thesis: that said, a detailed examination of the four aforementioned occurrences of OM looks like a fruitful first step toward their resolution or, perhaps, their clarification. For these and additional reasons, the sort of study which I propose to carry out should be of interest to Aristotelian scholarship quite broadly and to scholarship on the *Metaphysics* more specifically.

A similar project was pursued by Brentano in his doctoral dissertation (1862/1975): however, the results of this work are undoubtedly dated in the light of subsequent developments in both philological and philosophical scholarship concerning the *Metaphysics*. Since then, many scholars have attempted to make sense of one or more of the four aforementioned occurrences of OM while pursuing different projects. These include: various translations-*cum*-commentary of the *Metaphysics*, notably Ross (1924: 256; 159-161; 305-309; 171-172), Kirwan (1993: 79-81; 140-147), and Bostock (1994: 45-68; 92-95); various monograph-length studies of the structure and aims of the *Metaphysics*, notably Owens (1951/1978: 307-328), Aubenque (1962: 94-250), and Menn (2021; forthcoming); two monograph-length studies of Aristotle's account of homonymy, namely Shields (1999: 217-267) and Ward (2008: 103-136); a few smaller but highly influential essays on Aristotle's conception of first philosophy, by Owen (1960) and the

duo of Frede (1987: 81-95) and Patzig (1961); and, lastly, a great many smaller but illuminating essays on OM or closely related topics, like Kahn (1978), Berti (2001; 2002), and Charles (2002). What seems to be missing in this vast and distinguished scholarly panorama is a monograph-length study of OM and, in particular, of the various versions of OM which Aristotle endorses across the *Metaphysics*. This thesis is meant as a first approximation of such a project.

This sort of project is enticing for several reasons. First, the monographic format allows for an extensive and detailed discussion of each and all of the four aforementioned passages of the *Metaphysics*. This gives us the opportunity to focus on some salient aspects of the four aforementioned occurrences of OM, some of which seem to have been underexplored: a case in point is Z4, which significantly expands on some of the key ideas which are first introduced in Γ2, but which so far has been largely overlooked. Secondly, placing OM at the forefront of our inquiry allows us, in some measure, to steer clear from potentially controversial assumptions concerning the philosophical project (or projects) which Aristotle sees himself as carrying out across the *Metaphysics*: assumptions of this sort may place some undue constraints on our attempts to interpret OM; indeed, most if not all of the four aforementioned endorsements of OM occur within fairly introductory contexts, wherein the nature of such project (or projects) is still far from perspicuous. Finally, pursuing this project today allows us to benefit from certain significant developments in contemporary Aristotelian scholarship, three of which are particularly noteworthy: today, we have a clearer grasp of the Aristotelian notions of multivocity (Shields, 1999) and of priority (Peramatzis, 2011), as well as of certain methodological concerns which guide Aristotle's discussion of substance in Z (Burnyeat, 2001). Drawing on the results of these studies gives us the opportunity to cast significantly new light on Aristotle's commitment to OM. Since Focal OM receives the lion's share of Aristotle's attention across the four aforementioned chapters of the *Metaphysics*, my central aim will be to settle on a determinate interpretation of this particular version of OM.

3. Issues

Roughly put, Focal OM states that substances and non-substances are called 'beings' in different ways from one another: more precisely, it states that substances are called 'beings' primarily and non-substances derivatively. As I see it, this gives rise to three main exegetical questions, which I shall call (i) the 'ontological' problem, (ii) the 'multivocity' problem, and (iii) the 'priority' problem.[10]

i. Aristotle claims that substances and non-substances are called *'beings'* in different ways from one another: what sort of claim about *being* is he making, exactly?

A possible way of formulating this problem would be to ask whether Focal OM is meant to be understood as a claim about *existence* or about *predication*. As far as I am aware, virtually all commentators subscribe to the former approach: on their view, Focal OM states that substances and non-substances are said to 'exist' in different ways from one another. One of the main sources of disagreement among adherents to this view lies in the relationship between the Aristotelian notions of existence and of essence: according to some, Aristotle does not sharply distinguish the two notions from one another (Owen, 1960; Kahn, 1978); however, this suggestion has been increasingly criticised (Charles, 2002; Menn, 2021). That said, the existential reading of Focal OM has rarely if ever been called into question.

ii. Aristotle claims that substances and non-substances are called 'beings' *in different ways from one another*: how, exactly, are we to understand this qualification?

There seem to be three main ways of answering this question: (a) substances and non-substances are different kinds of being; (b) substances and non-substances enjoy different ways of being; (c) substances and non-substances are called 'beings' in different senses of the word 'being'.

[10] So far, very little has been said about how these three problems bear on Global OM: on what looks like the orthodox interpretation, this amounts to a distinction between four overarching senses of the 'is' of existence (Kirwan, 1993: 140-147, 189-190; Menn, 2021).

Most commentators agree that interpretation (a) will not do by itself. In order to see why, it might be useful to compare the distinction between substances and non-substances, which are different kinds of being, with the distinction between humans and oxen, which are different kinds of animal. According to Aristotle, humans and oxen are *specifically different* though *generically identical* kinds of animal, meaning that they are different species of the same genus: they are specifically different, since humans are (say) *biped* animals whereas oxen are (say) *quadruped* animals; they are generically identical, since what it is for humans to be animals is the same as what it is for oxen to be animals (say: to be ensouled natural substances which are capable of perceiving); accordingly, humans and oxen are called 'animals' in the same way. By contrast, substances and non-substances are *generically different* kinds of being: they are not different species of the same genus, for there is no such thing as a single genus of *being* or of *what is* [*Met.* B3, 998b22-26]; thus, what it is for substances to be is different from what it is for non-substances to be; accordingly, substances and non-substances are called 'beings' in different ways from one another. Scholars have sought to convey this insight in two main ways. According to some, substances and non-substances are called 'beings' in different senses of the word 'being' (Owen, 1960: 168). According to others, substances and non-substances enjoy different ways of being. In fact, some scholars have expressed themselves in both ways (Frede, 1987: 84, 87). However, some have expressly rejected the 'sense' reading: on their view, this reading unduly presupposes that Aristotelian multivocity is a relation between the meaning of words as opposed to the essence of things (Irwin, 1981 & 1982). In response, some scholars have argued that these two ways of understanding multivocity are not incompatible with each other: Aristotle undeniably construes multivocity as a sort of difference in signification; moreover, he quite plausibly distinguishes a 'shallow' from a 'deep' level of signification; at the deep level, signification seems to consist in a meaning relation *as well as* in one of essence-specification, for it involves an epistemically grounded attempt to properly *account for* or *define* what words signify; thus, deep instances of multivocity (like Focal OM) can be suitably

described as instances of difference in sense (Shields, 1999: 75-102). This solution to the multivocity problem suggests that Focal OM is intimately tied to Aristotle's theory of definition: roughly put, Aristotle must hold that substances and non-substances enjoy different definitions of being; in other words, the account which states what it is for a substance to be is different from the account which states what it is for a non-substance to be.

iii. Aristotle claims that substances are said to 'be' *primarily* and non-substances *derivatively*: how, exactly, are we to understand this further qualification?

A possible answer to this question is suggested by recent work on the Aristotelian notion of priority (Peramatzis, 2011). Presumably, Aristotle construes priority as a relation of asymmetrical independence: x is prior to y under respect F iff x is F independently of y being F, but not conversely. Assuming that this is correct, Focal OM roughly takes the following shape: saying what it is for a non-substance to be involves saying what it is for a substance to be, but not conversely.

One of the main challenges confronting any attempt to make sense of Focal OM is to offer a unified answer to the above three questions. As I go on to develop my preferred solution, I will not question but rather seek to expand on the two aforementioned solutions to the multivocity and to the priority problem. On the other hand, I will question the aforementioned solution to the ontological problem. Before I outline my position, I will touch upon a last issue concerning my intended approach to this task.

4. Approach

Aristotle's commitment to Focal OM undeniably presupposes familiarity with his concept of substance. However, Aristotle does not obviously operate under one and the same conception of substance across all of his writings. This is true, in particular, of the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*. In *Categories* 5, Aristotle distinguishes particular substances (like this or that particular human) from universal substances (like the species *human* or the genus *animal*): in

addition, he holds that the former are ontologically prior to the latter, since particular substances underlie universal substances as subjects, rather than the other way around; in fact, particular substances are the ontologically most basic types of being, for they underlie all other types of being as subjects, but have no further underlying subject whatsoever. In *Metaphysics* Z, Aristotle draws a different sort of distinction, namely between composite substances, their form, and their matter. Several details of the *Metaphysics* account of substance, and of its relationship to the *Categories* account, are highly controversial. For example: are compound substances the same as particular substances? Are substantial forms universal or particular? Are substantial forms ontologically prior to the compounds which they enform, or the other way around? Is the *Metaphysics* account intended to supersede or rather to refine the *Categories* account of substance? Whatever the answer to these questions might be, any detailed inquiry into Focal OM will inevitably have to rely upon one of these accounts. But which one, exactly?

A possible and indeed plausible answer to this question is suggested by certain recent developments in Aristotelian scholarship. Today, it is widely acknowledged that Aristotle's discussion of substance in *Met*. Z proceeds at two distinct levels: at one such level, which we may call properly 'metaphysical', Aristotle employs a set of comparatively more sophisticated tools, such as the distinction between matter and form, the distinction between potentiality and actuality, and the notion of principle or cause; at another such level, which we may call 'logical' and which closely resembles his discussion of substance in *Cat*. 5, Aristotle does not employ these but rather a set of comparatively more rudimentary tools, such as the distinction between subject and attribute, the scheme of the categories, and related predicational principles.[11] Aristotle's discussion of substance clearly proceeds at the 'logical' level in Z1 and Z4, which involve two of the four aforementioned occurrences of OM. Though foreign to Z, the two other

[11] The distinction between the 'logical' and the 'metaphysical' level of Aristotle's discussion of substance has been popularised and most fully illustrated by Burnyeat (2001). A similar if not identical distinction is drawn by Code (1997). This distinction is also acknowledged by scholars who are otherwise critical of Burnyeat's reading of Z (Menn, 2011). For a recent attempt to clarify the nature of this distinction, from the vantage point of Z4, see Peramatzis (2017).

aforementioned occurrences of OM, in Γ2 and Δ7, also seem to proceed at this level. In Γ2, Aristotle does not deploy the distinction between matter and form or between potentiality and actuality: by contrast, he extensively relies on predicational principles; while he does invoke the notion of principle or cause, the latter is not cashed out in more partisan 'metaphysical' (e.g., hylomorphic or teleological) terms, but can be straightforwardly assimilated to the less partisan 'logical' notion of genus or type. In Δ7, Aristotle does not deploy the notion of principle or cause, but extensively relies on predicational principles: while he expressly invokes the distinction between potentiality and actuality, and arguably alludes to the distinction between matter and form, these distinctions are not used in order to underpin his commitment to Focal OM or, by extension, his conception of substance; at this stage, the exact nature of these two distinctions is still far from perspicuous; indeed, the chapter clearly concludes with the indication that at least one such notion, namely that of potentiality, calls for a separate discussion. All of this strongly suggests that, across the four aforementioned chapters of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle does not presuppose the more advanced hylomorphic conception of substance, but rather the more introductory one which we encounter in such 'logical' texts as the *Categories*.

If we accept this suggestion, we are faced with the additional question of exactly how much of the *Categories* account of substance should be read into the aforementioned four chapters of the *Metaphysics*: does Aristotle still accept this account in its entirety or does he suspend his commitment to some of its details? Take, for example, the aforementioned two claims about ontological priority: substances are ontologically prior to non-substances; particular substances are ontologically prior to universal substances. Aristotle undeniably endorses the first claim in the *Categories* as well as in the *Metaphysics*. In addition, he undeniably endorses the second claim in the *Categories*. Does he also endorse the second claim in the *Metaphysics*? This is a more difficult question, the answer to which does not directly bear on Aristotle's commitment to OM: for example, Focal OM states that substances are said to 'be' in a more fundamental

way than non-substances; however, it does not state whether one type of substance (and, if so, which) is said to 'be' in a more fundamental way than the other. While my proposal does not presuppose an answer to this question, I will touch upon it in due course.

5. Argument

The overall claim which I aim to defend in this thesis is that the four aforementioned occurrences of OM make up a unified theory of predication and, ultimately, of definition. First, Global OM identifies substances and non-substances as generically different though hierarchically connected types of subject of predication: substances are *per se*, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*, non-genuine, or derivative subjects of predication; in addition, Global OM marks off two ways in which an attribute may be predicated of either type of subject (and ultimately of a substance), namely potentially or actually; lastly, Global OM indicates that affirmative and negative predications of the *per se* or of the *per accidens* type are either true or false (or, for short, that they are truth-bearers). As such, Global OM constitutes a unified theory of predication, which is underpinned by Aristotle's commitment to the ontological primacy of substance. Focal OM is the first and indeed most fundamental specification of Global OM, which states that substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative types of subject of predication. This includes essential predication, namely the type of predication which states *what* something is or which defines something as *the determinate type of being* which it is. Thus, one specification of Focal OM states that substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative objects of definition. Whether this view is defensible hinges on Aristotle's answer to the following question: *which types of* substance are definitionally prior to *which types of* non-substance? In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle answers this question in two different ways, one of which states that non-substances are definitionally posterior to their *proper* underlying substances. This makes for a philosophically plausible account of the definitional primacy of substance and, I suggest, constitutes Aristotle's

considered statement of the aforementioned 'predicative-essentialist' or 'definitional' specification of Focal OM. I will motivate this interpretation over the course of four chapters, each of which focuses on one of the aforementioned four chapters of the *Metaphysics*.

I. In Γ2, Aristotle states that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. This occurrence of Focal OM is indeterminate in three main respects. (1) Is Aristotle distinguishing a primary from a derivative use of the 'is' of *existence* or of *predication*? (2) *Which types of* substance are said to 'be' primarily in relation to *which types of* non-substance? (3) *Why is it the case that* substances are said to 'be' primarily in relation to non-substances? As I see it, Aristotle does not fully answer these questions in Γ2, but here sketches a tentative answer, which he will develop and support in the subsequent stages of his discussion of OM throughout the *Metaphysics*.

II. In Δ7, Aristotle states that something may be said to 'be' in either of four overarching ways: (i) *per se*; (ii) *per accidens*; (iii) in virtue of being true; (iv) either potentially or actually. Overall, I will interpret this as a distinction between four overarching uses of the 'is' of predication. Specifically, I will identify the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' with the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication, which Aristotle sets out in *Posterior Analytics* A4, A19, and A22. On my understanding of this distinction, Δ7 introduces the idea that substances are said to 'be F' *per se*$_3$ or genuinely whereas non-substances are said to 'be F' *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely: for an attribute to belong to a non-substance involves belonging to a further underlying substance, but not conversely; hence, predicating an attribute of a non-substance involves predicating it of a further underlying substance, but not conversely; for example, predicating *pallor* of a cultivated thing (i.e. of a certain type of non-substance) involves predicating it of a further underlying human (i.e. of a certain type of further underlying substance), but not conversely; to sum up, substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative subjects of predication. Along the way, Aristotle also distinguishes between different types of genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication, including essential

or *per se*$_1$ and non-essential or *per accidens*$_1$ predication: the examples which he offers in Δ7 focus on the latter case, which looks more innocuous; his focus shifts toward essential predication in Z1 and Z4.

III. In Z1, Aristotle states that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. His attempt to corroborate this claim relies on the assumption that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of predication. Moreover, Z1 displays a marked interest in essential or *per se*$_1$ predication, namely in the sort of predication which states *what* something is. All of this suggests that, on Aristotle's view, substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively: for something to be a certain type of non-substance involves having a certain type of substance as a further underlying subject, but not conversely; hence, saying that something is a certain type of non-substance involves saying that its underlying subject is a certain type of substance, but not conversely. For example, saying that the non-substance type *pallor* is a certain type of colour involves saying that it belongs to a certain type of underlying substance, whereas saying that the substance type *human* is a certain type of animal does not involve saying that it belongs to any type of underlying non-substance whatsoever. To sum up, substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative subjects of essential predication.

IV. In Z4, Aristotle once again states that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. His discussion once again relies on the assumption that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of predication. Moreover, Z4 displays an even clearer interest in the topic of essential or *per se*$_1$ predication: indeed, it expressly introduces the idea that substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative types of essence-possessor. This strongly suggests that substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively. One of the ways in which Aristotle conveyed this idea in Z1 was by saying that substances are prior *in account* to non-substances. In Z4, he conveys it through the stronger claim that substances are prior *in definition*

to non-substances: to wit, defining something as a certain type of non-substance involves defining its underlying subject as a certain type of substance, but not conversely. This claim lends itself to at least two possible formulations. According to one such formulation, non-substances are definitionally posterior to their proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substances: roughly put, defining something as a certain type of non-substance involves demarcating those types of substance which *may* underlie it as subjects from those which may *not*; by contrast, defining something as a certain type of substance does not involve demarcating any type of underlying non-substance whatsoever. For example: defining the non-substance type *pallor* as a certain type of colour involves saying that it belongs to some or other type of *corporeal* substance, for corporeal substances are the only types of substance which admit of being coloured; by contrast, defining something as a certain type of corporeal substance (e.g., defining the substance type *human* as a certain type of animal) does not involve saying that it belongs to any type of underlying non-substance whatsoever. Though Aristotle does not go as far as to endorse this position in Z4, he clearly presents it as a plausible theory of definitional priority in the adjacent Z5. Hence, we should likely regard this as his considered statement of the 'predicative-essentialist' or 'definitional' specification of Focal OM.

I will conclude by discussing some of the main implications of my argument. In particular, I discuss the prospects of a particular existential interpretation and its possible relationship to my preferred essentialist reading of Focal OM.[12]

[12] Because this thesis is a primarily philosophical undertaking, I will largely avoid more recognisably philological disputes concerning the text of the *Metaphysics*. Where discrepancies between different manuscripts arise, I will follow E and J rather than Ab: as noted by Primavesi (2012), members of both the α and β family of mss. of the *Metaphysics* bear signs of intentional editorial interventions on a common archetype; however, interventions in β-texts (such as Ab) are likely the product of a deliberate effort to interpret or revise that archetype, while those in α-texts (such as EJ) amount to additions of later supplements, which have not led to significant alterations of the original wording. Translations of relevant passages are my own modified versions of those issued by Kirwan (Γ2 and Δ7) and Bostock (Z1 and Z4).

I. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Γ2

Aristotle's first official endorsement of OM throughout the *Metaphysics* occurs in Γ2 [1003a33-b10]. Here, he specifically endorses a refined version of OM, which I will call 'Focal OM', and which may be roughly formulated as follows: different kinds of being are called 'beings' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to one thing (or, for short: focally).

> Τὸ δὲ ὂν λέγεται μὲν πολλαχῶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἓν καὶ
> μίαν τινὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐχ ὁμωνύμως· ἀλλ' ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ
> ὑγιεινὸν ἅπαν πρὸς ὑγίειαν, τὸ μὲν τῷ φυλάττειν τὸ δὲ (35)
> τῷ ποιεῖν τὸ δὲ τῷ σημεῖον εἶναι τῆς ὑγιείας τὸ δ' ὅτι
> δεκτικὸν αὐτῆς, καὶ τὸ ἰατρικὸν πρὸς ἰατρικήν (τὸ μὲν (1003b1)
> γὰρ τῷ ἔχειν ἰατρικὴν λέγεται ἰατρικὸν τὸ δὲ τῷ εὐφυὲς
> εἶναι πρὸς αὐτὴν τὸ δὲ τῷ ἔργον εἶναι τῆς ἰατρικῆς,
> ὁμοιοτρόπως δὲ καὶ ἄλλα ληψόμεθα λεγόμενα τούτοις),
> οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ ὂν λέγεται πολλαχῶς μὲν ἀλλ' ἅπαν (5)
> πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὅτι οὐσίαι, ὄντα λέγεται,
> τὰ δ' ὅτι πάθη οὐσίας, τὰ δ' ὅτι ὁδὸς εἰς οὐσίαν ἢ
> φθοραὶ ἢ στερήσεις ἢ ποιότητες ἢ ποιητικὰ ἢ γεννητικὰ
> οὐσίας ἢ τῶν πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν λεγομένων, ἢ τούτων τινὸς
> ἀποφάσεις ἢ οὐσίας· διὸ καὶ τὸ μὴ ὂν εἶναι μὴ ὄν φαμεν. (10)

> Being is said in many ways, though in relation to one thing and to a single nature, and not homonymously. But just as everything which is healthy [is called 'healthy'] in relation to health (something in virtue of preserving, something else in virtue of producing, something else in virtue of being a sign of health, and something else in virtue of being receptive of it), and that which is medical [is called 'medical'] in relation to medical expertise (for something is called 'medical' in virtue of possessing medical expertise,

> something else in virtue of being naturally suited to it, and something else in virtue of being a result of medical expertise, and we shall find other things which are so called in like fashion), so too that which is is so called [sc. is called a 'being'] in many ways, but all in relation to a single principle. For some things are called 'beings' because they are substances, others because they are affections of substance, others because they are a route to a substance, or destructions, or privations, or qualities, or productive, or generative of substance, or of things which are called [sc. which are called 'beings'] in relation to substance, or denials of one of these or of substance; wherefore we also say that what is not is something which is not.

The argumentative structure of the passage may be broken down as follows. Aristotle:

1. endorses Focal OM [1003a33-34];
2. draws an analogy between OM and two additional cases of focal multivocity [1003a34-b6];
3. clarifies how Focal OM should be interpreted [1003b6-10].[13]

The passage gives rise to several questions, one set of which concerns the structure of multivocity, in general, and of focal multivocity, in particular. What is it for different kinds of F to be called 'F' *in different ways from one another* (πολλαχῶς)? And what does it take for them to be so called *in relation to one thing* or *focally* (πρὸς ἕν)? Following recent trends in Aristotelian scholarship, I will attempt to clarify the notion of multivocity in terms of the notion of homonymy. More specifically, I will interpret focal multivocity as a certain type of 'associated' or 'connected' homonymy, consisting in a relation of definitional priority: roughly put, different kinds of F are called 'F' in different ways as well as focally iff they asymmetrically depend on the same kind of F for being called or defined as the kinds of F which

[13] In this chapter, I use the label 'focal multivocity', *in lieu* of Owen's 'focal meaning' (1960) and of Shields' 'core-dependent homonymy' (1999), in order to describe those cases in which different kinds of F are called 'F' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to one thing.

they are. From this vantage point, Focal OM takes roughly the following shape: different kinds of being (i.e. different kinds of non-substance) depend on the same kind of being (i.e. substance) for being defined as the kinds of being which they are, but not conversely.

In Γ2, Aristotle clearly identifies the focal or primary kind of being with substance, and the satellite or posterior kinds of being with different kinds of non-substance. However, several aspects of his argument call for further clarification. First, he does not fully specify which kinds of substance are definitionally prior to which kinds of non-substance. Secondly, he does not fully explain what makes substances definitionally prior to non-substances. Finally, he does not unequivocally indicate whether Focal OM should be understood as a claim about existence or about predication. As I see it, these more advanced issues cannot be settled on the basis of Γ2 alone: presumably, they set the agenda for Aristotle's subsequent discussions of OM throughout the *Metaphysics*.

1. 1003a33-34

In this section, I will disentangle some preliminary questions arising from Aristotle's commitment to Focal OM in the opening lines of Γ2. Since Focal OM is essentially a refined version of OM (namely, a combination of OM with an additional focality claim) Aristotle's commitment to the former view clearly presupposes his commitment to the latter. This suggests that, before settling on an interpretation of Focal OM, we should gain an adequate preliminary grasp of OM. This task is challenging for various reasons, which I will outline and do my best to address in the following subsections. First, in §I.1.1, I will discuss some more recognisably linguistic issues, concerning Aristotle's employment of the verbs 'to be' and 'to say'. Then, in §I.1.2, I will discuss some more recognisably theoretical issues, concerning his deployment of the notions of multivocity and of homonymy.

1.1

At first glance, OM exhibits the following syntactical structure: subject-term ('τὸ ὄν'), verb ('λέγεται'), adverb ('πολλαχῶς'). This construction calls for further comment, though, due to the somewhat flexible syntactical behaviour of the Greek verbs 'to be (εἶναι)' and 'to say (λέγειν)'. In the following two sub-sections, I offer a brief survey of Aristotle's use of these two verbs, by focusing on certain passages of the *Organon*. First, I will distinguish between two possible syntactical behaviours of the passive inflections of 'to say': these make for two different interpretations of OM; I take it that these two interpretations are not mutually incompatible but constitute two notational variants of the same view. Then, I will distinguish between two possible syntactical behaviours of 'to be', which make for two genuinely different interpretations of OM: the first is existential whereas the second is predicative in character; whether Aristotle endorses the former, the latter, or both interpretations of OM is a serious exegetical problem which, on my view, cannot be settled on the basis of Γ2 alone.

1.1.1

Throughout the *corpus*, Aristotle often makes claims which exhibit the same syntactical structure as OM, and which we may call 'multivocity commitments'. These are claims of the form 'the F λέγεται πολλαχῶς' or 'πλεοναχῶς'. Such claims have an explicit subject-term but lack an explicit complement-term. As I see it, there are two possible ways of understanding their syntax. In order to illustrate their difference, I will examine different examples of multivocity commitments which occur in what looks like Aristotle's most extensive account of multivocity, namely *Top.* I.15.[14]

In some cases, it seems natural to suppose that the subject-term refers to a linguistic item and that 'λέγεται' lacks any complement-term whatsoever: 'the F λέγεται πολλαχῶς' (full stop). This is true of those multivocity commitments wherein the subject-term involves a neuter singular determinate article (i.e. 'τὸ'), which is most likely being used as a quotational device. Such claims are most naturally translated as '[the word or expression] "F" is used in many ways'. Take, for example, *Top.* I.15 [106b29-107a2], where Aristotle offers an argument to the effect that τὸ δίκαιον πλεοναχῶς ῥηθήσεται. The argument relies on the assumption that the inflections (πτώσεις) of τὸ δίκαιον, such as τὸ δικαίως, λέγεται πολλαχῶς. Aristotle's use of the term 'πτώσις', as well as his unequivocal use of 'τὸ' as a quotational device as part of 'τὸ δικαίως', strongly suggest that the πολλαχῶς λεγόμενα which he has in mind in this passage are linguistic items. Thus, when he states 'εἰ γὰρ τὸ δικαίως πλεοναχῶς λέγεται, καὶ τὸ δίκαιον πλεοναχῶς ῥηθήσεται', it seems safe to translate this as 'if [the adverb] "justly" is used in many ways, then [the adjective] "just" will also be used in many ways'.

In other cases, it seems more natural to suppose that the subject-term refers to a real item and that 'λέγεται' has an implicit complement-term: 'the F λέγεται (sc. λέγεται F) πολλαχῶς'. This is true of those multivocity commitments wherein the subject-term involves a determinate

[14] My ensuing remarks are to a large extent informed by Hussey's unpublished work on 'λέγειν'.

article other than 'τὸ', such as 'ἡ', for which it would be less plausible to serve as a quotational device. Such elliptical claims are most naturally translated as 'an F is called (sc. is called "F") in [one out of] many ways' or as 'F's are called (sc. are called "F") in many ways'. Take, for example, *Top.* I.15 [106a36-b1], where Aristotle offers an argument to the effect that πλεοναχῶς ἡ ἡδονὴ λέγεται: here, 'ἡ ἡδονὴ' quite plausibly refers to a real item, namely to this or that pleasure, or perhaps to the whole class of pleasures, as evidenced by his use of the determinate article 'ἡ'; presumably, then, 'λέγεται' has an implicit complement-term, namely 'ἡδονὴ', which need not be made explicit due to its occurrence as part of the subject-term. Hence, it seems natural to translate 'πλεοναχῶς ἡ ἡδονὴ λέγεται (sc. λέγεται ἡδονὴ)' as 'a pleasure is called (sc. is called a "pleasure") in [one out of] many ways' or perhaps as 'pleasures are called (sc. are called "pleasures") in many ways'.[15]

Some cases are harder to adjudicate, though, due to the ambiguity of the subject-term: in such cases, the subject-term consists of a neuter singular determinate article which is followed by a neuter singular common noun; thus, it is unclear whether 'τὸ' is being used to introduce a real or a linguistic item. Such multivocity commitments may be understood in either of two ways: (a) the word 'F' is used in many ways; (b) an F is called (sc. is called 'F') in [one out of] many ways. OM is a case in point, for 'τὸ ὂν' may be taken to refer to either of two types of item: (a) a linguistic item (i.e. the word 'being'); (b) a real item (i.e. this or that being). Hence, we may envisage two possible readings of OM.

> The word 'being' (τὸ ὄν) is used (λέγεται) in many ways (πολλαχῶς). On this reading, 'λέγεται' has neither an explicit nor an implicit complement-term. Since the subject-term is taken to refer to a linguistic item, we may call this the 'linguistic' reading of OM.

[15] Also see Δ2 [1013a24-b3] and *Phys.* II.3 [194b23-195a4]. Aristotle first states that a material, a formal, an efficient, and a final cause are called a 'cause' (αἴτιον λέγεται) in different ways from one another: here, 'αἴτιον' serves as the explicit complement-term of 'λέγεται'. He then states that causes (τὰ μὲν οὖν αἴτια) are so called (λέγεται, sc. λέγεται αἴτια) in roughly four ways (σχεδὸν τοσαυταχῶς): here, 'αἴτια' serves as the implicit complement-term of 'λέγεται'; it need not be made explicit due to its occurrence as part of the subject-term.

> This or that being (τὸ ὄν) is called a 'being' (λέγεται, sc. λέγεται ὄν) in [one out of] many ways (πολλαχῶς). On this reading, 'λέγεται' has an implicit complement-term (i.e. 'ὄν'). Since the subject-term is taken to refer to a real item, we may call this the 'realist' reading of OM.

Each of the aforementioned readings of OM looks plausible on textual grounds. For a start, Aristotle's most comprehensive discussion of OM, i.e. Δ7, seems to be expressly concerned with demarcating different uses of the verb 'to be': see, in particular, 1017a31-35, where he discusses the veridical use of 'is' (τὸ ἔστιν) or 'to be' (τὸ εἶναι); here, 'τὸ' unequivocally serves as a quotational device introducing a significant linguistic expression. Moreover, Aristotle often clarifies OM by claiming that τὸ ὄν has different significates, for example in Z1 [1028a11-13] and in Z4 [1030b11-12]: presumably, significant items are linguistic rather than real ones; this would suggest that, in the above passages, Aristotle is keen on distinguishing between different uses of the word 'being'. While all of this lends support to a linguistic reading of OM, its realist counterpart looks no less plausible. This is certainly true of a later passage of Γ2, namely 1003b6-10, where Aristotle attempts to elucidate his commitment to Focal OM: roughly put, these lines indicate that different types of being (τὰ μὲν … τὰ δὲ) are called 'beings' (ὄντα λέγεται) in different ways from one another; here, 'λέγεται' has different subject-terms ('τὰ μὲν' and 'τὰ δὲ') and an explicit complement-term ('ὄντα'). In Z1, Aristotle refines his commitment to OM [1028a10-11] along similar lines at 1028a13-20: roughly put, these lines indicate that different types of being (τὸ τί ἐστιν … τὰ δὲ) are called 'beings' (λέγεται ὄντα) in different ways from one another; here, 'λέγεται' has different subject-terms ('τὸ τί ἐστιν' and 'τὰ δὲ') and an explicit complement-term ('ὄντα'). These look very much like refined, non-elliptical versions of the realist reading of OM.

Though I have taken care to distinguish them from one another, I do not mean to suggest that the two readings express incompatible views. In fact, we may even have reason to treat them as notational variants of one and the same view, as for instance suggested by Z1 [1028a10-20]: in

this passage, Aristotle looks as keen on distinguishing between the ways in which 'being' is used or signifies [1028a11-13] as he is in distinguishing between the ways in which things are called 'beings' [1028a13-20]. Accordingly, I will follow a liberal approach to the syntax of OM. I shall mainly rewrite this as follows:

> Different kinds of being are called 'beings' (or: said to 'be') in different ways from one another.

For notational convenience, though, I will occasionally rewrite this as the claim that the word 'being' is used in many ways. This is not to settle the more controversial issue of what it could be for a certain word (e.g., 'being') to be used *in many ways*, or for certain things to be called 'F' (e.g., 'beings') *in different ways from one another*. I will turn to this question in §I.1.2. Before doing so, I will discuss some additional issues surrounding the syntactical behaviour of 'εἶναι'.

1.1.2

Aristotle consistently distinguishes between two uses of the verb 'to be'. In some cases, 'to be' has a subject-term but lacks any complement-term whatsoever: 'S is', sc. 'is *simpliciter*'; we may call this the 'absolute' use of 'to be' (τὸ εἶναι ἁπλῶς). In other cases, 'to be' serves to join a subject-term with a complement-term: we may call this the 'predicative' use of 'to be' (τὸ εἶναι τι, sc. τὸ εἶναι τι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων, also referred to as 'τὸ εἶναι ἐπὶ μέρους' or as 'τὸ εἶναι τοδὶ'). In some such cases, 'to be' serves to join a subject-term with an explicit complement-term: 'S is F'; we may call this the 'non-elliptical' predicative use. In other such cases, 'to be' serves to join a subject-term with an implicit complement-term, which need not be made explicit for contextual reasons: 'S is (sc. is F)'; we may call this the 'elliptical' predicative use.[16]

[16] The above distinction should *not* be confused with the one which is captured by OM. In particular, the distinction between τὸ εἶναι ἁπλῶς and τὸ εἶναι τι, which is drawn in the *Organon*, should not be confused with the distinction between τὸ ἁπλῶς ὄν and τὸ τὶ ὄν, which is drawn in the *Metaphysics* [Z1, 1028a20-31]. The former looks very much like a distinction between the *existential* and the *predicative* use, whereas the latter looks very much like a distinction between a *primary* and a *derivative* use of the verb 'to be': whether the latter should be thought of as

Aristotle explicitly distinguishes the absolute from the predicative use of 'to be' in different parts of the *Organon*: for example, the distinction is invoked throughout *A.Po*. B1–2, in order to demarcate different types of object of scientific knowledge and inquiry, e.g., to distinguish an inquiry into *whether* something is from an inquiry into *what* something is [89b31-35; 89b37-90a5; 90a9-14; 90a31-34]; it is also invoked in *Soph. El.* 5 in order to discuss a certain type of argumentative fallacy, which consists in inferring 'S is *simpliciter*' from 'S is F' [166b37-167a6; also see *Soph. El.* 25, 180a36-38, and *Rhet.* II.24, 1402a3-6].[17] In these passages, the absolute use is exemplified by means of statements like 'centaur is (sc. is *simpliciter*)', 'god is (sc. is *simpliciter*)', 'the moon is (sc. is *simpliciter*)', and 'what is not is (sc. is *simpliciter*)', whereas the predicative use is exemplified by means of statements like 'S is pale', 'the moon is eclipsed', and 'what is not is an object of opinion'. It is possible and indeed plausible to interpret statements of the former type as existential ones (Kirwan, 1993: 189; Charles, 2002: 112; Peramatzis, 2011: 210; Bronstein, 2016: 73-76; Menn, 2021: 201; Rapp, 2022: 47-49). For example, to inquire into whether (the type) centaur is or is not *simpliciter* is presumably to inquire into whether it exists or does not exist. If so, to say that centaur is *simpliciter* is presumably to say that it exists. Assuming that this interpretation is correct, we may conclude that, in distinguishing the absolute from the predicative use, Aristotle distinguishes the existential from the predicative use of 'to be'.[18]

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different uses of the *existential* or of the *predicative* verb 'to be' is a more controversial matter which I address in chapter III.

[17] For evidence that Aristotle is concerned with uses of 'to be', see in particular: 'τὸ δ' εἰ ἔστιν ἢ μὴ ἁπλῶς λέγω' [*A.Po.* B1, 89b33] and 'λέγω δὲ τὸ ὅτι ἔστιν ἐπὶ μέρους καὶ ἁπλῶς' [B2, 90a2], where 'τὸ' is unequivocally being used as a quotational device. Also see: 'Οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἁπλῶς τόδε ἢ πῇ λέγεσθαι καὶ μὴ κυρίως' [*Soph. El.* 5, 166b37-38], which strongly suggests that he intends to distinguish an unqualified from a qualified use of a given linguistic expression, e.g., 'to be *simpliciter*' (τὸ εἶναι ἁπλῶς) and 'to be F' (τὸ εἶναί τι).

[18] While this looks like the most widespread interpretation of *A.Po.* B1–2 and *Soph. El.* 5, it has been questioned by commentators like Kahn (1966: 263-264) and Brown (1994: 233-236). Here I will simply assume that the orthodox interpretation is correct. That said, these passages certainly call for further comment. First, one may wonder how the distinction between the absolute and the predicative use relates to the distinction between knowing *that* something is (ὅτι ἔστιν) and knowing *whether* something is (εἰ ἔστιν) [*A.Po.* B1–2, 89b23-90a5]: on which point, see Barnes (1993: 203-204), Charles (2000: 69-71), and Bronstein (2013: 73-76). Secondly, *Soph. El.* 5 [166b37-167a6] looks very much in line with *De Int*. 11 [21a18-b33]: however, both passages are hard to reconcile with *Cat*. 10 [13b12-35]; on which point, see Rapp (2022: 44-49). Here I must overlook such problems.

With these observations in mind, let us go back to OM.

Different kinds of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another.

Here, the verb 'to be' lacks an explicit complement-term. This may be due to either of two reasons: (a) it lacks any complement-term whatsoever; (b) it lacks an explicit but has an implicit complement-term. Hence, we may envisage at least two possible interpretations of OM.

a. Different kinds of being are said to 'exist' in different ways from one another.
b. Different kinds of being are said to 'be F' in different ways from one another.

We may call the former the 'existential' and the latter the 'elliptical predicative' interpretation of OM. The elliptical predicative reading can be further refined, since Aristotle distinguishes between different types of predication. In particular, he consistently distinguishes between what I will later call 'essential' or '*per se*$_1$' and 'non-essential' or '*per accidens*$_1$' predication: for example, between '*human* is a certain type of animal' and '*human* is pale'; the two predications differ from each other inasmuch as the former signifies *what* the type *human* is (τὶ ἐστιν), i.e. *the determinate type of being* which it is (ὅπερ ἐστίν), whereas the latter does not [83a24-32].[19] Accordingly, we may envisage at least two possible specifications of the elliptical predicative interpretation of OM.

b.i. Different kinds of being are said to 'be essentially F' in different ways from one another.
b.ii. Different kinds of being are said to 'be non-essentially F' in different ways from one another.

We may call the former the 'essentialist' and the latter the 'non-essentialist' elliptical predicative interpretation of OM.[20]

[19] This is only meant to serve as a rough illustration of the distinction between essential and non-essential predication: I will come back to and discuss more fully this distinction in the following chapters of this thesis; to that end, I will extensively draw on Aristotle's comprehensive account of predication in *A.Po.* A4, A19, and A22.

[20] In order to identify these alternatives, I have distinguished the existential from the predicative use of 'to be'. In particular, I have distinguished between the existential and the *elliptical* predicative use of 'to be': between 'to be' (sc. to 'be *simpliciter*' or to 'exist') and 'to be' (sc. to 'be F'). The distinction looks particularly useful in Δ7, Z1,

Following Owen (1965: 70, 95), it has been common practice among readers of Γ2 to subscribe to an existential interpretation of OM (Kirwan, 1993: 79; Shields, 1999: 217-220; Charles, 2002: 113; Ward, 2008: 104-111). In addition, several commentators have been reluctant to saddle Aristotle with a clear-cut distinction between the existential and the predicative essentialist use of the verb 'to be'. On this view, Aristotle held that, in any given case, for something to *exist* is to *be some or other type of being*: ultimately, it is to be a type of substance, or quality, or quantity, or some other categorial type of being (Owen, 1965: 76-77; Kahn, 1978: 261). This suggests that Aristotle subscribes to a mixed interpretation of OM, combining the existential with the essentialist reading: different types of being are said to 'exist'—*which is to say* to 'be what they essentially are'—in different ways from each other. However, this interpretation is not incontrovertible. First, in Γ2, Aristotle does not expressly indicate that he is concerned with 'being *simpliciter*', as opposed to 'being F': compare this with *A.Po.* B1 [89b31-35], where he expressly indicates that, by asking whether centaurs are, he means to ask whether centaurs are *simpliciter* or exist. Hence, in Γ2, he does not obviously subscribe to an existential reading of OM. Secondly, in *A.Po.* B1, Aristotle seems to distinguish the notions of essence and existence from one another: for example, he distinguishes our knowledge of *whether* something is, sc. is *simpliciter* or exists (εἰ ἔστιν), from our knowledge of *what* something is, sc. what it essentially is (τὶ ἐστιν), both conceptually and temporally [89b31-35]. Hence, he would not obviously endorse the aforementioned 'mixed' existential-essentialist reading of OM.

It is worth reiterating that Γ2 marks Aristotle's first official endorsement of OM throughout the *Metaphysics*. At such an early stage, he need not feel obliged to specify which of the above interpretations of OM he means to endorse. Perhaps, he reserves the right to speak his mind

and Z4 where Aristotle illustrates OM by expressly relying on predicational material: as I go on to show in chapters II, III, and IV, this quite plausibly indicates that the aforementioned endorsements of OM involve an elliptical predicative use of 'to be'.

more clearly at some later stage. Accordingly, for the remainder of this chapter, I will not argue for any of the above interpretations of OM: for the time being, I am content to lay them out as different plausible alternatives. I will return to them in each of the next chapters of this thesis, where I attempt to settle on a more definite interpretation of OM.

1.2

On either of the aforementioned interpretations, OM states that different kinds of being are said to 'be' *in different ways from one another* (πολλαχῶς). How, exactly, should we understand this qualification?

The answer to this question is far from obvious, since in Γ2 Aristotle does not seek to elucidate what multivocity in general consists in. Nor does he offer an account of focal multivocity, in particular. Rather, he attempts to illustrate that OM qualifies as an instance of focal multivocity. In doing so, he seems to be presupposing that readers of Γ2 are already acquainted with the notion of multivocity.

Since the latter receives an independent treatment in *Top.* I.15, one may wish to tackle the above problem by drawing on the account of multivocity which emerges from this chapter. However, this strategy would not obviously be uncontroversial. On the one hand, *Met.* Γ2 seems to distinguish multivocity from homonymy: while Aristotle affirms that different kinds of being are called 'beings' in different ways (πολλαχῶς), he denies that they are so called homonymously (ὁμωνύμως). On the other hand, *Top.* I.15 does not seem to distinguish multivocity from homonymy: Aristotle surveys several tests for multivocity, many of which are used precisely in order to establish homonymy [106a9-22; 106a36-b12; 107a3-17; 107a36-b5; 107b13-18; 107b19-26; 107b27-32]; furthermore (and as I point out below), some salient instances of multivocity which are not explicitly presented as ones of homonymy [e.g., 107a18-31] can be treated as such based on the official account of homonymy which Aristotle offers in *Cat*. 1.

This makes for what is by now a familiar exegetical problem, which clearly bears on our reading of the opening lines of Γ2: Aristotle seems to identify multivocity with homonymy in *Top.* I.15 and to distinguish them from one another in *Met.* Γ2; is he genuinely contradicting himself across the two works? In what follows, I do not aim to offer a complete resolution to this problem. Instead, I will simply outline what I take to be the simplest and most widely adopted strategy for defusing it. On this basis, I will suggest that OM can after all be treated as a type of multivocity by *Top.* I.15 standards or (in other words) as a type of homonymy by *Cat*. 1 ones. I begin by offering a brief survey of the distinction between homonymy and synonymy which Aristotle draws in *Cat*. 1.

[HOM] x and y are homonymously called 'F' iff: (i) x and y are each truly called 'F'; (ii) the account which states what it is for x to be F is *different from* the account which states what it is for y to be F [1a1-6].

[SYN] x and y are synonymously called 'F' iff: (i) x and y are each truly called 'F'; (ii) the account which states what it is for x to be F is *identical with* the account which states what it is for y to be F [1a6-12].

For example, a human and an ox are synonymously called 'animals': it is true to say that a human, and so too to say that an ox, is an animal; moreover, what it is for a human to be an animal is the same as what it is for an ox to be an animal (say, to be an ensouled natural substance which is capable of perceiving); hence, the account which states what it is for a human to be an animal is identical with the one which states what it is for an ox to be an animal. On the other hand, certain things are homonymously called 'donkeys'. For some of them to be a donkey is to be a certain type of animal, while for others it is to be a certain type of machine. However, *animal* and *machine* are different genera, neither of which is subordinate to the other. Thus, what it is for an animal to be a donkey is different from what it is for a machine to be a

donkey. Accordingly, the account which states what it is for an animal to be a donkey is different from the account which states what it is for a machine to be a donkey.[21]

Several commentators, including Irwin (1981: 524-525), Shields (1999: 11-14), and Ward (2008: 12-18), have sought to disambiguate between two possible readings of the *Cat*. 1 account of homonymy.

[HOM_1] x and y are homonymously called 'F' iff: (i) x and y are each truly called 'F'; (ii) the account which states what it is for x to be F is *wholly different from* the account which states what it is for y to be F.

[HOM_2] x and y are homonymously called 'F' iff: (i) x and y are each truly called 'F'; (ii) the account which states what it is for x to be F is *not wholly identical with* the account which states what it is for y to be F.

HOM_2 makes for a much more comprehensive account of homonymy than HOM_1. In fact, HOM_1 may be considered as a subordinate type of HOM_2: this is what we may call 'discrete' or 'unconnected' homonymy; for example, an animal and a machine are called 'donkeys' in a discretely homonymous fashion. Another type of HOM_2 may involve a partial overlap between the accounts which state what it is for x and for y to be F. In this case: (i) x and y are each truly called 'F'; (ii) the account which states what it is for x to be F is *partly but not wholly different from* the account which states what it is for y to be F. We may call this type of homonymy 'associated' or 'connected'.[22]

[21] This example is borrowed from *Top.* I.15 [107a18-31]: though it is not explicitly presented as an example of homonymy, it clearly qualifies as such by *Cat*. 1 standards. In *Cat*. 1, Aristotle offers a different example of homonymy, by claiming that a human and a picture are homonymously called 'animals'. I have chosen to overlook this example as its details are somewhat controversial (Shields, 1999: 14-15, including n11).

[22] Commentators customarily describe associated or connected homonymy as a phenomenon of 'partial overlap' between different accounts or definitions (Shields, 1999; Ward, 2008). For the sake of an easier presentation, I have also followed this practice, though the exact nature of this overlap is admittedly far from perspicuous. In §I.2, I attempt to clarify the type of overlap which is involved in *a certain type of* associated or connected homonymy, namely focal multivocity: though some of its details remain unclear within Γ2, it seems safe to construe this particular type of overlap as a relation of definitional priority.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Aristotle accepts the more comprehensive account of homonymy which is captured by HOM_2. If so, we are better positioned to defuse the puzzle arising from the opening lines of Γ2, where he affirms that OM is a case of focal multivocity and denies that it is a case of homonymy. Elsewhere in the *corpus*, Aristotle contrasts focal multivocity with a certain type of homonymy, which quite plausibly coincides with discrete or unconnected homonymy.[23] This is compatible with holding that focal multivocity is a different type of homonymy, namely (a certain type of) associated or connected homonymy. Perhaps, then, Aristotle does not altogether deny that OM is a case of homonymy: rather, he denies that OM is a case of discrete or unconnected homonymy; this is compatible with holding that OM is a case of associated or connected homonymy (Irwin, 1981: 531-533; Shields, 1999: 22-28; Ward, 2008: 104-111). I will assume that the proposed solution to the above puzzle is correct, and that instances of focal multivocity, such as OM, qualify as ones of homonymy, though not of the discrete or unconnected but rather of the associated or connected type. [24]

If that is correct, OM must state that different kinds of being are so called in different ways from one another (or: homonymously). Focal OM is a refinement of this claim, stating that different kinds of being are so called in different ways from one another, though not altogether homonymously, but in relation to a single kind of being (or: focally). This presupposes that there are generically different though relevantly interconnected types of being, enjoying correspondingly different though relevantly interconnected accounts or definitions of being: for certain values of 'x' and 'y', what it is for x to be is partly though not wholly different from what it is for y to be; hence, the account which states what it is for x to be is partly though not

[23] In *EE* VII.2, for example, he claims that different kinds of friendship are so called neither univocally (μήτε καθ' ἓν), nor *altogether* homonymously (μήτε πάμπαν […] ὁμωνύμως), but rather in relation to a single and primary kind of friendship (πρὸς μίαν γάρ τινα λέγονται καὶ πρώτην) [1236a16-18].

[24] This is a more resolute approach than the one which is followed by some other prominent commentators of Γ2: for example, Alexander and Owen seem to oscillate between claiming (a) that focal multivocity is a *tertium quid* between synonymy and homonymy (Alexander *In Met.* IV, 241,3-241,21; Owen, 1960: 179) and (b) that focal multivocity should be distinguished from mere or chance homonymy (Alexander *In Met.* IV, 241,25-241,26; Owen, 1960: 166 n1, 169).

wholly different from the account which states what it is for y to be. The main questions confronting us at this point concern the exact scope and nature of this connection. Which kinds of being are called 'beings' in different ways from one another? In what way are different accounts or definitions of being reciprocally connected?

Interim Conclusions

Before proceeding to address these problems, I will deal with a final preliminary issue arising from Aristotle's opening commitment to OM.

Focal OM states that different kinds of being are called 'beings' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to a single kind of being. What Aristotle says throughout 1003a34-b10 is clearly meant to lend some plausibility to claim ii, but does not obviously tell in favour of claim i: he claims that different kinds of non-substance are called 'beings' in different ways from one another as well as in relation to substance; however, he does not preface this by establishing multivocity, namely by showing that different kinds of non-substance are indeed called 'beings' in different ways from one another (and from substances). Why does he bypass this step?

Perhaps, by the start of Γ2, Aristotle takes multivocity to have already been established. For example: throughout Γ2, he appears to claim that there is no such thing as a single genus of being [1005a8-11] but that beings divide straight into different genera [1004a4-5]. This view was previously defended in *Met.* B3 [998b22-27], and lends support to OM in a fairly straightforward way. Assume that items such as substances (οὐσίαι) [1003b6] and qualities (ποιότητες) [1003b8] are two of the maximally abstract kinds of being. Assume, further, that there is no such thing as a single genus of being [BNG]. It follows that substances and qualities are not merely specifically but, more radically, generically different kinds of being: what it is for a substance to be is different from what it is for a quality to be; accordingly, the account which states what it is for a substance to be is different from the account which states what it is

for a quality to be. Hence, substances and qualities are called 'beings' homonymously or in different ways from one another by *Cat*. 1 or *Top.* I.15 standards.[25]

This argument has two main implications. (1) The plausibility of OM hinges on that of BNG. I have elsewhere argued that the various objections which are ordinarily raised against B3's argument for BNG do not succeed and, furthermore, that BNG can be defended on grounds other than the ones offered by Aristotle in B3 (Buongiorno, 2022). I am therefore inclined to bracket this problem, and to assume that Aristotle is justified in committing to some version of OM in Γ2. (2) The number of ways in which something may be called a 'being' must correspond to the number of maximally abstract kinds of being which Aristotle is willing to posit. This gives rise to the two kindred questions of which and of how many maximally abstract kinds of being there are. These are more controversial questions, which Aristotle does not explicitly address in Γ2. Several other passages of the *Metaphysics* suggest that such kinds coincide with what Aristotle customarily calls the 'categories' [Δ7, 1017a22-27; E2, 1026a35-b1; Z1, 1028a10-20; Θ10, 1051a34-35]. However, it would seem premature to invoke such passages in order to shed light on Γ2. For one reason: the division of the categories is not explicitly mentioned throughout Γ2. Besides: it is unclear how the list of uses of 'being' which Aristotle offers at 1003b5-10 is meant to correlate with the division of the categories. Aristotle's claim that some things are called 'beings' by being substances and others by being qualities of substance [1003b6-9] certainly indicates that the two lists are meant to overlap to some degree. But to what degree, exactly? I shall come back to this problem in §I.3. Now, I move on to consider some more general issues surrounding Aristotle's endorsement of Focal OM, such as the way in which different accounts of being are reciprocally connected.

[25] Compare with Barnes (1995: 72), who suggests that OM is meant to lend support to BNG, rather than the other way around.

2. 1003a34-b6

In order to cast light on this matter, Aristotle compares OM to two analogue cases of focal multivocity. In this section, I will first present each of these cases: I will then examine what they tell us about the general structure of focal multivocity; lastly, I will point out some possible limitations of the resulting account of focal multivocity. This will allow for a more precise, though admittedly not definitive, interpretation of Focal OM.

2.1

Having endorsed Focal OM, Aristotle offers two analogue cases of focal multivocity.

A. Different kinds of healthy thing are said to 'be healthy' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to health (πρὸς ὑγίειαν) [1003a34-35].

In order to clarify this suggestion, Aristotle offers a fourfold (but possibly open-ended) distinction between accounts which state what it is for something to be healthy [1003a35-b1]. The basic implication seems to be that for different kinds of healthy thing to be healthy involves bearing different relations to the same kind of healthy thing, namely health or a healthy condition: for some (e.g., for a certain type of regimen or operation) it is to *preserve* or *produce* this sort of condition; for others (e.g., for a certain type of complexion) it is to *be indicative of* it; for others yet (e.g., for a certain type of organism) it is to *be receptive of* it.

B. Different kinds of medical thing are said to 'be medical' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to medicine (πρὸς ἰατρικήν) [1003b1].

In order to clarify this suggestion, Aristotle offers a threefold (but possibly open-ended) distinction between accounts which state what it is for something to be medical [1003b1-4]. The basic implication seems to be that for different kinds of medical thing to be medical involves bearing different relations to the same kind of medical thing, namely medicine or medical expertise: for some (e.g., for a certain type of expert) it is to *possess* this sort of

expertise; for others (e.g., for a certain type of operation) it is to *be an exercise of* it; for others yet (e.g., for a certain type of instrument) it is to *be well suited for* (exercising) it.[26]

Aristotle concludes that OM exhibits an analogous structure to the above cases of focal multivocity: different kinds of being are called 'beings' (i) in different ways from one another as well as (ii) in relation to a single principle (πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν) [1003b5-6]. Thus, the above cases are likely meant to exemplify the general structure of focal multivocity, and to shed clearer light on the structure of Focal OM in particular.

2.2

In discussing each analogue case of focal multivocity, Aristotle offers a list of accounts which state what it is for certain things to be F or (in other words) a list of definitions of F-ness.[27] The various accounts are partly but not wholly different from one another, since they state that for different kinds of F to be F involves bearing *different kinds of relation* to *the same kind of F*. This suggests that focal multivocity is a relation of definitional dependence, which different 'satellite' kinds of F bear to the same 'focal' kind of F. In the above passage, Aristotle specifically identifies health (or: a healthy condition) as the focal type of healthy thing, and medicine (or: medical expertise) as the focal type of medical thing. This tells in favour of the following formulation of the two analogue cases of focal multivocity.

A. Healthy regimen $=_{def}$ the type of complexion which produces or preserves a healthy condition.

[26] In *Met.* Z4 [1030b2-3] and *EE* VII.2 [1236a19], Aristotle offers four examples of focally connected medical items, namely a body, a soul, an operation, and an instrument. Γ2 is not clear as to which of the above is called 'medical' in virtue of being εὐφυὲς πρὸς τὴν ἰατρικὴν: perhaps, as I have suggested in the main text, he holds that *an instrument* is called 'medical' in virtue of being well suited *for exercising medical expertise*; otherwise, he may hold that *a body* is called 'medical' in virtue of being well suited *for undergoing a medical operation*. Alternatively (though perhaps less plausibly) he may hold that *a person*, who does not possess medical expertise, is called 'medical' in virtue of being well suited *for acquiring it* (Shields, 1999: 112).

[27] In this chapter, I operate under a fairly lax notion of definition, according to which something qualifies as a definition of F-ness iff it is a true account which states what it is for something to be F. In chapter IV, I will opt for a more regimented notion of definition, whereon *some but not every* true account which states what it is to be F qualifies as a definition of F-ness. This is due to certain restrictions on the notion of definition which are explicitly in place in Z4, but not in Γ2 (or, for that matter, in Δ7 and Z1).

Healthy complexion $=_{def}$ the type of complexion which is indicative of a healthy condition.

Healthy organism $=_{def}$ the type of organism which is receptive of a healthy condition.

B. Medical expert $=_{def}$ the type of person who possesses medical expertise.

Medical operation $=_{def}$ the type of operation which consists in the exercise of medical expertise.

Medical instrument $=_{def}$ the type of tool which is well suited for exercising medical expertise.

This sort of dependence relationship is likely meant to be asymmetrical, since Aristotle goes on to speak of the focal kind of being as a principle (ἀρχή) of its satellites: this suggests that a focal type of F should act as a principle of each of its satellites; however, two things or types thereof cannot be principles of one another, at least under the same respect (e.g., definitionally). As a result, it seems safe to construe focal multivocity as a relation of definitional priority, which one kind of F bears to different kinds of F: each satellite depends on the focus for being called or defined as the kind of F which it is, whereas the focus does not in turn depend on any of its satellites for being called or defined as the kind of F which it is.[28]

[28] The claim that focality involves priority is confirmed by Aristotle's subsequent remarks on the primacy of substance [1003b16-19], and on the multivocity of oneness [1004a25-31]. Each passage implies that the focus is prior to its satellites, priority being most intuitively understood as a relation of asymmetrical independence.
For the sake of transparency, it is worth distinguishing between two possible interpretations of focal multivocity, understood as a relation of definitional priority. In any given instance of focal multivocity, different kinds of F are called 'F' in different ways from one another as well as in relation to *one thing*. This could mean that different kinds of F are definitionally posterior to either of two kinds of thing: either (a) to the same kind of *F* or (b) to the same kind of *G* (where being G is other than being F). Reading a sits better with Aristotle's own understanding of Focal OM, which is precisely what the two analogue cases of focal multivocity are meant to shed light on: Focal OM states that different kinds of being (i.e. different kinds of non-substance) are definitionally posterior to the same kind of being (i.e. substance); here, the focus or definitionally prior item is clearly identified as a kind of F, rather than as a kind of G (where being G is other than being F). Hence, I have adhered to reading a and will continue to do so throughout this chapter.
An interesting implication of this reading is that, in Γ2, Aristotle identifies health (or: a healthy condition) as the focal type of healthy thing and medicine (or: medical expertise) as the focal type of medical thing. In this chapter's Appendix, I critically revisit this suggestion in the light of Aristotle's subsequent remarks at 1003b6-10.

2.3

While this may serve as a helpful preliminary illustration of the general structure of focal multivocity, certain aspects of Aristotle's theory call for further clarification.

First, Aristotle seems to be suggesting that different kinds of F (e.g., different types of healthy, or of medical thing) are defined in terms of a single kind of F (e.g., of a single type of healthy, or of medical thing). As a result, the same term, 'F' (e.g., 'healthy', or 'medical'), is not only part of each satellite *definiendum*, but also of each respective *definiens*. Does this not imply that each of the proposed definitions is circular?[29] This worry can perhaps be defused by insisting that focal multivocity should be construed as a relation of definitional priority: while each satellite kind of F is defined in terms of the focal kind of F, the focus is not defined in the same way as or in terms of its satellites; hence, the satellite kinds of F would not be defined in terms of themselves. Unfortunately, though, Γ2 does not offer definitions of a healthy condition or of medical expertise. Moreover, this solution of the circularity charge presupposes that focal multivocity can be correctly understood as a relation of definitional *priority*: however, as I immediately point out below, this assumption is not unobjectionable.

Secondly, and relatedly, focal multivocity is meant to be understood as a relation of definitional priority, or of asymmetrical independence between definitions: the satellite kinds of F depend on the focal kind of F for being called or defined as the kinds of F which they are, but not conversely. Assuming that this description of focal multivocity is correct, why should we think that it is satisfied when it comes to such terms as 'healthy' and 'medical'? Let us assume, for example, that Aristotle is right to identify a healthy condition as the focal type of healthy thing and medical expertise as the focal type of medical thing. This presupposes that a healthy condition, and so too medical expertise, is definitionally independent of any of its alleged satellites. But what prevents us from defining a healthy condition (e.g.) as a certain type of

[29] This problem is raised by Shields (1999: 38).

condition which is produced or preserved by a healthy regimen? And why should medical expertise not be defined as the type of expertise which is exercised through medical operations or by means of medical instruments?

Third, Aristotle holds that each satellite or derivative kind of F is called 'F' in virtue of standing in *some or other kind of relation* towards the focal or prior kind of F. Yet he must clearly set certain constraints on the types of relation which a satellite might bear to the focus. Specifically, any such relation will need to be sufficiently robust in order for the aforementioned tie of definitional priority to obtain: the satellites must prove definitionally dependent on the focus, *but not conversely*. Which types of relation can secure the asymmetrical aspect of this dependence relationship?[30]

All of the above worries revolve around the suggestion that focal multivocity should be understood as a relation of definitional priority: while this suggestion is textually compelling, it is a challenging task to find theoretical support for it. Recent commentators have sought to overcome this problem by invoking Aristotelian notions of causation or explanation. According to Shields (1999: 110-127), each satellite kind of F must stand in either of the four causal-explanatory relations which Aristotle identifies in *Phys.* II.3 and *Met.* Δ2 (i.e. material, formal, efficient, or final) toward the focal kind. Shields suggests that the focal kind of F need not stand in one and the same causal-explanatory relation toward each of its satellites.[31] He also suggests that the focus need not be causally-explanatorily prior to each of its satellites, at least in either of the above four ways.[32] On the other hand, he insists that there must be some additional type of relationship, such that the focus does ultimately turn out to be causally-explanatorily prior to

[30] The problem is raised by Shields (1999: 105-108).

[31] For example, a healthy organism and a healthy regimen stand in a relationship of efficient causation, while a healthy organism and a healthy organ stand in a relationship of material causation. Note, though, that this illustration of Shields' does not square well with my reading of the passage, since I don't take Aristotle to be referring to organs as satellite types of healthy thing.

[32] For example, a healthy organism is the efficient cause of a healthy complexion, but a healthy regimen is the efficient cause of a healthy organism.

each of its satellites.[33] Ward (2008: 79-86) agrees that each satellite must stand in either of four causal-explanatory relations toward the focus, and underscores the need for the focus to be causally-explanatorily prior to each of its satellites.[34]

I agree with Shields and Ward that (at least as discussed in Γ2) focal multivocity has causal-explanatory underpinnings. Indeed, Aristotle speaks of each focus as a principle (ἀρχή) of its satellites [1003b6]. I nonetheless disagree with Shields and Ward on the following point: on their view, the focus is definitionally prior to the homonymous satellites in virtue of bearing any of the four causal-explanatory types of relationship to each of them; I think that this result is both undesirable and unnecessary.

While appealing to the notion of ἀρχή, in Γ2, Aristotle does not rely on the more detailed, fourfold scheme of causes which he so extensively deploys in *Phys.* II. The notions of material, final, and efficient cause are conspicuously absent throughout the chapter. To be sure, in Γ2, Aristotle does occasionally speak of forms (εἴδη). However, he only mentions them alongside genera (γένη), and in contexts where he clearly does not mean to address deep metaphysical problems concerning change or hylomorphism [1003b19-22; 1003b33-36]. All of this suggests that Aristotle is here simply using 'εἶδος' in order to refer to some or other *type of object*. The

[33] Shields identifies this relationship with the fifth type of priority which Aristotle discusses in *Cat*. 12, i.e. priority 'in nature' [14b9-23]. Aristotle seems to hold that x is prior in nature to y iff: (i) if x is, then y is, and conversely; (ii) x's being is somehow responsible (αἴτιον ὁπωσοῦν) for y's being, but not conversely. This notion of priority is admittedly hard to explicate (Shields, 1999: 123). Crucially, *Cat*. 12 does not specify *how* x's being is supposed to be responsible for y's being. Is it one among the four aforementioned types of causal-explanatory relations, or an additional one? Moreover, how does the *Cat*. 12 account of priority in nature connect to the account of priority in nature or substance which is offered in *Met.* Δ11 [1019a1-4]?

[34] On the other hand, Ward advocates for a revision of the list of causal-explanatory relationships which might obtain between the focus and its satellites, by suggesting that 'exemplary' should be substituted for formal causation. I find her proposal unconvincing. Following Cajetan's remarks on the multivocity of 'goodness' in *De Nominum Analogia*, Ward identifies the exemplary cause as that type of cause which "is related to the thing caused as the model is related to the product made or the thing done" (2008: 85). Ward argues that Aristotle comes close to singling out exemplary causation as a distinct type of causal-explanatory link, alongside the four aforementioned types, in *Phys.* II.3 [194b26-29]. However, on the most natural reading of the passage, Aristotle is here speaking precisely about *formal* causation. More broadly: none of Aristotle's various lists of types of cause suggest that he identified exemplary causation, at least as described by Ward, as a distinct type of causal-explanatory link, alongside the formal, material, final, and efficient. I also fail to see how the model-product analogy may help to illuminate the focus-satellite relationship.

same also seems to be the case as regards his use of the term 'nature (φύσις)' [1003b22-26; also see Γ1, 1003a26-28].

In the light of these considerations, it seems unwarranted to bring the *Physics*' total scheme of causes to bear on our reading of Γ2: formal cause or explanation alone should suffice. Moreover, at least within the context of Γ2, it is unnecessary to understand a formal cause in hylomorphic or teleological terms: x's formal principle may be broadly construed as what makes x the determinate type of thing which it is. This suggestion sits particularly well with Aristotle's conception of focal multivocity as a relation of definitional priority: one way for x to be a formal cause of y is to be part of y's definition [*Phys.* II.3, 194b26-29; *Met.* Δ2, 1013a26-29]; and indeed, in each of the above analogue cases, the focus turns out to be part of the definition of each satellite (but not conversely). This suggests that a focal kind of F should act as a formal principle of, in the sense of being definitionally prior to, each satellite kind of F: the focus makes its satellites the kinds of F which they are, but not conversely; hence, the satellites are called or defined as the kinds of F which they are in terms of the focus, but not conversely. Yet this brings us back precisely to the problem which we set out to address: Aristotle clearly conceives of focal multivocity as a relation of definitional priority; but what secures the asymmetrical aspect of this dependence relation?[35]

[35] Commentators generally acknowledge that focal multivocity involves the definitional priority of one type of F over the others. However, they are not comfortable with the suggestion that focal multivocity might involve a relationship of formal causation-explanation. Shields accepts this, though only after a lengthy and complex argument (1999: 114-118). On the other hand, Ward objects that focal multivocity simply cannot involve a formal causal-explanatory link, since this would presuppose that the focal and satellite types of F are synonymously called 'F' (2008: 81-83). I think that this worry is misplaced. First, Aristotle evidently conceives of definitional priority as a type of formal causal-explanatory relationship. So it would simply be inconsistent for him to think that focal multivocity involves definitional priority, but not some type of formal causal-explanatory link between focal and satellite types of F. Secondly, Ward worries that a formal causal-explanatory relationship necessarily involves complete isomorphism and thus synonymy between *explanans* and *explanandum*. Yet this does not seem to be the case: focal multivocity looks like an unproblematic case where x makes y the type of thing which y is without being the same type of thing as y. For instance, for a complexion to be healthy is to indicate that some or other organism is properly performing its vital functions: thus, a healthy organism makes a healthy complexion the type of healthy thing which it is, even though what it is for the two of them to be healthy is something different. If we accept that focal multivocity involves formal causation-explanation, we may still wonder how it relates to the other types of causation-explanation, and in particular to the final and efficient types: for, on Aristotle's view, formal, final, and efficient cause often coincide [*Phys.* II.7, 198a24-26]; for how interesting, I shall bracket this question, since it clearly lies beyond the 'logical' level of analysis of *Met.* Γ2.

Interim Conclusions

Perhaps, the answer to this question is not supposed to be garnered from Aristotle's remarks at 1003a34-b6. In effect, it is far from clear why Aristotle should seek to address this problem at this stage of his argument. Γ2 opens with Aristotle's claim that OM qualifies as a case of focal multivocity. However, this marks the first appearance of focal multivocity throughout the whole of the *Metaphysics*. Moreover: while Γ2 clearly presupposes familiarity with his official accounts of homonymy and multivocity in the *Organon*, focal multivocity is not systematically (or even explicitly) dealt with in either *Cat*. 1 or *Top.* I.15. Hence, readers of Γ2 need not be altogether familiar with the notion of focal multivocity. As a result, it might be too ambitious for Aristotle to offer a complete account of this notion at this clearly introductory stage. On the other hand, it would seem congenial for him to offer a preliminary illustration of its general features by way of some fairly intuitive examples.

To sum up, Aristotle clearly conceives of focal multivocity as a relation of definitional priority, which a single type of F bears to several types of F: however, he does not clarify what makes a certain type of F definitionally prior to others. As a result, it is also difficult to establish which types of F qualify as focal and which qualify as satellite types of F: for example, why should a healthy condition be definitionally prior to a healthy organism, or medical expertise be definitionally prior to a medical practitioner, rather than the other way around? As I go on to point out in the next section, Focal OM is indeterminate under both respects.

3. 1003b6-10

Drawing on the two above analogue cases, Aristotle proceeds to illustrate how OM qualifies as a case of focal multivocity. Given our preceding discussion, one would expect Aristotle to offer a satisfactory answer to the following two questions. First: which beings occupy the focal or the satellite position? Secondly: what makes something a focal rather than a satellite kind of being? Aristotle's answer to the former question is not wholly satisfactory: he clearly identifies the focal type of being with substance and the satellite types of being with different types of non-substance; however, he is not clear as to *which* types of substance occupy the focal position or as to *which* types of non-substance occupy the satellite positions. Aristotle's answer to the second question is not entirely satisfactory either: he clearly indicates that substances underlie non-substances as subjects; however, this does not look sufficient for explaining why the former are focal whereas the latter are satellite types of being. To sum up: Aristotle does not fully specify which types of substance are definitionally prior to which type of non-substance or why the former are definitionally prior to the latter.

3.1

In order to clarify Focal OM, Aristotle draws a broad-brush distinction between two ways in which something may be called a 'being': some things are called 'beings' in virtue of being substances (οὐσίαι); others are so called in virtue of being attributes of substance (πάθη οὐσίας). It also looks like attributes of substance come in two types, which we may call 'static' and 'dynamic': the former include qualities (e.g., *being pale*), and their privative or negative counterparts (e.g., *being not-pale* or *not being pale*);[36] the latter include the processes whereby

[36] Aristotle's list of attributes includes privations (στερήσεις) and negations (ἀποφάσεις). These are distinguished at 1004a10-16 (which might be a later addition to the text of Γ2) as well as in *A.Pr.* A46. Examples of στερήσεις and ἀποφάσεις from *A.Pr.* A46 are *being not-pale* (τὸ εἶναι μὴ λευκόν) and *not being pale* (τὸ μὴ εἶναι λευκόν), respectively [51b8-10].

substances come or cease to be.[37] To sum up, something may be called a 'being' in either of two ways: (i) in virtue of being a substance; (ii) in virtue of being either of two types of attribute of a substance.

This interpretation hinges on three main assumptions. (1) It relies on a determinate interpretation of Aristotle's use of the expression 'affections of substance (πάθη οὐσίας)' at 1003b7. Aristotle appears to use the word 'affection (πάθος)' in two ways. Strictly speaking, affections are a determinate type of attribute, alongside qualities, quantities, and so forth [Z1, 1028a18-20]: presumably, they are what patients suffer, as opposed to what agents do, throughout various processes; on which point, see the distinction between πάσχειν and ποιεῖν in *Cat*. 4 [1b25-27], *Top.* I.9 [103b20-23], and *Met.* Δ7 [1017a24-27]. More loosely, affections are any type of attribute, including qualities, quantities, and affections proper (but presumably excluding relative attributes) [*Met.* N2, 1089b23-24]. I take it that, in the above passage, Aristotle is following the looser use of the term. (2) My proposal also hinges on a determinate interpretation of Aristotle's use of the contrastive expressions 'τὰ μὲν' and 'τὰ δὲ', and of the disjunctive 'ἢ', throughout 1003b6-10. I take it that the 'τὰ μὲν' at 1003b6 and the first occurrence of 'τὰ δὲ' at 1003b7 are coordinate, and introduce an overarching twofold division between uses of 'being', one of which is distinctive of substances and the other of non-substances. The second occurrence of 'τὰ δὲ' at 1003b7 is not meant to introduce a further division which is coordinate to the above, but rather a subdivision of the second leg of the first distinction: it introduces the wider range of items which are called 'beings' in virtue of being attributes of substance. The group of items which fall within this division is articulated through Aristotle's use of the disjunctive 'ἢ'. (3) The resulting list of attributes of substance is not meant

[37] I take it that the expression 'ὁδὸς εἰς οὐσίαν' stands for a process which 'leads to' something's being a certain type of substance or to a substance's coming into existence. For a similar use of 'ὁδὸς', see *Phys*. II.1 [193b12-13]. I take it that those things which Aristotle designates as 'ποιητικὰ ἢ γεννητικὰ οὐσίας' should also be construed as generative processes. The alternative would be to think of them as substances which are generative of other substances: e.g., as someone's father, or mother. Yet this would give rise to further unnecessary taxonomical complications.

to be taken as definitive. First, the list fails to mention some of the items which Aristotle customarily includes among the derivative or satellite types of being and presents as (maximally general) types of attribute of substances, e.g., quantities (ποσότητες) [Z1, 1028a19]. Secondly, the list includes items which are consistently absent from Aristotle's various lists of 'categorial' uses of 'being', and whose nature is here left unspecified (e.g., routes to or destructions, privations or negations, and things which are generative or productive of substance). Hence, I take it that lines 1003b7-10 present us with a merely introductory list of attributes of substance, which may need to be further regimented in due course.[38]

3.2

Aristotle's choice to classify OM as a case of focal multivocity strongly suggests that he construes OM as a relation of definitional priority: this suggestion is likely confirmed by what he goes on to say at 1003b16-19; substance is the primary type of being (τὸ πρῶτον) i.e. the one which other types of being (asymmetrically) depend on for being called or defined as the types of being which they are (ἐξ οὗ τὰ ἄλλα ἤρτηται, καὶ δι' ὃ λέγονται, sc. λέγονται ὄντα). His remarks at 1003b6-10 shed some preliminary light on two aspects of this priority relation, namely its direction and its ground. First: Aristotle undeniably identifies substances as the focal or definitionally primary and non-substances as the satellite or definitionally derivative types

[38] This is not the only way to interpret the scope of Focal OM: indeed, there are other possible ways to interpret Aristotle's use of 'τὰ μὲν', 'τὰ δὲ', and 'ἢ' in this passage. Here, I will overlook these and instead point out some more serious peripheral issues concerning the scope of Focal OM, as I understand it. As some commentators have pointed out, Aristotle does not simply hold (i) that substances and non-substances (e.g., that *human* and *pallor* or that *human* and *walking*) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another. In addition, he holds (ii) that different types of non-substance (e.g., that qualities, like *pallor*, and processes, like *walking*) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another (Bostock, 1994: 45-52). On top of that, some commentators believe that Aristotle holds (iii) that different types of substance (hylomorphically understood) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another. According to some, he holds that different types of substantial compound (like an animal and a plant) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another, and that the same goes for different types of matter (like ice and wood) (Owen, 1965: 76-81). According to others, he holds that substantial compounds and their forms (like a human and his or her form) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another, and that the same goes for different types of form (namely natural and supra-natural ones) (Frede, 1987: 85-88). Each of the above views is difficult to motivate. However, views i and ii are the only ones which can be safely ascribed to Aristotle on textual grounds. In this thesis, I will largely overlook view ii and mainly focus on how Aristotle attempts to motivate or clarify view i.

of being. Secondly, Aristotle quite plausibly attempts to account for definitional priority by invoking the notion of subjecthood: substances are definitionally prior to non-substances because the latter are attributes (πάθη) of the former or (in other words) because the former underlie the latter as subjects. That said, each of the aforementioned aspects of Focal OM call for further clarification.

Direction. Whether a substance is definitionally prior to a non-substance depends on whether the former underlies the latter as a subject: however, it is not the case that *any old type of* substance underlies *any old type of* non-substance as a subject; hence, it is not the case that *any old type of* substance is definitionally prior to *any old type of* non-substance. For example, whether a certain type of substance is definitionally prior to the quality type *pallor* depends on whether the former underlies the latter as a subject: however, whether *pallor* belongs to a certain type of substance depends on whether the latter is corporeal; hence, whether a certain type of substance is definitionally prior to the quality type *pallor* depends on whether the former is a type of *corporeal* substance. Yet note that this conclusion may be interpreted in either of two ways, namely as the claim that the quality type *pallor* is definitionally posterior: (a) to *some or other type of* corporeal substance, regardless of whether the latter is a human, or a log, or another type of corporeal substance; (b) to *a certain type of* corporeal substance, e.g., exclusively to the type *human*, or exclusively to the type *log*, or exclusively to another type of corporeal substance. Which of these two options would Aristotle endorse? More broadly, one would expect Aristotle to give a clearer answer to the following question: assuming that substances are definitionally prior to non-substances, *which types of* substance are definitionally prior to *which types of* non-substance?[39]

[39] My take on the 'direction' problem is fundamentally different from Frede's (1987) and Patzig's (1960): on their view, Aristotle subscribes to what looks like a monist position, whereon all other types of being are focally connected to a single type of (i.e. divine) substance; as I see it, he may endorse a much looser pluralist position, which states that different types of non-substance are focally connected to different types of substance. For example: certain types of non-substance (e.g., colours) may be focally connected to certain types of substance (e.g., corporeal substances) whereas other types of non-substance (e.g., *walking*) may be focally connected to other or perhaps more determinate types of substance (e.g., animals).

Ground. Aristotle holds that substances underlie non-substances as subjects and that this *at least partly* accounts for the fact that the former are definitionally prior to the latter. What is less clear at the present stage is whether he takes subjecthood to *fully* or to *only partly* account for definitional priority. Where, exactly, does he stand as regards this issue? The question looks legitimate since priority is most intuitively understood as a relation of asymmetrical dependence. Hence, in order to establish that substances are definitionally prior to non-substances, Aristotle must establish that both of the following conditions are met: (i) non-substances definitionally depend on substances; (ii) substances do not definitionally depend on non-substances. His appeal to subjecthood seems to account for the first aspect of this relationship: for a non-substance to be essentially involves having a substance as a further underlying subject; hence, saying what it is for a non-substance to be involves saying that a substance underlies it. However, Aristotle's appeal to subjecthood does not unequivocally account for the second aspect of this relationship. In order to illustrate this point, it might be useful to focus on the relationship between substances and their *differentiae*. For something to be a substance essentially involves possessing certain attributes, which differentiate it from other types of substance: however, Aristotle denies that these types of attribute are substances [*Cat*. 5, 3a7-3b9]; hence, for something to be a substance essentially involves possessing certain non-substantial attributes. For example, for something to be a certain type of corporeal substance essentially involves being corporeal: however, the attribute of *corporeality* is not a substance; hence, for something to be a corporeal substance essentially involves possessing at least one non-substantial attribute. On this basis, one may retort that substances depend on certain types of non-substance (i.e. upon their *differentiae*) for being, and therefore for being called or defined as, the types of being which they are. Aristotle would obviously reject this conclusion, since it undercuts his claim that substances are definitionally prior to non-substances. But how, exactly, could he circumvent this objection? To sum up: assuming that

non-substances are definitionally dependent on substances, why should we think that the converse is not true?

Conclusions

On my proposed interpretation, Γ2 does not present us with Aristotle's considered statement of Focal OM. Instead, it calls our attention to certain aspects of this view which call for further clarification. As we progress in our reading of the *Metaphysics*, it will be crucial to examine whether, and if so how, Aristotle intends to fill these gaps.

Roughly put, Focal OM states that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. It seems safe to construe this as a claim about definitional priority. Moreover, it seems safe to construe priority as a relation of asymmetrical independence. However, at least three aspects of Focal OM call for further clarification.

First, Focal OM may be interpreted in either of two main ways, namely as a claim about existence or about predication.

a. Substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively.
b. Substances are said to 'be F' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Secondly, we may wonder *which types of* substance are said to 'be' primarily in relation to *which types of* non-substance. Third, and relatedly, we are not wholly clear as to *why* the former are said to 'be' primarily in relation to the latter.

Aristotle does not address these questions in Γ2: however, this need not indicate that he is oblivious to them; perhaps, he simply plans to address them at a later, less introductory stage of his discussion of OM, throughout the *Metaphysics*. As I see it, he will do so explicitly in Δ7, Z1, and Z4, by resorting to a more sophisticated conceptual toolkit than the one which is available to him in Γ2. Specifically, he relies on more fine-grained notions concerning subjecthood and predication, which he discusses in *Posterior Analytics* A, and which he likely

presumes readers of Γ2 to be already familiar with: they are the notions of essential or *per se*$_1$, proper or *per se*$_2$, and genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication.[40]

[40] It seems uncontroversial to suggest that *Met.* Γ presupposes familiarity with *A.Po.* A: this is obviously true of Aristotle's argument for the unity of first philosophy, in Γ1–Γ2, of his general discussion of the common axioms of demonstration, in Γ3 (see, esp. 1005b2-5), and of his specific discussion of the principle of non-contradiction, in Γ4 (see, esp. 1006a5-11).

Appendix

This appendix touches on some issues which I have so far chosen to overlook for the sake of an easier exposition. These are not central to my ensuing discussion of OM but are nonetheless pertinent to a discussion of *Metaphysics* Γ2 [1003a33-b10].

(1) As will become clear in chapter II, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of non-substance, namely non-substantial attributes, like *pallor*, and non-substantial compounds, like a pale thing: a non-substantial compound is a composite type of being, consisting in a non-substantial attribute belonging to an underlying substance; for example, a pale thing consists in *pallor* belonging to an underlying (corporeal) substance. Crucially, Aristotle allows that non-substantial compounds may underlie non-substantial attributes as subjects: thus, it may be true to say that a pale thing is pale or that a pale thing is walking. This consideration may be helpful for illuminating an otherwise obscure aspect of 1003b6-10. On careful scrutiny, Aristotle holds that something may be called a 'being' in either of two ways: (i) in virtue of being a substance; (ii) in virtue of being an attribute *of either of two types of item*, namely (a) of a substance or (b) of any of those things which are called 'beings' in relation to substance (οὐσίας ἢ τῶν πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν λεγομένων, 1003b9). On a possible reading, items of type b should be identified with non-substantial compounds. On this reading, then, Aristotle holds that a non-substantial attribute may be called a 'being' in virtue of being an attribute of either of two types of item, namely of a substance or of a non-substantial compound. This looks puzzling for two reasons. First, it does not obviously sit well with Aristotle's claim that different types of non-substantial attribute (e.g., qualities and processes) are called 'beings' in different ways from one another, as well as in relation to a *single* type of being, i.e. substance. Secondly, it indicates that non-substantial compounds are called 'beings' in a more fundamental way than non-substantial attributes: though this is in line with Z1 [1028a20-31] it does not obviously sit well with M2, which suggests that a non-substantial attribute (like *pallor*) is prior in account to a non-

substantial compound (like *pale human*) [1077a36-b11]. Here, as well as in what follows, I am inclined to put such issues aside, since the distinction between substances and non-substances is more important than that between non-substantial attributes and non-substantial compounds for understanding Aristotle's commitment to Focal OM.

(2) 1003b6-10 concludes with Aristotle's brief remark that, if true, Focal OM lends plausibility to the claim that what is not is what is not (διὸ καὶ τὸ μὴ ὂν εἶναι μὴ ὄν φαμεν). This remark is obscure for different reasons. First: what is meant by 'what is not'? Is it a non-entity, like a centaur? Is it a privative attribute, like *being not-pale*? Is it a negative attribute, like *not being pale*? Secondly: on either reading, what could it mean for what is not to be what is not? Is it not to exist? Is it to be the type of non-entity, or perhaps the type of privative or negative attribute, which it is? Here, as well as in what follows, I will bracket these questions, since considerations about not-being look peripheral to Aristotle's commitment to OM. For a similarly problematic passage, see Z4 [1030a23-27].

(3) Lastly, I would venture to suggest that lines 1003b6-10 call for a revision of the two analogue cases of focal multivocity which were previously presented at 1003a34-b4. First, Γ2 identifies health (ὑγίεια) as the focal type of healthy thing [1003a35]. In retrospect, though, health looks very much like a satellite type of being: for, presumably, it is a certain type of attribute of substance; specifically, it is the sort of state which *some or other living organism* is in iff certain conditions are met (say, iff such an organism is correctly performing its bodily functions). For a living organism to be healthy, then, is precisely to be receptive of such a state, as Aristotle himself seems to point out at 1003b1 (see 'ὅτι δεκτικὸν αὐτῆς'). By contrast, for a certain type of regimen to be healthy is to cause *such an organism* to come to or continue to be in such a state, while for a certain type of complexion it is to indicate that *such an organism* is in such a state. If right, this calls for a suitable reconfiguration of the focal type of healthy thing: for the item in question does not appear to be mere health (i.e. an attribute of substance), but rather the sort of organism which is receptive of such a state, namely a *healthy organism* (i.e. a

substance). Secondly, Γ2 identifies medicine (ἡ ἰατρικὴ) as the focal type of medical thing [1003b1]. In retrospect, though, medicine looks very much like a satellite type of being as well, for it too looks like an attribute of substance: presumably, medicine is *a human being's* rational capacity to heal others [*Top.* I.3, 101b5-10]. For a human being to be a medical practitioner, then, consists precisely in possessing said capacity, as Aristotle himself seems to indicate at 1003b2 (see 'τῷ ἔχειν ἰατρικὴν'). By contrast, a medical procedure and a medical instrument are essentially a way and a means *for such a practitioner* to exercise their expertise. Again, this calls for a suitable reconfiguration of the focal type of medical thing: for the item in question does not appear to be mere medical expertise (i.e. an attribute of substance), but rather the sort of person who possesses it, namely a *medical practitioner* (i.e. a substance). Indeed, this result seems to be vindicated by Aristotle's own remarks in *EE* VII.2 [1236a19-22], where he observes that an instrument is called 'medical' in relation to *a doctor*, i.e. to someone who *possesses* medical expertise, as opposed to medical expertise itself. The proposed reconfiguration of the two analogue cases of focal multivocity looks particularly advantageous, since it allows us to explain why a given satellite type of healthy or medical thing should prove definitionally dependent on the alleged focus: each satellite type of healthy or medical thing essentially has a healthy organism or a medical practitioner as an underlying subject. As a result, the notion of subjecthood serves as a unified criterion for demarcating focal multivocity as a relation of definitional dependence. Moreover, this notion is not foreign to either of the two analogue cases of focal multivocity, since Aristotle himself invokes it on at least two occasions: a healthy organism is *receptive of* a healthy condition [1003b1]; a medical practitioner *possesses* medical expertise [1003b2]. Admittedly, it is still unclear whether subjecthood is by itself sufficient for establishing that focal multivocity involves *asymmetry*. For instance: why should a healthy organism not be defined as the sort of organism which follows a healthy regimen, and why should a medical practitioner not be defined as the sort of practitioner who

is capable of carrying out medical procedures? Given the limitations of Aristotle's treatment of Focal OM at 1003b6-10, it seems best to leave these questions open.[41]

[41] If the proposed reconfiguration is right, it follows that Γ2 does not present us with Aristotle's definitive or metaphysically transparent picture of the two aforementioned analogue cases of focal multivocity. This is not a problem: as presented in Γ2, the two analogue cases successfully equip us with an adequate grasp of the overall contours of focal multivocity, and thereby prepare us to understand Focal OM (in broad terms) as a relation of definitional priority. Once the details of Focal OM have been filled out (namely: once substances have been identified as the focal and non-substances as the satellite types of being), we can turn back to the two analogue cases, and understand them with greater precision.

II. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Δ7

Following Γ2, *Metaphysics* Δ7 presents us with a uniquely comprehensive distinction between uses of the verb 'to be'. As a whole, the chapter suggests that something might be said to 'be' in either of four overarching ways: *per accidens* [1017a8-22]; *per se* [1017a22-30]; in virtue of being true (with not-being understood as being false) [1017a31-35]; in virtue of being potentially or actually [1017a35-b9]. For the sake of convenience, I will refer to this fourfold distinction as 'Global OM'.[42]

One of the main sources of disagreement among commentators of Δ7 is whether Global OM involves an existential or an elliptical predicative use of 'to be': according to some, Δ7 distinguishes between various ways in which something might be said to 'exist'; according to others, it distinguishes between several ways in which something may be said to 'be F' or (equivalently) in which an attribute may be predicated of a subject. In this chapter, I will defend an elliptical predicative reading of Global OM: on this interpretation, Δ7 distinguishes between four different though systematically interconnected uses of the predicative verb 'to be'; I motivate this reading in four steps, which roughly correspond to the four sections of Δ7.

My main aim is to defend what I take to be a plausible interpretation of the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be', which is drawn at 1017a7-30. I will carry out this task in two steps. In part 1, I will examine the overarching nature of this distinction based on Aristotle's discussion of *per se* and *per accidens* predication in the *Posterior Analytics*. Specifically, I will argue that Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' should be identified with the *Posterior Analytics* distinction between *per se*$_3$ or genuine and *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predication. I interpret this distinction as follows: an attribute

[42] Throughout the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle also invokes Global OM in E2 [1026a33-b2], Z1 [1028a10-11], Θ1 [1045b27-1046a1], and Θ10 [1050a34-b2]. Since Δ7 far surpasses these passages in terms of both length and depth, and since all of the subsequent mentions of Global OM arguably presuppose Δ7 as their background, I will narrowly focus on how this distinction in presented in Δ7. In this thesis' Conclusion, I shall briefly comment on the relationship between the two versions of Global OM which we encounter in Δ7 and E2.

is predicated of a subject *per se*$_3$ or genuinely iff it is predicated of a substance; an attribute is predicated of a subject *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely iff it is predicated of a non-substance. Hence, turning back to Δ7: something is said to 'be' *per se* iff an attribute is predicated of a substance; something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff an attribute is predicated of a non-substance. I also argue that the *per se* and the *per accidens* use are not merely distinct but hierarchically interconnected: the *per accidens* use is posterior to or parasitic on the *per se* use; indeed, predicating an attribute of a non-substance involves predicating an attribute of a further underlying substance, but not conversely. In part 2, I will turn to the more detailed distinction between *per se* uses of 'to be' which is drawn at 1017a22-30: I interpret this as a distinction between at least eight different types of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication; these include *per se*$_1$ or essential predication, as well as at least seven different types of *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predication. Thus, lines 1017a22-30 introduce the idea that substances are *per se*$_3$ or genuine subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: this will play a significant role in Aristotle's subsequent discussions of Focal OM in Z1 and Z4.

I then turn to the remainder of Δ7, which I see as an extension of the foregoing discussion of predication. Part 3 examines what we might call the veridical use of 'to be' and 'not to be', which is discussed at 1017a31-35. I will understand this as a certain type of elliptical predicative use of 'to be': in one case, to say that something 'is' or that something 'is not' consists in predicating a truth-value, i.e. truth or falsity, of an affirmative or of a negative predication of the *per se*$_3$ or of the *per accidens*$_3$ type. I also argue that the veridical use is posterior to or parasitic on the *per se* use: indeed, predicating a truth-value of an affirmation or of a denial involves predicating an attribute of a substance, but not conversely. Part 4 examines the distinction between the potential and the actual use of 'to be', which is drawn at 1017a35-b9. Again, I defend an elliptical interpretation of this distinction: 'potentially' and 'actually' signify two different kinds of way for something to be F or (equivalently) for an attribute to belong to a subject, and ultimately to a substance. I also argue that these two uses depend on the *per se*

use of ‘to be’: ‘potentially’ and ‘actually’ are copula-modifiers, meaning that they qualify how a complement-term attaches to a subject-term, and ultimately to a substance-term; whether the *per se* is in turn independent of either use is an additional question which deserves further consideration.

1. *Per se* and *per accidens* ‘being’

Aristotle begins Δ7 by contrasting a *per accidens* with a *per se* use of the verb ‘to be’ [1017a7-8]. The distinction is refined over the course of 1017a8-30, which divides into two sections: 1017a8-22, concerning the *per accidens* use; 1017a22-30, concerning the *per se* use.

Τὸ ὂν λέγεται τὸ μὲν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ δὲ καθ’
αὐτό, κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς μέν, οἷον τὸν δίκαιον μουσικὸν
εἶναί φαμεν καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον μουσικὸν καὶ τὸν μουσικὸν
ἄνθρωπον, παραπλησίως λέγοντες ὡσπερ τὸν μουσικὸν οἰκο- (1017a10)
δομεῖν ὅτι συμβέβηκε τῷ οἰκοδόμῳ μουσικῷ εἶναι ἢ τῷ
μουσικῷ οἰκοδόμῳ (τὸ γὰρ τόδε εἶναι τόδε σημαίνει τὸ συμ-
βεβηκέναι τῷδε τόδε), —οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν εἰρημένων· τὸν
ἄνθρωπον ὅταν μουσικὸν λέγωμεν καὶ τὸν μουσικὸν ἄν-
θρωπον, ἢ τὸν λευκὸν μουσικὸν ἢ τοῦτον λευκόν, τὸ μὲν ὅτι (15)
ἄμφω τῷ αὐτῷ συμβεβήκασι, τὸ δ’ ὅτι τῷ ὄντι συμβέβηκε,
τὸ δὲ μουσικὸν ἄνθρωπον ὅτι τούτῳ τὸ μουσικὸν συμβέ-
βηκεν (οὕτω δὲ λέγεται καὶ τὸ λευκὸν εἶναι, ὅτι ᾧ
συμβέβηκεν, ἐκεῖνο ἔστιν)· —τὰ μὲν οὖν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς
εἶναι λεγόμενα οὕτω λέγεται ἢ διότι τῷ αὐτῷ ὄντι ἄμφω (20)
ὑπάρχει, ἢ ὅτι ὄντι ἐκείνῳ ὑπάρχει, ἢ ὅτι αὐτὸ ἔστιν ᾧ
ὑπάρχει οὗ αὐτὸ κατηγορεῖται· καθ’ αὐτὰ δὲ εἶναι λέγεται
ὅσαπερ σημαίνει τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας· ὁσαχῶς
γὰρ λέγεται, τοσαυταχῶς τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει. ἐπεὶ οὖν τῶν
κατηγορουμένων τὰ μὲν τί ἐστι σημαίνει, τὰ δὲ ποιόν, τὰ δὲ (25)
ποσόν, τὰ δὲ πρός τι, τὰ δὲ ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν, τὰ δὲ πού,
τὰ δὲ ποτέ, ἑκάστῳ τούτων τὸ εἶναι ταὐτὸ σημαίνει· οὐθὲν

γὰρ διαφέρει τὸ ἄνθρωπος ὑγιαίνων ἐστὶν ἢ τὸ ἄνθρωπος
ὑγιαίνει, ἢ τὸ ἄνθρωπος βαδίζων ἐστὶν ἢ τέμνων τοῦ ἄν-
θρωπον βαδίζειν ἢ τέμνειν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων. (30)

Being is said on the one hand *per accidens* and on the other *per se*. On the one hand, for example, we say that the just thing is cultivated and that the human is cultivated and that the cultivated thing is a human *per accidens*, speaking in much the same way when we say that the cultivated thing builds because being cultivated coincides in the housebuilder or being a housebuilder in the cultivated thing (indeed, for this 'to be this' signifies that this coincides in this). And so too in the aforementioned cases: when we say that the human is cultivated and that the cultivated thing is a human, or that the pale thing is cultivated or that this is pale, in one case [we say so] because both coincide in the same being, in another because one of them coincides in the being in question, whereas [we say] that the cultivated thing is a human because the cultivated thing coincides with this (and the pale thing is also said to 'be' in this way: because that with which it coincides is). So, on the one hand, the things which are said to 'be' *per accidens* are said [sc. are said to 'be'] in this way either because both belong to the same being, or because this belongs to that being, or because this is that to which what it is predicated of belongs.
On the other hand, the very things which the figures of predication signify are said to 'be' *per se*: indeed, 'to be' signifies in as many ways as they are said [sc. in as many ways as they are said to 'be' *per se*]. Thus, since some predicates signify what something is, others how it is qualified, others how it is quantified, others how it is relative to something else, others its acting or being affected somehow, others where it is, and others when it is, 'to be' signifies the same as each of these. Indeed, 'human is staying-healthy' in no way differs from 'human stays-healthy', nor 'human is walking' or 'cutting' from 'human walks' or 'cuts', and so too in the other cases.

These lines have sparked widely different interpretations, which might be grouped under two main headings: some commentators (like Kirwan) take Aristotle to be distinguishing between two uses of the 'is' of existence; others (like Ross) take him to be distinguishing between two uses of the 'is' of predication, and specifically between the 'is' of non-essential and the 'is' of essential predication. However, both lines of interpretation face insurmountable textual difficulties. In what follows, I offer what I take to be a considerably more plausible interpretation, by drawing on Aristotle's discussion of *per se* and *per accidens* predication in the *Posterior Analytics*. On this basis, I will reject the existential in favour of a predicative reading of Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. I will also reject the specific predicative alternative that is advocated for by Ross, who treats the above as a distinction between essential or *per se*$_1$ and non-essential or *per accidens*$_1$ predication: e.g., between statements like '*human* is an animal' and '*human* is cultivated'. I will defend an alternative predicative reading, which treats the above as a distinction between genuine or *per se*$_3$ and non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ predication. In a nutshell: something is said to 'be' *per se* iff *a substance* is said to 'be F' (or, equivalently, iff an attribute is predicated of *a substance*); by contrast, something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff *a non-substance* is said to 'be F' (or, equivalently, iff an attribute is predicated of *a non-substance*). For example: something is said to 'be' *per se* when a *human* is said to 'be cultivated', whereas something is said to 'be' *per accidens* when a *just thing* is said to 'be cultivated'. I will also argue that, while distinct, the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' are hierarchically interconnected: indeed, predicating an attribute of non-substance involves predicating an attribute of an underlying substance, but not conversely; in other words, the *per accidens* is parasitic on the *per se* use. This insight allows us to overcome an objection which might be raised against my proposal, due to the presence of a *per se*$_3$ predication ('the human is cultivated') in the *per accidens* section of Δ7.

1.1

Aristotle begins Δ7 by claiming that something might be called a 'being' (or: said to 'be') in either of two ways, namely *per accidens* or *per se* [1017a7-8].[43]

This claim lends itself to at least two possible interpretations. On one such interpretation, it involves an existential use of 'to be': something might be said to 'be', sc. to 'be' *simpliciter* or to 'exist', in either of two ways, namely *per accidens* or *per se*. On an alternative interpretation, it involves an elliptical predicative use of 'to be': something might be said to 'be', sc. to 'be F', in either of two ways, namely *per accidens* or *per se*.

Accordingly, some of the most authoritative commentators on Δ7 have opted for either of two interpretations of 1017a7-8. On one such approach, which is propounded by Ross (1924: 306-307), Aristotle distinguishes between two ways in which something might be said to 'be F': specifically, he distinguishes the 'is' of *non-essential* from the 'is' of *essential* predication. On Ross' reading, which looks very much like a polished version of Alexander's [*In Met.* V, 370,5–371,36], something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff a subject (S) is said to 'be F' but is not essentially F, as for instance when a human is said to 'be cultivated'. By contrast, something is said to 'be' *per se* iff S is said to 'be F' and is essentially F, as for instance when the substance type *human* is said to 'be an animal' or when the quality type *pallor* is said to 'be a colour'. Ross' first suggestion is *prima facie* supported by the presence of 'the human is cultivated', a non-essential predication, in the *per accidens* section of Δ7 [1017a9; 1017a14]. However, his

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[43] Τὸ ὂν λέγεται τὸ μὲν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ δὲ καθ' αὑτό. The syntax of this claim lends itself to at least two possible interpretations.

a. This or that being is called a 'being' either *per accidens* or *per se*: 'Τὸ ὂν λέγεται (sc. λέγεται ὂν) τὸ μὲν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ δὲ καθ' αὑτό'; on this reading, 'Τὸ ὂν' designates a real item (i.e. this or that being) and 'λέγεται' has an implicit complement-term (i.e. 'ὂν').

b. The word 'being' is used either *per accidens* or *per se*: 'Τὸ ὂν λέγεται τὸ μὲν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ δὲ καθ' αὑτό'; on this reading, 'Τὸ ὂν' designates a linguistic item (i.e. the word 'being') and 'λέγεται' has no complement-term whatsoever.

I do not take these readings to be incompatible, but to constitute two notational variants of the same view. On these points, see §I.1.1.1.

second suggestion is severely undercut by Aristotle's choice to exemplify the *per se* use by way of predications like 'human is walking', or 'cutting', or 'staying-healthy' [1017a27-30]: these are also non-essential predications; hence, if Ross were right, they should be classed as assertions of *per accidens* rather than *per se* being; this result is puzzling by Ross' own admission (ibid. 307).

On an alternative approach, Δ7's *per se* v *per per accidens* distinction amounts to a distinction between two ways in which something may be said to 'exist'. There seem to be at least two ways in which the existential reading may be developed, one of which is closer in spirit to Owen's reading of Δ7 (1965: 71, 82) and one to Kirwan's (1993: 142-146). Here I gloss over the details of each proposal, and simply point out some striking difficulties which beset either attempt to interpret the *per se* v *per accidens* distinction along existential lines. For a start, throughout 1017a7-30, Aristotle consistently exemplifies the *per accidens* and the *per se* use by way of predicative, rather than existential statements: as we saw, these include statements like 'the human *is cultivated*' and 'human *is walking*', but not statements like 'human', or 'walking', or 'a cultivated human *exists*'; it seems intuitive to infer that Δ7's *per se* v *per accidens* distinction amounts to a distinction between two predicative as opposed to two existential uses of the verb 'to be'. Proponents of the existential reading may try to resist this conclusion, by retorting that Aristotle envisages a special relationship between predicative and existential statements: perhaps, he is inclined to explain the truth of certain existential statements in terms of the truth of certain predicative ones; perhaps, he is even willing to reduce certain existential statements to certain predicative ones. If this suggestion were correct, then it would seem legitimate for Aristotle to exemplify a distinction between uses of 'exists' by way of different predicative assertions, across 1017a7-30. Something which Aristotle says in Λ3 might seem to lend some support to this line of thought: for Aristotle there claims that, when human is healthy, health *is* [1070a22-23]; this may be taken to suggest that the true statement 'health exists' can be explained in terms of, or perhaps even reduced to, the true statement

'some or other living substance (such as the type *human*) is healthy'. Still, it bears emphasising that Aristotle makes no comparable suggestion in Δ7: here, he altogether refrains from commenting on the relationship between predicative and existential statements; hence, the foregoing attempt to defuse my first objection to the existential reading lacks direct textual support. All of this suggests that a predicative reading is at least equally if not even more plausible than an existential reading of Δ7's *per se* v *per accidens* distinction. Yet there are even more important reasons why the existential approach should be abandoned. As I anticipated, the *per se* use of 'to be' is exemplified by means of predicative statements like 'human is walking' and 'human is staying-healthy' [1017a27-30]: on the existential reading, these statements are meant to exemplify the way in which certain non-substances—namely, non-substantial attributes like *walking* and *staying-healthy*—are said to 'be'; hence, on this reading, these non-substances are said to 'be' *per se*. However, this is precisely what Aristotle goes on to deny in Z1 [1028a20-25]: there, he expressly denies that non-substances like *walking* and *staying-healthy* are *per se*, for they are not separable from substances. As a result, the existential reading makes for certain gross inconsistencies between Δ7 and Z1: however, these inconsistencies are intolerable, since Z1 clearly begins with a cross-reference to Δ7 [1028a10-11]. Menn, who puts forth an improved version of Kirwan's existential reading, seems to be aware of such a discrepancy and even to attempt to defuse it. He does so by suggesting that for something to 'be' *per se* means something different across Δ7 and Z1: in Δ7, it means that either of two types of being (i.e. a substance or a non-substantial attribute, rather than a non-substantial compound) exists; in Z1, it means that a certain type of being (i.e. a substance, rather than a non-substance) exists *per se* (Menn 2021: 209-211). Yet it would be very surprising for Aristotle to use the same expression in such different ways across these chapters, since—as Menn himself points out (ibid. 193-194)—Z1 obviously presupposes and refers back to Δ7.

What I have said so far tells strongly against the existential as well as against Ross' predicative approach to Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of the verb 'to be'.

However, it also suggests that this distinction has predicative underpinnings. The challenge, then, is to identify a viable predicative alternative to Ross' approach.

1.2

In order to carry out this task, I shall draw on Aristotle's most systematic discussion of *per se* and *per accidens* predication, to be found in *Posterior Analytics* A4.

Here, Aristotle distinguishes between four types of *per se* predication. On his view, S is truly said to 'be F':

per se$_1$ iff S is F and for S to be what it is involves being F [73a34-37];[44]

per se$_2$ iff S is F and for F-ness to be what it is involves belonging to S [73a37-b3];[45]

per se$_3$ iff S is F and for S to be F does not involve having something different as a subject [73b5-10];[46]

per se$_4$ iff S is F because of being S [73b10-16].[47]

A subject may be said to 'be F' *per accidens* in either of four corresponding ways, depending on which of the above criteria it fails to satisfy. For the sake of our discussion of Δ7, it is pertinent to focus on the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication.

I should begin by acknowledging that the *A.Po.* A4 account of *per se*$_3$ predication, or *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion, is to some degree controversial. According to the traditional

[44] E.g., a human is said to 'be an animal' *per se*$_1$. This is not Aristotle's own example, but clearly fits the above account.

[45] E.g., a number is said to 'be even' or to 'be odd' *per se*$_2$. Note that oddness is a proper or exclusive attribute of numbers, meaning that numbers alone admit of being either even or odd. More generally, *per se*$_2$ attributes look like proper or exclusive attributes of their underlying subjects.

[46] E.g., an animal is said to 'be pale' or to 'be cultivated' *per se*$_3$ [73b3-5]. Note that *A.Po.* A4 does not explicitly present either of these as an example of *per se*$_3$ predication: rather, each is presented as an example of *per accidens*$_1$ as well as *per accidens*$_2$ predication.

[47] E.g., a sacrificial victim is said to 'have died' *per se*$_4$. This use of '*per se*' is the least relevant to our current discussion.

interpretation of *A.Po.* A4, the *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion is satisfied by substances *alone*.[48] That said, adherents to the traditional interpretation disagree with each other as to whether the criterion is satisfied by *all* substances.[49] The disagreement largely hinges on a certain ambiguity of the *A.Po.* A4 *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion: a *per se*$_3$ subject of predication does not have *something different* as a subject;[50] however, the type of difference at stake is far from perspicuous; for example, we may wonder whether Aristotle is operating under a notion of strict numerical difference, or rather under a looser notion of difference in nature, essence, or type.[51] This makes for two different readings of the *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion: (a) a *per se*$_3$ subject of predication does not have any further underlying subject whatsoever; (b) a *per se*$_3$ subject of predication does not have a different type of being as a further underlying subject. On reading a, the *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion is satisfied by *Categories*-style primary or particular substances alone (Barnes 1994: 114-117). On reading b, it is satisfied by substances at large, including *Categories*-style secondary or universal substances, namely the species and genera of particular substances (Peramatzis 2010: 157-165). Here I will bracket this dispute: I will simply present the latter and more generous reading of the *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion, and briefly explain why I choose to endorse it.

On the more generous reading, a *per se*$_3$ subject does not have a different type of being as a further underlying subject: it follows that something is a *per se*$_3$ subject iff it is a substance. First, being a substance is *necessary* for being a *per se*$_3$ subject. Aristotle distinguishes between

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[48] This reading has recently been challenged by Bronstein (2019), whose objections likely call for a dedicated reply.

[49] At 73b5-10, Aristotle states that what is a substance and a *this* (ἡ δ' οὐσία καὶ ὅσα τόδε τι σημαίνει) is a *per se*$_3$ subject of predication. Whether this places any restriction on the range of substances which qualify as *per se*$_3$ subjects of predication partly hinges on what 'τόδε τι' means. I temporarily gloss over this issue, since this expression is not used in Δ7. I shall come back to it in chapters III and IV, since 'τόδε τι' *is* recurrently used in Z1 and Z4. In passing, it is worth emphasising that the *Posterior Analytics* account of predication does not presuppose familiarity with the *Metaphysics* hylomorphic account of substance.

[50] A *per se*$_3$ subject 'is not said of *something different* as a subject (μὴ καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεται ἄλλου τινός)'; a *per se*$_3$ subject is such-and-such 'without being *something different* (οὐχ ἕτερόν τι ὄν)' [73b5-10].

[51] The two types of difference (and the two corresponding types of sameness) are clearly on display in various passages of Δ, such as Δ6 [1016b31-1017a6] and Δ9 [1018a4-15].

two types of non-substance: the first is a non-substantial *attribute*, like *walking* (τὸ βαδίζειν); the second is a non-substantial *compound*, like *a walking thing* (τὸ βαδίζον), which consists in a non-substantial attribute belonging to a substance. According to Aristotle, each type of non-substance has some or other substance as an underlying subject: however, substances and non-substances are different types of being; hence, neither type of non-substance is a *per se*$_3$ subject.[52] Secondly, being a substance is *sufficient* for being a *per se*$_3$ subject. Aristotle distinguishes between two types of substance: the first is a particular substance, like this or that particular human, which has no further underlying subject whatsoever [*Cat*. 2, 1b3-6; *Cat*. 5, 2a11-14]; the second is a universal substance, like the species *human*, which is predicated of its members [*Cat*. 2, 1a20-22; *Cat*. 5, 2a14-19]. If anything is a particular substance, it qualifies as a *per se*$_3$ subject, since it does not have anything else, including a different type of being, as a further underlying subject. If anything is a universal substance, it also qualifies as a *per se*$_3$ subject, since its underlying members are not different in nature from it: for example, the type *human* has this or that particular human as a further underlying subject; moreover, the type *human* and this or that particular human are not different in nature from one another; indeed, both of them are types of substance and they even share the same definition [Cat. 5, 3a17-20]. Hence, both types of substance qualify as *per se*$_3$ subjects.

There are at least two reasons why I am inclined to prefer the more generous reading of the *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion as part of my ongoing discussion of Δ7: first, we should be cautious not to disqualify universal substances like the type *human* from being *per se*$_3$ subjects of predication, especially within the context of Δ7;[53] secondly, the more generous reading allows

[52] The distinction between the two types of non-substance is clearly at play throughout *A.Po.* A4, where non-substantial compounds are exemplified by the walking thing. The distinction is further refined in *Met.* Z1 [1028a20-31], where Aristotle explicitly states that substances underlie non-substantial attributes, like *walking*, as well as non-substantial compounds, like the walking thing, as subjects.

[53] Δ7 clearly exemplifies the *per se* use by way of predications like 'human is walking (τὸ ἄνθρωπος βαδίζων ἐστιν)'. We have reason to think that the subject-term 'human' here signifies the species *human*, rather than this or that particular human. See, for instance, *Cat*. 2 [1a20-22; 1b3-6], where 'ἄνθρωπος' designates the species *human*, whereas 'ὁ τὶς ἄνθρωπος' designates this or that particular human. That said, substance types are not basic subjects of predication: for example, predicating grammaticality of the species *human* involves predicating it of a

us to make perfectly good sense of the way in which Aristotle himself exemplifies the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication in such contexts as *A.Po.* A22 [83a1-20].[54] There, Aristotle puts forward various examples of true predications [83a1-14]. These include statements like:

(1) 'the cultivated thing is pale', where a non-substantial attribute (*being pale*) is predicated of a non-substantial compound (a cultivated thing);[55]

(2) 'the pale thing is a log', where a substantial attribute (*being a log*) is predicated of a non-substantial compound (a pale thing);[56]

(3) 'the log is pale', where a non-substantial attribute (*being pale*) is predicated of a substance (a log).[57]

In A22, predicative statements of type 1 and 2 are called 'non-genuine (μὴ ἁπλῶς)' or *per accidens* (κατὰ συμβεβηκός), whereas statements of type 3 are called 'genuine (ἁπλῶς)' or *per se* (μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός) [83a14-20]. This classification can be adequately accounted for based on the more generous interpretation of the *A.Po.* A4 *per se*$_3$ subjecthood criterion. On the one hand, statements of type 1 and 2 predicate an attribute of a *non-substance* and therefore qualify as *per accidens*$_3$ predications. For example, for the cultivated thing to be pale involves having a different type of being, namely a substance (and specifically a human), as a subject: hence, the cultivated thing is said to 'be pale' non-genuinely or *per accidens*$_3$. Similarly, for the pale thing to be a log involves having a different type of being, namely a substance (and specifically a log), as a subject: hence, the pale thing is said to 'be a log' *per accidens*$_3$. On the other hand,

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further underlying subject, i.e. this or that particular human [2b36-3a6]. Hence, predications like 'the universal *human* is walking' cannot be true unless predications like 'this or that particular human is walking' are true in the first place. This suggests that predications involving a particular substance term (e.g., 'this or that particular human is walking') are equally well suited for exemplifying *per se*$_3$ predication, and therefore the *per se* use of 'to be'.

[54] The *per se*$_3$ v *per accidens*$_3$ distinction is also invoked and exemplified in *A.Po.* A19 [81b24-29].

[55] 'τὸ μουσικὸν λευκὸν εἶναι φῶ', 83a11.

[56] 'τὸ λευκὸν εἶναι φῶ ξύλον', 83a5.

[57] 'τὸ ξύλον λευκὸν εἶναι φῶ', 83a9.

statements of type 3 predicate an attribute of a *substance*, and therefore qualify as *per se*$_3$ predications. For example, for the log to be pale does not involve having a different type of being, namely a non-substance (such as a cultivated or a pale thing), as a subject: hence, the log is said to 'be pale' genuinely or *per se*$_3$.

Based on this survey of *A.Po.* A4 and A22, it seems safe to interpret the *Posterior Analytics* distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication as follows: an attribute is predicated of a subject genuinely or *per se*$_3$ iff it is predicated of a *substance*, and non-genuinely or *per accidens*$_3$ iff it is predicated of a *non-substance*. In what follows, I will argue that Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of the verb 'to be' should be identified precisely with this distinction: something is said to 'be' *per se* iff an attribute is predicated of a *substance*, whereas something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff an attribute is predicated of a *non-substance*.

In order to further underpin my argument, I will briefly call attention to three salient features of Aristotle's account of *per se*$_3$ predication, as I have interpreted it.

(i) The distinction between *per se*$_3$ or genuine and *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predication is exclusive.

That is to say that the same attribute cannot be predicated of the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_3$: for example, *pallor* cannot be predicated of a log *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_3$, for that would imply that a log is a substance as well as a non-substance, which is absurd.[58]

(ii) The distinction between *per se*$_3$ or genuine and *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predication is not exclusive.

[58] The exclusive reading of the *per se*$_3$ v *per accidens*$_3$ distinction is strongly encouraged by Aristotle's contrastive usage of the expressions 'τὰ μὲν' and 'τὰ δὲ', 'ὁ μὲν' and 'τὸ δὲ', and 'τὸ οὕτω λέγειν' and 'τὸ δ' ἐκείνως', in *A.Po*. A4 [73b5-10], A19 [81b24-29], and A22 [83a14-20].

That is to say that the same attribute may be predicated of the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_1$: for example, *pallor* is predicated of a log *per se*$_3$, since a log is a substance, as well as *per accidens*$_1$, since for something to be a log does not involve being pale.[59]

(iii) The distinction between *per se*$_3$ or genuine and *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predication is hierarchically structured.

Take, for example, the *per accidens*$_3$ predication 'the pale thing is a log' and the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the log is pale'. On the one hand, for a pale thing to be a log involves having a log, which is pale, as a further underlying subject: thus, saying that a pale thing is a log involves saying that an underlying log is pale [83a4-9]. On the other hand, for a log to be pale does not involve having a non-substance, such as a pale thing, as a further underlying subject: thus, saying that a log is pale does not involve saying that an underlying pale thing is a log [83a9-14]. To sum up: predicating log-ness of a pale thing involves predicating *pallor* of an underlying log, but not conversely; as such, the *per accidens*$_3$ predication 'the pale thing is a log' is parasitic on the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the log is pale'. More generally: *per accidens*$_3$ is parasitic on *per se*$_3$ predication, in that predicating an attribute of a subject *per accidens*$_3$ involves predicating an attribute of a subject *per se*$_3$, but not conversely.

I shall come back to each of these three observations over the course of my reading of Δ7, for they all underpin my proposed interpretation of the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'.

[59] To be sure, a *per se*$_3$ predication need not consist in a *per accidens*$_1$ predication: indeed, the same attribute may be predicated of the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per se*$_1$; for example, *animality* is predicated of a human *per se*$_3$, since a human is a substance, as well as *per se*$_1$, since for something to be a human involves being an animal. Hence, we may distinguish between two types of *per se*$_3$ predication: *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ (e.g., 'the log is pale') and *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ (e.g., 'the human is an animal'). Aristotle is clearly interested in *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predication: indeed, he observes that substances alone are what they *essentially* are genuinely or *per se*$_3$ (οὐχ ἕτερόν τι ὄντα ἐστὶν ὅπερ ἐστίν) [A4, 73b8]; for example, the type *human* (a genuine or *per se*$_3$ subject of predication) is *essentially* an animal (ὅπερ γὰρ ζῷόν ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος) [A22, 83a30]; the implication is, presumably, that substances alone are *per se*$_3$ subjects of *per se*$_1$ predication. That said, *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predication does not figure prominently throughout Δ7. It certainly seems to be listed as a type of *per se*$_3$ predication (see τί ἐστι at 1017a25): however, it is not explicitly accorded any special significance; furthermore, examples of *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predication are conspicuously absent from the whole chapter. By contrast, *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predication plays a prominent role in Z1 and Z4, as I go on to show in chapters III and IV.

1.3

For a start, let us look at how Aristotle himself exemplifies this distinction throughout Δ7. Since they look less controversial, I will first examine the examples of the *per se* use, which are given at 1017a27-30.[60] They are:

(1) 'human is staying-healthy';[61]

(2) 'human is walking';[62]

(3) 'human is cutting'.[63]

Each statement straightforwardly qualifies as a type of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication, for in each case an attribute is predicated of a substance. Accordingly, let us suppose that Δ7's *per se* use of 'to be' should be identified with *per se*$_3$ predication: something is said to 'be' *per se* iff a *substance* is said to 'be F' or (equivalently) iff an attribute is predicated of a *substance*.

Let us turn to the examples of the *per accidens* use, which are first given at 1017a8-10. Here, Aristotle puts forward three types of statement, which clearly correspond to the three types of statement which we encountered in our reading of *A.Po.* A22. They are:

(1) 'the just thing is cultivated', where a non-substantial attribute (*being cultivated*) is predicated of a non-substantial compound (the just thing);[64]

[60] I temporarily gloss over Aristotle's choice to distinguish between various *per se* uses of 'to be', at 1017a22-27, as well as his refusal to distinguish 'human is walking' from 'human walks', at 1017a27-30. I come back to these points in §II.2.

[61] 'τὸ ἄνθρωπος ὑγιαίνων ἐστὶν'.

[62] 'τὸ ἄνθρωπος βαδίζων ἐστὶν'.

[63] '[τὸ ἄνθρωπος] τέμνων [ἐστὶν]'.

[64] 'τὸν δίκαιον μουσικὸν εἶναί φαμεν', 1017a8-9. Statements of type 1 also include 'the pale thing is cultivated (τὸν λευκὸν μουσικὸν)' and 'the cultivated thing is pale (τοῦτον λευκόν)' [1017a15]. They also include 'the cultivated thing builds a house (τὸν μουσικὸν οἰκοδομεῖν)' [1017a10-13], though this is not as straightforward as the above.

(2) 'the cultivated thing is a human', where a substantial attribute (*being a human*) is predicated of a non-substantial compound (the cultivated thing);[65]

(3) 'the human is cultivated', where a non-substantial attribute (*being cultivated*) is predicated of a substance (the human).[66]

Aristotle goes on to explain why something is truly said to 'be F' in each of the above examples [1017a13-18]:

(1) the just thing is said to 'be cultivated' because *being just* and *being cultivated* coincidentally belong to the same thing (i.e. to the type *human* or to a particular human);[67]

(2) the cultivated thing is said to 'be a human' because *being cultivated* coincidentally belongs to the underlying being (i.e. to the type *human* or to a particular human);

(3) the human is said to 'be cultivated' because *being cultivated* coincidentally belongs to it (i.e. to the type *human* or to a particular human).[68]

Statements of type 1 and 2 straightforwardly qualify as *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predications, for in each case an attribute is predicated of a non-substance. Statements of type

[65] 'τὸν μουσικὸν ἄνθρωπον [εἶναί φαμεν]', 1017a9-10.

[66] 'τὸν ἄνθρωπον μουσικὸν [εἶναί φαμεν]' [1017a9]. I have tentatively translated the subject term of this predication as 'the human'. This is clearly a substance term. Moreover, it seems safe to assume that its referent is a substance *type*, i.e. the universal *human* rather than this or that particular human. See, for instance, *Cat*. 5 [2a11-19], where 'ὁ ἄνθρωπος' is used to designate the human species, whereas 'ὁ τὶς ἄνθρωπος' is used to designate a particular human. That said, predications like 'the universal *human* is cultivated' cannot be true unless predications like 'this or that particular human is cultivated' are true in the first place [*Cat*. 5, 2b36-3a6]. This suggests that Aristotle's observations about statements of type 3 not only apply to predicative assertions about universal, but also to ones about particular substances.

[67] In these lines, 'the just thing is cultivated' is actually replaced by 'the pale thing is cultivated': however, the change is insignificant since the two statements clearly exhibit the same predicational structure; moreover, each statement predicates the same attribute (i.e. being cultivated) of some or other non-substance; finally the attribute in question clearly belongs to the same underlying substance, namely the type *human* or a particular human; indeed, *cultivation* looks like a *per se*$_2$ or proper attribute of humans.

[68] A more abstract explanation is offered at 1017a19-22. In each respective case, S is said to 'be F' *per accidens*:

(1) because *being S* and *being F* belong to the same underlying being (or substance);

(2) because *being S* belongs to the being which is (improperly) predicated of S (i.e. because an underlying substance of type F happens to *be S*);

(3) because *being F* belongs to the being (or substance) of which it is predicated (i.e. to S).

3 straightforwardly qualify as *per se*$_3$ or genuine as well as *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predications: for instance, a human is said to 'be cultivated' *per se*$_3$, since it is a substance, as well as *per accidens*$_1$, since for a human to be what it is does not involve being cultivated. Hence, Aristotle appears to exemplify the *per accidens* use of 'to be' by way of two different types of *per accidens* predication, namely *per accidens*$_1$ and *per accidens*$_3$. This naturally gives rise to the question as to whether the *per accidens* use of 'to be' should be identified with *per accidens*$_1$ or with *per accidens*$_3$ predication.[69]

In order to address this question, let us recall that Aristotle consistently exemplifies the *per se* use of 'to be' through *per se*$_3$ predications: this suggests that the *per se* use of 'to be' should be identified with *per se*$_3$ predication. If we accept this assumption, we are faced with two alternative interpretations of Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be': the latter must be identified either with the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication or with the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_1$ predication. Here I shall argue for the former alternative.

The key underlying assumption of my argument is that Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' is meant to be exclusive, as suggested by Aristotle's contrastive usage of 'μὲν' and 'δὲ' at 1017a7-8 and at 1017a19-22: this quite plausibly indicates that something is said to 'be' either *per se* or *per accidens*, but not in both ways; or, equivalently, that *a certain type of* being is said to 'be' *per se* whereas *a different type of being* is said to 'be' *per accidens*. As I noted, the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_1$ predication is not exclusive (§II.1.2, observation ii): the same attribute may be predicated of the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_1$; for example, a human is said to 'be cultivated' *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_1$. By contrast, the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication is exclusive (§II.1.2, observation i): the same attribute may not be predicated of the same subject

[69] I assume that the *per accidens* use of 'to be' cannot encompass both types of *per accidens* predication, since Aristotle is clearly sensitive to their difference in Δ7 [1017a19-22] as well as throughout the *Posterior Analytics*.

per se$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_3$; for example, a human is said to 'be cultivated' *per se*$_3$ but not *per accidens*$_3$. On this basis, it seems best to identify Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and *per accidens* use of 'to be' with the *Posterior Analytics* distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication: something is said to 'be' *per se* iff a *substance* is said to 'be F' (or, equivalently, iff an attribute is predicated of a *substance*); by contrast, something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff a *non-substance* is said to 'be F' (or, equivalently, iff an attribute is predicated of a *non-substance*).[70]

Interim Conclusions

This proposal displays certain clear merits when compared with past interpretations of Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. First, it avoids the various pitfalls of the existential reading: it does justice to Aristotle's choice to focus on matters of predication; it steers clear of any controversial commitments concerning the relationship between predicative and existential statements; lastly, it avoids otherwise inevitable inter-textual inconsistencies between Δ7 and Z1. Secondly, it avoids the pitfalls of Ross' predicative approach, since it allows us to accommodate Aristotle's choice to exemplify the *per se* use by way of *per se*$_3$ or genuine, though *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predications, like 'human is walking' [1017a27-30]. Finally, it avoids the pitfalls of yet another exegesis of Δ7, which is

[70] So far, I have glossed over one potentially controversial example of *per accidens* 'being', namely 'the pale thing is', which is briefly mentioned at 1017a18-19: 'and the pale thing is also said to "be" in this way, because that with which it coincides is', reading 'οὕτω δὲ λέγεται καὶ τὸ λευκὸν εἶναι, ὅτι ᾧ συμβέβηκεν, ἐκεῖνο ἔστιν', with ms. E. Given the lack of an explicit complement-term, 'the pale thing is' may be interpreted in either of two ways: (a) as an existential statement ('the pale thing exists'); (b) as an elliptical predication ('the pale thing is F'). For example, given its proximity to 'the cultivated thing is a human' [1017a17-18], it is particularly attractive to interpret 'the pale thing is' as an elliptical formulation of 'the pale thing is *a human*'. I believe that this option is strongly encouraged by certain striking parallels between Δ7 [1017a13-19] and *A.Po.* A19 [81b24-29]. In the latter passage, *per se*$_3$ predication is exemplified by 'the human is pale (τὸν ἄνθρωπον λευκόν [φαμεν εἶναι])' and *per accidens*$_3$ predication by 'this pale thing is a human (τὸ λευκόν ποτ' ἐκεῖνό φαμεν εἶναι ἄνθρωπον)'. Because *per accidens* 'being' consists in *per accidens*$_3$ predication, and Aristotle explicitly exemplifies *per accidens*$_3$ predication through the statement 'this pale thing is a human', it makes perfect sense to assume that, at 1017a18-19, *per accidens* 'being' is exemplified by the elliptical predicative statement 'the pale thing is (sc. is a human)'. Moreover, 'the pale thing is a human' turns out to exhibit the same structure as the immediately preceding *per accidens*$_3$ predication 'the cultivated thing is a human': this is particularly advantageous, since it allows us to explain why the pale thing is held to 'be' *in the same way* as the cultivated thing (see 'οὕτω', 1017a18); indeed, in both cases, a non-substance is said to 'be a human'; thus, each predication is true in virtue of the fact that a further underlying substance (which happens to be cultivated, in one case, and pale, in another) is essentially a human.

proposed by Kahn (1966: 248-249). At first glance, my proposal looks similar to Kahn's: indeed, we both claim that *Met.* Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' should be identified with *A.Po.* A4's distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication. On closer inspection, though, our readings are fundamentally different from one another. Indeed, I take the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication to be exclusive, whereas Kahn does not. On his reading, something is said to 'be F' *per se*$_3$ iff an attribute is predicated of a *substance*, whereas something is said to 'be F' *per accidens*$_3$ iff an attribute is predicated of *some or other subject*, regardless of whether the subject in question is a substance or a non-substance: hence, *per se*$_3$ predication turns out to constitute "a special case" of *per accidens*$_3$ (which he calls 'random') predication (1966: 248; 1978: 274, n51). This is not how I understand the relationship between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication. On my reading, something is said to 'be F' *per se*$_3$ iff an attribute is predicated of a *substance*, whereas something is said to 'be F' *per accidens*$_3$ iff an attribute is predicated of a *non-substance*: since no substance is a non-substance, the two types of predication turn out to be mutually exclusive. Accordingly, I also take Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' to be exclusive: if something is said to 'be' *per se*, it is not said to 'be' *per accidens* (or vice versa). By contrast, Kahn would need to concede that the *per se* use is 'a special case' of the *per accidens* use, which is precisely what he appears to do (1978: 274, n51). However, and as I earlier pointed out, an exclusive reading of the *per se* v *per accidens* distinction is clearly encouraged by Aristotle's contrastive usage of 'μὲν' and 'δὲ' at 1017a7-8 and at 1017a19-22.

Having presented the main merits of my proposal, I will conclude by addressing an objection which might be understandably raised against it, due to the inclusion of the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the human is cultivated' in the *per accidens* section of Δ7 [1017a9, 1017a14]. If my reading of Δ7 is correct, *per se*$_3$ predication cannot be used to exemplify *per accidens* 'being': indeed, *per accidens* 'being' should be identified with *per accidens*$_3$ predication; however, *per accidens*$_3$ and *per se*$_3$ predication are mutually exclusive. At this point, one may retort that a

per se$_3$ predication (i.e. 'the human is cultivated') is in fact used to exemplify *per accidens* 'being' in Δ7. Hence, one may be led to conclude that my reading of Δ7 is mistaken.

While I accept the first premiss of this objection, I reject the second: the *per accidens* section of Δ7 undeniably includes a *per se*$_3$ predication, i.e. 'the human is cultivated'; however, this predication *is not* being offered as an example of *per accidens* 'being'. First, it *should not* be understood as an example of *per accidens* 'being': the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the human is cultivated' is also a *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predication; however, *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predication should not be identified with *per accidens* 'being', for that would make the distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* 'being' non-exclusive, whereas this distinction is meant to be exclusive. Secondly, it *need not* be understood as an example of *per accidens* 'being': the *per accidens* section of Δ7 includes the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the human is cultivated', not because it exemplifies *per accidens* 'being', but because—as I go on to explain—it underpins Aristotle's actual examples of *per accidens* 'being'.

In Δ7, *per accidens* 'being' is undeniably exemplified by the *per accidens*$_3$ predications (1) 'the just thing is cultivated' and (2) 'the cultivated thing is a human'. What seems not to have been sufficiently appreciated by commentators is that each of these *per accidens*$_3$ predications is parasitic upon the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the human is cultivated'. (1) For the just thing to be cultivated involves having a substance as a subject: the substance in question is a particular human or the type *human*, which happens to be just as well as to be cultivated; hence, predicating *cultivation* of the just thing involves predicating *cultivation* of the underlying human. (2) For the cultivated thing to be a human involves having a substance as a subject: again, the substance in question is a particular human or the type *human*, which happens to be cultivated; hence, predicating *humanity* of the cultivated thing involves predicating *cultivation* of the underlying human. To sum up: predicating *cultivation* of the just thing or *humanity* of the cultivated thing involves predicating *cultivation* of the underlying human, though the converse is obviously not true; hence, the *per accidens*$_3$ predications 'the just thing is cultivated'

and ‘the cultivated thing is a human’ are parasitic upon the *per se*$_3$ predication ‘the human is cultivated’. With that in mind, let us look back to the *per accidens* section of Δ7. At 1017a8-13, Aristotle sets out to illustrate what it is for something to ‘be’ *per accidens* by employing certain examples of *per accidens*$_3$ predication, including ‘the just thing is cultivated’ and ‘the cultivated thing is a human’; however, each of these *per accidens*$_3$ predications is parasitic upon the *per se*$_3$ predication ‘the human is cultivated’; hence, given the examples which he has chosen in Δ7, Aristotle cannot fully illustrate what it is for something to ‘be’ *per accidens* independently of the *per se*$_3$ predication ‘the human is cultivated’. In order to illustrate what it is for something to ‘be’ *per accidens*, e.g., when the just thing is said to ‘be cultivated’ or when the cultivated thing is said to ‘be a human’, Aristotle must also illustrate what it is for something to ‘be’ *per se*, e.g., when the human is said to ‘be cultivated’: this is precisely what he does throughout 1017a13-19 and in more abstract terms throughout 1017a19-22; there, he states that an attribute, such as *humanity* or *cultivation*, is truly predicated of a non-substance, such as the cultivated or the just thing, in virtue of belonging to a substance, such as the human; he also states that an attribute, such as *cultivation*, is truly predicated of a substance, such as the human, in virtue of belonging to the substance in question, namely the human, as opposed to some underlying non-substance, such as the just or the cultivated thing. This explains why the *per accidens* section of Δ7 includes the *per se*$_3$ predication ‘the human is cultivated’, in spite of the fact that this predication does not exemplify *per accidens* ‘being’: for, in fact, it clearly exemplifies *per se* ‘being’.

There are two important upshots to this reply. First, the *per se* use turns out to be prior to or more fundamental than the *per accidens* use of ‘to be’: indeed, the *per se* use should be identified with *per se*$_3$ predication and the *per accidens* use with *per accidens*$_3$ predication, and (as I noted) *per accidens*$_3$ is parasitic upon *per se*$_3$ predication (§II.1.2, observation iii). This displays a further merit of my proposal: the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of ‘to be’ turn out to be distinct from as well as hierarchically connected to one another; in other words, this

reading makes for a systematic account of the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use.[71] Secondly, the *per se*$_3$ predication 'the human is cultivated' should not be understood to exemplify *per accidens* but *per se* 'being'. This turns out to be particularly advantageous once we turn to the dedicated discussion of the *per se* use of 'to be' at 1017a22-30. Throughout the bulk of this passage [1017a22-27], Aristotle distinguishes between the various ways in which something might be said to 'be' *per se*. However, he wholly refrains from explaining or illustrating what it might mean for something to 'be' *per se* in the first place. This strongly suggests that 1017a22-27 requires prior familiarity with the *per se* use of 'to be'. On my proposal, the reader of 1017a22-27 has indeed been familiarised with this use, through the inclusion of a *per se*$_3$ predication at 1017a8-22. The latter endows the reader of 1017a22-27 with the required preliminary grasp of the *per se* use, which is then consolidated through additional *per se*$_3$ predications at 1017a27-30. Of course, this sets some important constraints on my reading of 1017a22-30, to which I now turn.

[71] In Δ7, Aristotle does not explicitly claim that the *per se* use is more basic than the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. However, he evidently does so in Z1: he there claims that substances are said to 'be' *per se* or genuinely, while non-substances are said to 'be' *per accidens* or non-genuinely, and thereby concludes that substances are said to 'be' primarily in relation to non-substances [1028a10-31]. It is worth remarking that, in Δ7, the priority of the *per se* use is illustrated by focusing on *per se*$_3$ predications of a determinate type, namely *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predications like 'the human is cultivated' [1017a9]. In Z1, Aristotle arguably shifts his focus to *per se*$_3$ predications of a different type, namely *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predications like 'this is a human' or 'this is a god' [1028a17].

2. *Per se* 'being' refined

Having distinguished the *per se* from the *per accidens* use [1017a7-8], and discussed the *per accidens* use [1017a8-22], Aristotle proceeds to discuss the *per se* use [1017a22-30]. The passage roughly divides into three sections: first, Aristotle reintroduces the *per se* use [1017a22-23]; then, he identifies different *per se* uses of 'to be' [1017a23-27]; finally, he exemplifies one such use by way of three statements [1017a27-30].

Lines 1017a23-27 are particularly controversial: the main source of disagreement among commentators is whether they are meant to introduce different uses of the 'is' of predication or of the 'is' of existence; there is also room for disagreement among different adherents to the existential reading. In what follows, I articulate a particular version of the predicative reading of this passage: the different *per se* uses of 'to be' should be construed as different kinds of genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication; they are at least eight different kinds of way in which a substance may be said to 'be F' or (equivalently) in which an attribute may be predicated of a substance. Specifically, Aristotle subscribes to the following view, which I will refer to as 'Categorial OM':

> a substance may be said to 'be F' in virtue of being what it is, of being thus-and-so qualified, of being thus-and-so quantified, of being thus-and-so relative to something, of acting or of being affected in such-and-such a way, of being in a certain place, or of being at a certain time.[72]

2.1

I will start by situating my proposal in relation to several available interpretations of 1017a23-30.

[72] I take it that this list need not be exhaustive but is possibly open-ended.

In this passage, Aristotle undeniably refines the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use by drawing a further distinction between several *per se* uses of 'to be'. In doing so, he may be drawing either of two distinctions.

On one possible reading, he discerns different kinds of way in which something might be said to 'be F'. On a determinate version of this elliptical predicative reading, which is propounded by Ross (1924: 307), Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication, such as '*human* is a certain type of animal' (which signifies that something is a certain type of substance) and '*pallor* is a certain type of colour' (which signifies that something is a certain type of quality).

On an alternative interpretation, which seems to be endorsed by the majority of commentators, Aristotle discerns different kinds of way in which something might be said to 'exist', such as 'a substance exists' and 'a quality exists'. The existential reading is open to different formulations, hinging on different assumptions concerning the relationship between the 'is' of existence and the 'is' of predication. On one such reading, which is propounded by Owen (1965: 76, 82), Aristotle identifies different uses of the 'is' of existence, corresponding to different uses of the 'is' of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication.[73] On an alternative existential reading, which is propounded by Kirwan (1993: 140-143), Aristotle identifies different uses of the 'is' of existence, corresponding to different uses of the 'is' of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication.[74]

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[73] Owen's argument roughly runs as follows: (P1) for something to *exist* is the same as to *be what it is*; (P2) different types of categorial being (substances, qualities, quantities, relatives, etc.) are said to 'be what they are' in different ways from one another; hence, (C) different types of categorial being (substances, qualities, quantities, relatives, etc.) are said to 'exist' in different ways from one another. For instance: for a human to *exist* is to *be a certain type of substance*, whereas for pallor to *exist* is to *be a certain type of quality*; being a certain type of substance is different from being a certain type of quality; hence, what it is for a human to exist is different from what it is for pallor to exist, so that a human and pallor are said to 'exist' in different ways from one another. While ground-breaking at the time of its inception, Owen's proposal has been increasingly criticised over time. For instance, we may doubt that Aristotle accepts P1, since he distinguishes the question of whether something is, sc. is *simpliciter* or exists, from the question of what something (essentially) is: on which point, see §I.1.1.2. This has led some commentators, like Charles, to subscribe to a more cautious existential reading of 1017a22-30: on this view, Aristotle distinguishes between different uses of the existential 'is' which broadly correspond *but cannot be strictly reduced* to different uses of the 'is' of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication (2002: 111-114).

[74] An elaborate defence of this reading has been recently offered by Menn (2021: 205-217). Menn's argument roughly runs as follows: (P1) a true statement of the form 'x is F', wherein 'x' signifies a substance, entails a corresponding true statement of the form 'F-ness exists', and vice versa; (P2) a substance is said to 'be F' in different ways depending on which type of attribute is predicated of it; hence, (C) F-ness is said to 'exist' in

While each of the above readings deserves a more extensive discussion, I am inclined to reject each of them, for reasons which I have already laid out in §II.1.1. As we saw, lines 1017a27-30 exemplify the *per se* use of 'to be' through three predicative statements: they are 'human is walking', 'human is staying-healthy', and 'human is cutting'; each of these statements qualifies as a *per se*$_3$ or genuine but not as a *per se*$_1$ or essential predication. This tells equally strongly against Ross' version of the predicative reading and against Owen's determinate version of the existential reading of 1017a22-27. On the other hand, it does lend plausibility to a version of the predicative reading, other than Ross': on this reading, Aristotle means to distinguish between different kinds of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication, such as '*human* is cultivated' [1017a9] and '*human* is walking' [1017a29]; for, presumably, the former signifies a way for a substance to be qualified whereas the latter signifies a way for a substance to act. To be sure, this is still not enough to altogether rule out the existential reading which is favoured by Kirwan: adherents to this reading may accept that Aristotle explicitly distinguishes between different kinds of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication; in addition, they may insist that Aristotle implicitly draws a corresponding distinction between different kinds of existential statement. However, additional considerations suggest that it is neither desirable nor necessary for us to accept this interpretation. For a start, Aristotle does not exemplify the *per se* use of 'to be' through any existential statements: hence, we need not presume that he means to distinguish between different ways in which things are said to 'exist'. Nor should we do so: if we did, we would need to accept certain inconsistencies between Δ7, on the one hand, and Z1 on the other; however, these inconsistencies are intolerable. For example, we would need to accept that

different ways, depending on which type of attribute is predicated of a substance. For instance: if it is true to say that a substance is literate or that a substance is walking, it is also true to say that literacy exists or that *walking* exists, and vice versa; however, a substance is said to 'be F' in different ways when it is said to 'be literate' and to 'be walking' (for in the former case it is said to 'be thus-and-so qualified' whereas in the latter case it is said to 'act in such-and-such a way'); hence, literacy is said to 'exist' in one way (which is proper to qualities) whereas *walking* is said to 'exist' in another way (which is proper to actions). Though I agree that Aristotle endorses P2, it bears pointing out—as Menn himself seems to acknowledge (2021: 207)—that Aristotle does not explicitly endorse P1, in Δ7. Hence, he does not obviously endorse C.

different types of non-substantial attribute, like *cultivation* (i.e. a certain type of quality) and *walking* (i.e. a certain type of action), are said to 'be' *per se* in different ways from one another: this obviously presupposes that non-substantial attributes are said to 'be' *per se*, which is precisely what Aristotle goes on to deny in Z1 [1028a20-25]; this looks particularly puzzling, since Z1 clearly begins with a cross-reference to Δ7.

To sum up: the different *per se* uses of 'to be' need not and indeed should not be construed as different types of existential statement; on the other hand, they can be plausibly construed as different types of *per se*$_3$ predication. In what follows, I will motivate and refine this interpretation.[75]

2.2

Lines 1017a22-23 reintroduce the *per se* use of 'to be': roughly put, Aristotle claims that certain things are said to 'be' *per se*.[76]

Presumably, this is to say that substances are *per se*$_3$ subjects of predication: indeed, in each of Δ7's examples of *per se* 'being', an attribute is predicated of a substance; moreover, substances are expressly identified as genuine or *per se*$_3$ subjects of predication in the *Posterior Analytics* [A4, 73b5-10; A19, 81b24-29; A22, 83a1-20].

A particularly controversial aspect of lines 1017a22-23 concerns the relationship which *per se* beings are supposed to bear to what Aristotle here calls 'the figures of predication (τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας)'. Though Aristotle clearly construes this as a relation of signification, at least

[75] Yet another interpretation of 1017a22-30 is offered by Judson (2019: 129-130), who takes Aristotle to be making the following claim: items in different categories (i.e. substances, qualities, quantities, relatives, etc.) are fundamentally different types of being, meaning (presumably) that they are not species of one and the same genus of *being*; indeed, there is no such thing as a single genus of *being* or of *what is* [B3, 998b22-27]. On my preferred reading of the passage, this is not exactly what Aristotle is claiming, but rather something which he is presupposing, throughout 1017a22-30.

[76] "Those things which the figures of predication signify (ὅσαπερ σημαίνει τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας) are said (λέγεται) to 'be' (εἶναι) *per se* (καθ' αὑτὰ)" [1017a22-23]. I take 'εἶναι' to serve as the explicit complement-term of 'λέγεται' and 'καθ' αὑτὰ' to qualify how the complement-term attaches to the subject-term. What is less clear is how we should interpret the inner syntactical structure of the subject-term, namely the relative clause 'ὅσαπερ σημαίνει τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας': on my preferred reading of the passage, which I shortly proceed to set out, 'τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας' serves as the subject-term of 'σημαίνει'.

two points call for further clarification. First: what sort of thing is a figure of predication?[77] Secondly: do figures of predication signify *per se* beings, or rather the other way around?[78] These are admittedly difficult questions which cannot be settled conclusively at the present stage: here, I will simply offer what I take to be a plausible answer, based on some of Aristotle's remarks in *Met.* Δ and *A.Po.* A.[79]

An earlier passage of Δ6 [1016b31-1017a3] indicates that the figures of predication are kinds: indeed, items sharing the same figure of predication are supposed to be one in genus (ἕν γένει) with one another. Still, the passage is admittedly vague as to what kinds of thing the figures of predication are supposed to classify. On my preferred reading, they are different kinds of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication, such as '*human* is cultivated' [Δ7, 1017a9] and '*human* is walking' [Δ7, 1017a29]. On the one hand, each of these two predications signifies a *per se* being, for each of them signifies a substance being F. On the other hand, they signify different kinds of *per se* being, for they signify different kinds of way for a substance to be F: presumably, the former signifies a way for a substance to be qualified, whereas the latter signifies a way for a substance to act.[80]

This suggestion looks plausible on two main textual grounds. First, it is compatible with some of Aristotle's remarks in *A.Po.* A22 [83a20-23]: having distinguished *per se*$_3$ from *per accidens*$_3$ predication, Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of way in which an

[77] Some commentators construe the figures of predication as different kinds of attribute, like qualities and quantities (Kirwan, 1993: 140). Others construe them as different kinds of predicate, namely different unsaturated expressions of the form 'is F', like 'is thus-and-so qualified' and 'is thus-and-so quantified' (Menn, 2021: 206-208).

[78] Some commentators take *per se* beings to signify the figures of predication (Kirwan, 1993: 140), whereas others take the figures of predication to signify *per se* beings (Menn, 2021: 188, 198).

[79] On this account, the figures of predication are different kinds of genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication, namely different saturated expressions of the form 'S is F', wherein 'S' signifies a substance: thus construed, the figures of predication signify different kinds of *per se* being (rather than the other way around); indeed, different figures of predication signify different kinds of way for a substance to be F.

[80] I assume that a predication (i.e. a statement of the form 'S is F') signifies that an attribute (i.e. being F or F-ness) belongs to a subject (i.e. S). I take this assumption to be uncontroversial, since it is clearly consistent with Aristotle's official account of declarative (i.e. predicative) statements, which he lays out in the *De Interpretatione*, and which I discuss more fully in §II.3.

attribute may be predicated of a subject *per se*$_3$; one such way involves saying how a substance is qualified (ποιὸν) whereas another such way involves saying that a substance is doing something (ποιοῦν τι); presumably, the former is exemplified by predications like 'the log is pale' [83a9] and the latter by predications like 'the human is walking' [83a3-4]. Secondly, it is compatible with Aristotle's subsequent remarks at 1017a23-27, where he distinguishes between different *per se* uses of 'to be': on the reading which I go on to defend, these lines distinguish between different kinds of genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication; one such kind signifies how a substance is qualified (ποιὸν) whereas another such kind signifies a way for a substance to act (ποιεῖν); presumably, the former is exemplified by predications like '*human* is cultivated' [1017a9] and the latter by predications like '*human* is walking' [1017a29]. To sum up: both texts distinguish between different kinds of *per se*$_3$ predication; on one possible reading of Δ7, these are precisely the sorts of thing which Aristotle calls different 'figures of predication'.[81]

2.3

Lines 1017a23-27 introduce at least eight different *per se* uses of 'to be'.

P1. Things are said to 'be' *per se* in as many ways as 'to be' signifies.[82]

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[81] Before moving on, I address a peripheral though notoriously puzzling feature of 1017a27-30. There, Aristotle claims that 'human is walking' (or 'is cutting', or 'is staying-healthy') in no way differs from 'human walks' (or 'cuts', or 'stays-healthy'). The same claim is made in *De Int.* 12 [21b9-10]. To see why this point may bear emphasising within the context of Δ7, compare the statement 'human walks' [1017a29-30] with 'human is cultivated' [1017a9, 1017a14]. Unlike 'human is cultivated', 'human walks' does not obviously predicate an attribute of a substance, for it does not clearly involve a predicative use of the verb 'to be': hence—one might retort—it does not exemplify an assertion of *per se* being. Yet Aristotle would disagree with this conclusion: indeed, 'human walks' was classed as a genuine or *per se*$_3$ predication in *A.Po.* A22 [83a3-4]. Lines 1017a27-30 look like Aristotle's attempt to vindicate this choice: on his view, 'human walks' signifies the same as 'human is walking', namely that *walking* belongs to a human or that a human is walking; hence (while this may not be obvious) it signifies that an attribute belongs to a substance or (equivalently) that a substance is F. Hence, like 'human is cultivated', 'human walks' aptly exemplifies an assertion of *per se* being. For some alternative interpretations of this controversial claim, see Owen (1965: 82 n1), Kahn (1978: 255, 272 n44), Kirwan (1993: 142), and Menn (2021: 207).

[82] "Indeed (γὰρ), 'to be' (τὸ εἶναι) signifies (σημαίνει) in as many ways (ὁσαχῶς…τοσαυταχῶς) as they are said (λέγεται)" [1017a23-24]. I take it that 'λέγεται' [1017a24] has the same subject-term as the preceding 'λέγεται' [1017a22], namely 'ὅσαπερ σημαίνει τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας'. I also take it that 'λέγεται' [1017a24] has the same complement-term as the preceding 'λέγεται' [1017a22], namely 'εἶναι'. Finally, 'καθ' αὑτὰ' continues to qualify how the complement-term attaches to the subject-term. So construed, lines 1017a23-24 introduce the following claim: those things which the figures of predication signify (i.e. those things which are said to 'be' *per se*) are said to 'be' *per se* in as many ways as 'to be' signifies.

P2. ‘To be’ has at least eight different significates.

i. Different predicates have at least eight different significates.[83]

ii. ‘To be’ signifies the same as each predicate.[84]

C. Things are said to ‘be’ *per se* in at least eight different ways.

Here is a rough sketch of my interpretation of this argument, which I develop more fully in the paragraphs below.

P1 states that there are as many kinds of *per se*$_3$ predication as there are kinds of predicate. Here, a predicate is understood as an unsaturated expression of the form ‘to be F’, signifying a way for something to be F: any one predicate may be saturated in either of two ways, namely by means of a non-substance or by means of a substance term; saturating a predicate by means of a substance term yields a *per se*$_3$ predication, signifying a way for a substance to be F. P2 states that there are at least eight different kinds of predicate. Hence, C states that there are at least eight different kinds of *per se*$_3$ predication.

My interpretation of P1 relies on two main assumptions: first, Aristotle is using the verb ‘to be’ elliptically, meaning that ‘to be’ should be glossed as ‘to be F’; secondly, the type of *per se* predication which Aristotle has in mind is *per se*$_3$ predication. Assuming that this is right, P1 draws a relation of one-to-one correspondence between ways in which something may be said to ‘be F’ *per se*$_3$, on the one hand, and significates or uses of the expression ‘being F’, on the other. Aristotle’s thought is, presumably, that something may be said to ‘be F’ (whether *per se*$_3$ or *per accidens*$_3$) in one out of n number of ways: one type of being is said to ‘be F’ *per se*$_3$ (rather than *per accidens*$_3$); hence, one type of being is said to ‘be F’ *per se*$_3$ in one out of n number of ways.

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[83] “Of predicates (τῶν κατηγορουμένων) some signify τί ἐστι, others ποιόν, others ποσόν, others πρός τι, others ποιεῖν or πάσχειν, others πού, others ποτέ” [1017a24-27]. For the time being, I refrain from committing as regards the identity of these eight significates.

[84] “[For something] ‘to be’ (τὸ εἶναι) signifies the same (ταὐτὸ σημαίνει) as each of these (ἑκάστῳ τούτων, viz. τῶν κατηγορουμένων)” [1017a27].

P2 states that for something 'to be' (sc. 'to be F') may have one out of at least eight different significates or, in other words, that something may be said to 'be' (sc. to 'be F') in one out of at least eight different kinds of way. On my view, Aristotle reaches this conclusion in two steps. Sub-premiss i states that different predicates have different significates: minor differences aside, the latter coincide with what *Top*. I.9 calls 'the genera of the categories (τὰ γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν)' or simply 'the categories (αἱ κατηγορίαι)' [103b22-23, 103b37-39]; hence, for the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the aforementioned significates as 'categories'.[85] My interpretation of sub-premiss i relies on two main assumptions. First: at least within the context of Δ7, Aristotelian predicates should be construed as simple unsaturated expression of the form 'is F', 'being F', or 'to be F'. Secondly: at least within the context of Δ7, Aristotelian categories should be construed as different kinds of attribute or (in other words) as different kinds of way for something to be F. Assuming that this reading is correct, sub-premiss i states that different kinds of predicate signify at least eight different kinds of way for something to be F: some signify what something is (τί ἐστι), others how something is qualified (ποιόν), others how something is quantified (ποσόν), others how something is relative to something else (πρός τι), others how something is acting (ποιεῖν) or is being affected (πάσχειν), others where something is (πού), others when something is (ποτέ); for example, the predicate 'being cultivated' signifies the attribute *being cultivated*, namely a way for something to be qualified, whereas the predicate 'walking' signifies the attribute *walking*, namely a way for something to act.[86] Sub-premiss ii

[85] Note that the *Top.* I.9 list includes κεῖσθαι and ἔχειν, which are absent in Δ7: this may suggest that the Δ7 list is not meant to be exhaustive. It is also worth noting that, in Δ7, Aristotle separates ποιεῖν and πάσχειν through a disjunction ('ἢ') rather than the customary 'τὰ δὲ'. One possible explanation is that ποιεῖν and πάσχειν are different species of the same genus, namely κινεῖν. This would seem to agree with Z4, 1029b25. However, I will here put this issue aside, and simply treat ποιεῖν and πάσχειν as distinct categories. Note that I am narrowly interested in how the categories should be construed within the context of Δ7: I remain non-committal as to how they should be construed in other contexts, such as *Cat*. 4 and *Top.* I.9. On this subject, see (e.g.) Frede (1987: 29-48) and Malink (2007).

[86] This interpretation looks consistent with Aristotle's choice to speak of items like *being cultivated* (τὸ μουσικῷ εἶναι) as belonging to or as being truly predicated of a subject, both in Δ7 [1017a11] and in remarkably similar contexts like *A.Po.* A22 [83a12] and Z4 [1029b15]. On an alternative interpretation, which seems to be favoured by Owen (1965: 71, 77, 82) and Charles (2002: 112), different kinds of predicate signify different kinds of way for something to be essentially F, or to be what it is (τί ἐστι), namely to be a substance (οὐσία), to be a quality (ποιόν), to be a quantity (ποσόν), to be a relative (πρός τι), etc. Note, though, that the Aristotle of Δ7 clearly

states that for something 'to be' (sc. 'to be F') signifies the same as each predicate: again, this looks plausible on the assumption that Aristotelian predicates are simple unsaturated expressions of the form 'is F', 'being F', or 'to be F'. This yields the following interpretation of P2, in which for something 'to be F' signifies at least eight different kinds of way for something to be F. Depending on the predicate in question: for something to 'be F' signifies a way for something to be what it is, or to be qualified, or to be quantified, or to be such-and-such relative to something, or to be acting, or to be affected, or to be in a certain place, or to be at a certain time. Differently put: something may be said to 'be F' in virtue of being what it is, of being thus-and-so qualified, of being thus-and-so quantified, of being such-and-such relative to something, of acting or of being affected in such-and-such a way, of being in a certain place, or of being at a certain time. For example: when something is said to 'be cultivated', something is said to 'be F' in virtue of being thus-and-so qualified; when something is said to 'be walking', something is said to 'be F' in virtue of being acting thus-and-so.

With these clarifications in mind, let us turn to C. P1 states that something may be said to 'be F' *per se*$_3$ in as many ways as something may be said to 'be F'. P2 identifies at least eight different ways in which something may be said to 'be F'. It follows that something may be said to 'be F' *per se*$_3$ in at least eight different ways. In other words, Aristotle identifies at least eight different ways in which a substance may be said to 'be F'. We may call the resulting distinction 'Categorial OM'.

> A substance may be said to 'be F' in virtue of being what it is, of being thus-and-so qualified, of being thus-and-so quantified, of being thus-and-so relative to something, of

distinguishes being τί ἐστι from being ποιόν, or from being ποσόν, or from being πρός τι, etc. This choice may be interpreted in either of two ways. On the one hand, he may be distinguishing a certain (i.e. primary) way of being what it is, which consists in being a substance, from other (i.e. derivative) ways of being what it is, which consist in being a quality, or a quantity, or a relative, etc. On the other hand, he may be distinguishing a certain way of being F, which consists in being what it is, from other ways of being F, namely being qualified, or quantified, or relative to something, etc. The latter interpretation is no less plausible than the former.

acting or of being affected in such-and-such a way, of being in a certain place, or of being at a certain time.[87]

Clearly, the first kind of predication in this list qualifies as a *per se*$_3$ or genuine as well as a *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: indeed, such a predication signifies that *a substance* is F; moreover, it signifies that something *is what it is*. Thus, lines 1017a22-30 introduce the idea that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: while this insight does not play a pivotal role in Δ7, it will arguably do so in Z1 and Z4.

Interim Conclusions

Before moving on to the last two sections of Δ7, I shall present and assess two possible readings of the above stance, which I will respectively call the 'moderate' and the 'radical' reading of Categorial OM.

By way of illustration, take the statements '*human* is cultivated' [1017a9] and '*human* is walking' [1017a29]: in the former case, a substance is said to 'be F' in virtue of being thus-and-so qualified; in the latter case, a substance is said to 'be F' in virtue of acting in such-and-such a way. Suppose, now, that for a substance to be thus-and-so qualified and for it to act in such-and-such a way were different specifications of generically the same way for a substance to be F. It would follow that when a human is said to 'be cultivated' and to 'be walking' a substance is said to 'be F' in specifically different but generically identical ways. More broadly, Categorial OM would imply that a substance may be said to 'be' F in one of at least eight *specifically different* but *generically identical* ways.

[87] This also seems to be the most natural way of interpreting *A.Pr.* A 36–37 [48b2-4; 49a6-9]: something might be said to 'be' (sc. to 'be F') in as many ways as it may signify for an attribute to belong to a subject; moreover, an attribute might be said to belong to a subject in as many ways as there are categories, either genuinely (ἁπλῶς) or non-genuinely (πῇ). Here, Aristotle seems to be distinguishing between n different kinds of predicate, signifying n different kinds of way for something to be F: when they are saturated by means of a substance term, they yield n different kinds of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication, signifying different kinds of way for a substance to be F; when they are saturated by means of a non-substance term, they yield n different kinds of *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predication, signifying different kinds of way for a non-substance to be F. The resulting list of kinds of *per se*$_3$ predication quite plausibly corresponds to Δ7's: indeed, compare *A.Po.* A22 [83a21-23] with Δ7 [1017a24-27].

While nothing of what Aristotle says throughout 1017a22-30 seems to rule out this moderate formulation of Categorial OM, he likely subscribes to a more radical stance.

In Δ28, for example, he claims that those things which are said to 'be' in accordance with different figures of predication differ in genus from one another (ἕτερα δὲ τῷ γένει), to such an extent that they "will not analyse either into one another or into some one thing (οὐδὲ γὰρ ταῦτα ἀναλύεται οὔτ' εἰς ἄλληλα οὔτ' εἰς ἕν τι)" [1024b12-16]. Assuming that Aristotle's terminology remains consistent across Δ7 and Δ28 (as is clearly plausible), this passage suggests that the figures of predication signify not merely specifically but *generically different* kinds of way for a substance to be F. As we saw, different figures of predication signify different kinds of way for a substance to be F: however, the latter are *not* different specifications of generically the same way of being F; in Aristotle's words, they 'will not analyse into some one thing'.[88] Accordingly, Aristotle must subscribe to a more radical formulation of Categorial OM than the above: on his view, a substance may be said to 'be F' in one of at least eight *generically different* kinds of way. For example, when a human is said to 'be cultivated' and to 'be walking', it is said to 'be F' in two generically and not merely specifically different ways: for a human to be cultivated is a way for a substance to be qualified, whereas for it to walk is a way for a substance to act; however, for a substance to be thus-and-so qualified and for it to act thus-and-so are not species of one and the same kind of way for a substance to be F.

One may very well wonder whether Aristotle is able to motivate his endorsement of such a radical formulation of Categorial OM. To wit: why should we think that different kinds of *per se* being are generically and not merely specifically different from one another? Admittedly, Aristotle does not explicitly address this question in Δ7 and Δ28. Nonetheless, it would not be out of place for him to reply along the following lines. Let us take, for example, the two *per se* beings consisting in a human being cultivated and a human walking. For a human to be

[88] I here bracket the additional claim that different figures of predication 'will not analyse into one another'.

cultivated is a way for a quality to belong to a substance, while for a human to walk is a way for an action to be undertaken by a substance. However, for a quality to belong to a substance and for an action to be undertaken by a substance are not different species of the same kind of way for an attribute to belong to a substance: for that would presuppose that qualities and actions are different species of the same kind of *being*; however, there is no such thing as a single genus of *being*, encompassing both qualities and actions [B3, 998b22-27]. This argument obviously presupposes that quality and action are two of the highest kinds of being: while Aristotle does not explicitly make this assumption in the relevant B3 passage, the latter is certainly encouraged by several other passages of the *corpus*, including *A.Po.* A32 [88b1-3]. Crucially, this allows us to explain why the Aristotle of Δ7 is not content to distinguish between two kinds of *per se*$_3$ predication, namely between *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ (or τί ἐστι) and *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predication, but insists on drawing even further distinctions among kinds of *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predication: any two kinds of non-substantial attribute (e.g., qualities and actions) are not species of the same kind of *being*; hence, any two kinds of way for a substance to be non-essentially F (e.g., being thus-and-so qualified and being thus-and-so quantified) are not species of the same kind of way for a substance to be F.

This concludes my treatment of lines 1017a7-30. In the remainder of this chapter, I will survey the rest of Δ7, where Aristotle discusses the veridical use [1017a31-35] and distinguishes the potential from the actual use of 'to be' [1017a35-b9]. These uses are not central to my ongoing argument, which instead focuses on the relationship between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. Accordingly, the ensuing discussion is not intended to exhaust all of the exegetical questions which arise from the remainder of Δ7. Instead, I will pursue a more modest aim, which is to anchor Δ7's discussion of truth and falsity, on the one hand, and of potentiality and actuality, on the other, in the preceding discussion of *per se* and of *per accidens* being: I aim to show that, like the first two, the last two sections of Δ7 are concerned with predicative rather than (say) with existential uses of 'to be'. This naturally gives rise to the question as to

how the veridical use and the potential or actual use relate to the *per se* and to the *per accidens* use of ‘to be’. I will suggest that, like the *per accidens* use, the veridical use and the potential or actual use depend on the *per se* use of ‘to be’.

3. Veridical ‘being’

Following the discussion of the *per se* and the *per accidens* use [1017a7-30], lines 1017a31-35 introduce what I will refer to as the veridical use of ‘to be’ or veridical ‘being’.

> ἔτι τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ἔστιν ὅτι ἀληθές, τὸ δὲ μὴ εἶναι
> ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθὲς ἀλλὰ ψεῦδος, ὁμοίως ἐπὶ καταφάσεως καὶ
> ἀποφάσεως, οἷον ὅτι ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός, ὅτι ἀληθὲς
> τοῦτο, ἢ ὅτι ἔστι Σωκράτης οὐ λευκός, ὅτι ἀληθές· τὸ δ’ οὐκ
> ἔστιν ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος, ὅτι ψεῦδος.
>
> Again, for something ‘to be’ and that something ‘is’ signifies that something is true, and for something ‘not to be’ that it is not true but false, similarly as regards an affirmation and a denial: for example, ‘it is [sc. it is the case/it is true to say] that Socrates is cultivated’ [signifies] that this is true, or ‘it is [sc. it is the case/it is true to say] that Socrates is not pale’ [signifies] that it is true; whereas ‘it is not [sc. it is not the case/it is not true to say] that the diagonal is commensurate’ [signifies] that it is false.

In what follows, I will argue that something is said to ‘be’ or not to ‘be’ veridically iff a truth-value, i.e. truth or falsity, is predicated of an affirmation or of a denial. I will develop this interpretation in three steps: first, I examine how the veridical use is introduced at 1017a31-33; I then examine how the veridical use is exemplified at 1017a33-35; lastly, I examine how the veridical use may relate to the *per se* and to the *per accidens* use of ‘to be’. Though Aristotle does not explicitly say so, I will suggest that the veridical use is ultimately parasitic on the *per se* use of ‘to be’: indeed, predicating a truth-value of a declarative statement involves predicating an attribute of a subject, and ultimately of a substance, but not conversely. From this vantage point, the veridical section of Δ7 looks very much like an extension of the immediately preceding discussion of *per se* v *per accidens* ‘being’: it introduces the idea that

affirmative and negative predications of the *per se*$_3$ and of the *per accidens*$_3$ type are subjects of truth ascriptions and, by implications, that they are truth-bearers.[89]

3.1

Lines 1017a31-32 introduce the following two claims:

A. that something 'is' signifies that something is true;[90]

B. that something 'is not' signifies that something is not true but false.[91]

Thus, something is said to 'be' or not to 'be' veridically iff a truth-value (i.e. truth or falsity) is predicated of a certain type of item. But what sorts of item does Aristotle have in mind, exactly? In other words: what sort of item does Aristotle introduce as a subject of truth-ascriptions, and by implication as a truth-bearer?[92]

The most promising way for us to approach this problem is to focus on the 'ὁμοίως' clause of lines 1017a32-33: for something to 'be' signifies that it is true, whereas for something not to 'be' signifies that it is false, *similarly in the case of an affirmation and of a denial* (ὁμοίως ἐπὶ καταφάσεως καὶ ἀποφάσεως). On one plausible reading, this clause clarifies that something is said to 'be' or not to 'be' veridically iff a truth-value is predicated of either of two types of linguistic item, namely of an affirmation or of a denial. Assuming that this is correct, we may endorse the following (provisional) interpretation of claims A and B:

A. that something 'is' signifies that a declarative statement is true;

B. that something 'is not' signifies that a declarative statement is not true but false.[93]

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[89] My argument is to a large extent informed by Peramatzis' reading of this passage, as presented in a graduate seminar on ancient theories of truth at Worcester College in Hilary Term 2019.

[90] τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ἔστιν ὅτι ἀληθές

[91] τὸ δὲ μὴ εἶναι ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθὲς ἀλλὰ ψεῦδος

[92] By a 'truth-bearer', I understand the sort of item which is either true or false. By a 'subject of truth-ascriptions', I understand the sort of item which is said to be either true or false.

[93] On this reading, which is favoured by Pearson (2005) and Charles & Peramatzis (2016: 103), Δ7 ascribes truth and falsity to certain types of *linguistic* item (i.e. to affirmations and denials). Other commentators take Aristotle to be ascribing truth and falsity to certain types of *real* item. A version of this reading is endorsed by Crivelli, who

Further textual support for this interpretation can be garnered from Aristotle's own account of affirmations and denials in *De Interpretatione* 4–7. There, Aristotle defines affirmations and denials as two different types of declarative statement: a declarative statement (λόγος ἀποφαντικὸς or ἀπόφανσις) is defined as the sort of statement which signifies whether an attribute belongs or does not belong to a subject [17a23-24]; an affirmation (κατάφασις) is the sort of declarative statement which signifies that an attribute belongs to a subject, whereas a denial (ἀπόφασις) is the sort of declarative statement which signifies that an attribute does not belong to a subject [17a25-31].[94] For example: 'Socrates is pale (ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς)' is an affirmation, since it signifies that an attribute (*being pale*) belongs to a subject (Socrates); whereas 'Socrates is not pale (οὐκ ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς)' is a denial, since it signifies that an attribute (*being pale*) does not belong to a subject (Socrates) [18a2-7]. Two observations are worth keeping in mind at this point. First: Aristotle clearly treats truth and falsity as attributes of declarative statements [16b33-17a7].[95] Secondly: he clearly holds it possible to signify

likely thinks that Aristotle is ascribing truth and falsity to states of affairs: yet note that Crivelli does not motivate this suggestion (Crivelli, 2004: 45, esp. n1). A different version of this reading is endorsed by Menn, who likely thinks that Aristotle is ascribing truth and falsity to attributes like being cultivated and being not-pale: both types of attribute are said to 'be' (sc. to 'exist') in virtue of being *true of* (i.e. of belonging to) something (2021: 222-225). I take my proposed reading to be preferable on two main accounts. First, it allows us to make better sense of the 'ὁμοίως' clause of lines 1017a32-33. Secondly, it allows us to make better sense of the relationship between Δ7 and E4. In E4, Aristotle clearly claims that truth and falsity are attributes of affirmations and denials [1027b18-23]: this is precisely what he turns out to claim (or at any event to imply) in Δ7 on mine, but not on the two aforementioned rival readings, of 1017a31-35. In E4, Aristotle also quite plausibly denies that truth and falsity are attributes of real items [1027b25-28]: however, this is precisely what he turns out to affirm in Δ7 on either of the two rival readings of 1017a31-35. All of this arguably tells in favour of mine, and against either of the two rival readings of 1017a31-35, since E4 undeniably presupposes Δ7.

[94] In what follows, I focus on *simple* declarative statements. A declarative statement of this sort is unified, or is said to be 'one (εἷς)', in virtue of revealing one thing (ἕν δηλῶν) [17a15-16], i.e. in virtue of signifying *one* attribute (as holding or as not holding) of *one* subject (ἕν καθ' ἑνὸς σημαίνουσα) [18a13-14]. This should be contrasted with the sort of declarative statement which is unified in virtue of a connective (συνδέσμῳ εἷς), i.e. by being a conjunction of a plurality of simple declarative statements. Aristotle also distinguishes between different types of simple declarative statement: one such type is unified in virtue of signifying one attribute (as holding or as not holding) of one subject *per se* (ἓν καθ' ἑνὸς δηλοῦν μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός) [*A.Po.* B10, 93b35-37]. Presumably, simple declarative statements of this type should be construed as simple *per se*$_3$ predications: perhaps, they should even be construed as simple *per se*$_3$ predications of a determinate type (i.e. as simple *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ predications). However interpreted, such statements turn out to occupy a clearly central position in Aristotle's subsequent discussion of OM in Z4, as I explain in chapter IV.

[95] This passage may be interpreted in either of three ways. (1) Aristotle may be claiming that being either true or false is necessary for being a declarative statement: this seems to be suggested by 17a2-3, where he claims that a significant linguistic item is not a declarative statement unless it has the property of being either true or false (ἀποφαντικὸς δὲ οὐ πᾶς, αλλ' ἐν ᾧ τὸ ἀληθεύειν ἢ ψεύδεσθαι ὑπάρχει). (2) Aristotle may be claiming that being a declarative statement is necessary for being either true or false: this seems to be suggested by 17a3-4, where he

whether an attribute belongs or does not belong to a subject [17a26-31]. Hence: Aristotle quite plausibly holds it possible to signify that a declarative statement is true or that a declarative statement is not true (but false). This is precisely the main thrust of my proposed interpretation of claims A and B, according to which Δ7 introduces declarative statements as subjects of truth ascriptions and, by implication, as truth-bearers.[96]

In what follows, I aim to refine this interpretation in two steps: first, by examining how the veridical use of 'to be' is exemplified at 1017a33-35; then, by examining how the veridical use [1017a31-35] may relate to the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' [1017a7-30].

3.2

contrasts declarative statements with prayers, and a prayer is described as being neither true nor false (οὔτ' ἀληθὴς οὔτε ψευδής). (3) Finally, Aristotle may be making both claims. I remain non-committal on this front: however interpreted, the passage clearly introduces declarative statements as the paradigmatic types of linguistic truth-bearer.

[96] Two cautionary observations are in order at this point. (1) Declarative statements are *linguistic* truth-bearers. Admittedly, linguistic items are not the only truth-bearers within Aristotle's ontology, for truth and falsity are also clearly attributable to certain mental items, such as (certain types of) belief [*Cat*. 5, 4a10-19; *Met*. Θ10, 1051b13-15]; that said, mental truth-bearers are clearly peripheral to Aristotle's concerns in Δ7, where signification is quite plausibly approached as a language- rather than as a mind-to-world relation. The relationship between linguistic and mental truth-bearers certainly deserves further analysis: however, this topic likely falls outside of the scope of Δ7; Aristotle must reserve the right to explore it on a separate occasion, in such contexts as E4 or Θ10. There is a question as to whether linguistic and mental items are the only truth-bearers within Aristotle's ontology. For example, according to Crivelli (2004), Aristotle thinks that truth and falsity are also attributable to certain types of real (i.e. non-linguistic and non-mental) object, including states of affairs. According to Crivelli, the most unequivocal testimony for this view is to be found in Δ29 [1024b17-26] and in Θ10 [1051a34-b6]. Crivelli's proposal is nonetheless open to several objections, most of which I must put aside: most noticeably, it is particularly hard to square with E4, where (as I noted) Aristotle quite plausibly denies that truth and falsity are attributes of real objects [1027b25-28]. For his own attempt at a reconciliation of these passages, see Crivelli (2004: 65-66; 2015). For a concise and for a more extensive critique of Crivelli's proposal, see Coope (2005) and Charles & Peramatzis (2016). (2) Declarative statements are *predicatively complex* truth-bearers: an affirmation signifies that an attribute belongs to a subject, whereas a denial signifies that an attribute does not belong to a subject. One may wonder whether Aristotelian truth-bearers also include certain types of linguistic item which are not (or, perhaps: which do not straightforwardly seem to be) predicatively complex, namely existential statements and/or statements about certain types of incomposite object (i.e. the ones which Aristotle mentions in Θ10, 1051b17-18). These are important as well as extremely controversial questions, which are discussed more extensively by Crivelli (2004: 64; 99-125). Here, I am inclined to bracket them, since they are clearly irrelevant to our discussion of 1017a31-35. As we saw, Aristotle here introduces declarative statements as truth-bearers [1017a31-33]: he then seeks to clarify his position based on certain examples [1017a33-35]; though the exact syntax of these examples is to some degree controversial, each of them unequivocally qualifies as a declarative statement (i.e. as a predicatively *complex* item) by the standards of *De Int*. 4-7. For the record, my argument is meant to apply to present-tensed declarative statements, but not necessarily to future contingents (which Aristotle discusses in *De Int*. 9).

On my preferred interpretation of 1017a33-35, Aristotle offers three examples of declarative statements, two of which are signified to be true (i and ii) and one of which is signified to be false (iii).

i. *True affirmation*. That something 'is' (ὅτι ἔστι) may signify that an affirmation, e.g., 'Socrates is cultivated (Σωκράτης μουσικός, sc. ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός)', is true (ὅτι ἀληθὲς τοῦτο).

ii. *True denial*. That something 'is' (ὅτι ἔστι) may signify that a denial, e.g., 'Socrates is not pale (Σωκράτης οὐ λευκός, sc. οὐκ ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκός)', is true (ὅτι ἀληθές).

iii. *False affirmation*. That something 'is not' (τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν) may signify that an affirmation, e.g., 'the diagonal is commensurate (ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος, sc. ἔστι ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος)', is false (ὅτι ψεῦδος).

Though incomplete, the list can be easily expanded by introducing an example of a false denial, such as the one below.

iv. *False denial*. That something 'is not' (τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν) may signify that a denial, e.g., 'Socrates is not pale (Σωκράτης οὐ λευκός, sc. οὐκ ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκός)', is false (ὅτι ψεῦδος).[97]

[97] On an alternative interpretation of 1017a33-35, Aristotle exemplifies the veridical use by way of certain declarative statements involving an emphatic use of 'to be' or 'not to be': for example, 'Socrates *is* cultivated (ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός)' signifies that the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated (Σωκράτης μουσικός <ἔστι>)' is true (ὅτι ἀληθὲς τοῦτο), whereas 'the diagonal *is not* commensurate (οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος)' signifies that the affirmation 'the diagonal is commensurate (ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρός <ἔστι>)' is false (ὅτι ψεῦδος). The most elaborate defense of this reading seems to be Pearson's (2005: 206, n9): other adherents to (some or other version of) the emphatic reading include Kahn (1966: 250) and Kirwan (1993: 146). On my view, this proposal is undercut by the way in which declarative statements are exemplified in *De Int*. 7. Let us assume that Pearson's interpretation of the syntax of all of Δ7's examples is correct: then Δ7's 'ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός' exhibits the same syntactical structure as *De Int*. 7's 'ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς' whereas Δ7's 'οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος' exhibits the same syntactical structure as *De Int*. 7's 'οὐκ ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς' [17b28-29; 18a2-3]; now, in *De Int*. 7, 'ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς' does not signify that 'Socrates is pale' is true, but merely that Socrates is pale, whereas 'οὐκ ἔστι Σωκράτης λευκὸς' does not signify that 'Socrates is pale' is false, but merely that Socrates is not pale; hence, Δ7's 'ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός' cannot signify that 'Socrates is cultivated' is true, but must instead signify that Socrates is cultivated, whereas Δ7's 'οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ διάμετρος σύμμετρος' cannot signify that 'the diagonal is commensurate' is false, but must instead signify that the diagonal is not commensurate. Hence, the foregoing proposal fails to explain how truth or falsity may be ascribed to an affirmation (or, for that matter, to a denial). Moreover, when compared with *De Int*. 7, Pearson's attempt to distinguish statements like 'ἔστι Σωκράτης μουσικός', which allegedly involves an emphatic use of 'to be', from statements like 'Σωκράτης μουσικός <ἔστι>',

Thus construed, lines 1017a33-35 lend further support to the proposed interpretation of 1017a31-33: something is said to 'be' veridically iff truth is predicated of a declarative statement, i.e. iff either an affirmation or a denial is signified to be true (examples i and ii); something is said not to 'be' veridically iff falsity is predicated of a declarative statement, i.e. iff either an affirmation or a denial is signified to be false (examples iii and iv).[98]

The main challenge confronting the proposed reading is to explain how a declarative statement is signified to be true, in one case, or to be false, in another. Clearly, a declarative statement is signified to be true when something is said to 'be', or (equivalently) when something is affirmed, whereas it is signified to be false when something is said not to 'be', or (equivalently) when something is denied. But *what* is being affirmed, when a declarative statement is signified to be true? And *what* is being denied, when a declarative statement is signified to be false?

I can envisage two slightly different answers to this question: given my present aims, it is not essential for me to commit to either of them; suffice it to present them as two plausible, not incompatible alternatives, both of which make for an elliptical predicative interpretation of the veridical use of 'to be'. Interpretation 1 runs as follows.

A1. That a declarative statement 'is' (sc. 'is true') signifies that said declarative statement is true: e.g., 'it is true to state that Socrates is cultivated' signifies that 'Socrates is cultivated' is true.

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which does not, looks artificial: more broadly, we have no reason to assume that the copula occupies an emphatic position in the examples of declarative statements which are given at 1017a33-35.

[98] At this point, it is appropriate to comment on a potentially controversial aspect of claim B (§II.3.1): that something 'is not' signifies that a declarative statement is not true but false. This is not obviously unproblematic. For it is one thing to signify that an attribute (here, truth) does not belong to a subject (here, a declarative statement) and another thing to signify that its contrary attribute (here, falsity) belongs to that same subject. This problem can perhaps be solved based on the following two assumptions. First, a declarative statement is either true or false. Secondly, truth and falsity are a particular type of contrary pair, in that they lack intermediates. Thus, at least in the case of a declarative statement, *to be false* is the same as *not to be true*, and to signify that a declarative statement is not true is the same as to signify that it is false. Assume, for example, that 'Socrates is pale' is not true: for 'Socrates is pale' not to be true is the same as to be false; hence, to signify that 'Socrates is pale' is not true is the same as to signify that 'Socrates is pale' is false. The same is not true of prayers: a prayer is neither true nor false; thus, for a prayer not to be true is not the same as to be false; accordingly, to signify that a prayer is not true is not to signify that it is false.

B1. That a declarative statement ‘is not’ (sc. ‘is not true’) signifies that said declarative statement is not true but false: e.g., ‘it is not true to state that Socrates is cultivated’ signifies that ‘Socrates is cultivated’ is not true but false.

Interpretation 2 runs as follows.

A2. That something ‘is’ (sc. ‘is the case’) signifies that a declarative statement is true: e.g., ‘it is the case that Socrates is cultivated’ signifies that ‘Socrates is cultivated’ is true.

B2. That something ‘is not’ (sc. ‘is not the case’) signifies that a declarative statement is not true but false: e.g., ‘it is not the case that Socrates is cultivated’ signifies that ‘Socrates is cultivated’ is not true but false.

On interpretation 1, a declarative statement (e.g., ‘Socrates is cultivated’) is signified to be true or to be false when a certain type of *linguistic* item—namely that same declarative statement (e.g., ‘Socrates is cultivated’)—is said to be true or to be false. On interpretation 2, a declarative statement (e.g., ‘Socrates is cultivated’) is signified to be true or to be false when a certain type of *real* item—namely a real combination or division of simpler items (e.g., the non-substantial compound consisting in Socrates being cultivated)—is said to be the case (viz. to obtain) or not to be the case (viz. not to obtain). Since these alternatives strike me as equally plausible, I will not endorse either of them to the exclusion of the other, but endorse the following, comprehensive interpretation of claims A and B.

A. That something ‘is’ (sc. that something ‘is true’/that something ‘is the case’) signifies that a declarative statement is true: e.g., ‘it is (sc. it is true to state/it is the case) that Socrates is cultivated’ signifies that ‘Socrates is cultivated’ is true.

B. That something ‘is not’ (sc. that something ‘is not true’/that something ‘is not the case’) signifies that a declarative statement is not true but false: e.g., ‘it is not (sc. it is not true

to state/it is not the case) that Socrates is cultivated' signifies that 'Socrates is cultivated' is not true but false.[99]

Interim Conclusions

To conclude, I will turn to the relationship between Δ7's account of veridical 'being' and the preceding account of *per se* and *per accidens* 'being'.

Earlier on, I argued that the *Metaphysics*' distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* 'being' corresponds to the *Posterior Analytics*' distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication. Both types of predication clearly qualify as affirmations by *De Interpretatione* standards, for each of them signifies that an attribute belongs to a subject: the former (e.g., 'the human is cultivated') signifies that an attribute belongs to a substance; the latter (e.g., 'the just thing is cultivated') signifies that an attribute belongs to a non-substance. Affirmations are one type of declarative statement, and as such are one of the two paradigmatic types of linguistic truth-bearer for Aristotle. It follows that predications of the *per se*$_3$ and of the *per accidens*$_3$ type are among the paradigmatic types of truth-bearer for Aristotle: indeed, any such predication is either true or false. This point is clearly borne out at the outset of *A.Po.* A22, where Aristotle explicitly appeals to the notion of truth, precisely as he introduces the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication: it is possible to *truly assert* that the human is walking and so too that the pale thing is walking (ἔστι γὰρ εἰπεῖν ἀληθῶς τὸ λευκὸν

[99] On interpretation 1, a declarative statement is signified to be true by being said to be true or not to be true by being said not to be true. One might retort that, on interpretation 1, claims A and B turn out to be *trivially* true. However I do not think that this charge undercuts the plausibility of interpretation 1. Indeed, this way of predicating truth or falsity of a declarative statement is entirely consistent with the way in which an attribute is predicated of a subject, according to *De Int*. 4–7. Take, for example, the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated': it involves a subject-term, which signifies Socrates, and a predicate-term, which signifies being cultivated; hence, it signifies that Socrates is cultivated. Compare this with the affirmation 'it is true to state that Socrates is cultivated': it involves a subject-term, which signifies the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated', and a predicate-term, which signifies being true; hence, it quite plausibly signifies that the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated' is true. Now take the denial 'Socrates is not cultivated': it involves a subject-term, which signifies Socrates, and a predicate-term, which signifies not being cultivated; hence, it signifies that Socrates is not cultivated. Compare this with the denial 'it is not true to state that Socrates is cultivated': it involves a subject-term, which signifies the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated', and a predicate-term, which signifies not being true; hence, it quite plausibly signifies that the affirmation 'Socrates is cultivated' is not true but false. By following the same strategy, it would be possible to illustrate how truth and how falsity might be ascribed to a denial (e.g., to 'Socrates is not cultivated').

βαδίζειν […] καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον βαδίζειν), though of course the human is said to 'be walking' in one way (οὕτως, sc. ἁπλῶς or *per se*$_3$) and the pale thing in another (ἐκείνως, sc. μὴ ἁπλῶς or *per accidens*$_3$) [83a1-4]. To sum up: at 1017a7-30, Aristotle distinguishes *per se*$_3$ from *per accidens*$_3$ predications of the affirmative type; each type of affirmation is either true or false; at 1017a31-35, Aristotle acknowledges and expands upon this point, by introducing affirmations and denials (i.e. declarative statements in general) as subjects of truth ascriptions and, by implication, as truth-bearers.

All of this quite strongly suggests that, on Aristotle's view, the veridical use is significantly connected with the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. What calls for clarification is the exact nature of this connection. Here, I will venture to suggest that the *per se* use is prior to or more fundamental than the veridical use of 'to be'.[100]

Take, for example, the two affirmations (i) 'Socrates is cultivated' and (ii) 'it is (sc. it is true to state/it is the case) that Socrates is cultivated'. Affirmation i is an assertion of *per se*$_3$ being, since it signifies that an attribute (*cultivation*) belongs to a substance (Socrates). Affirmation ii is an assertion of veridical being, since it signifies that a truth-value (truth) belongs to a declarative statement ('Socrates is cultivated'). Affirmation i is obviously part of affirmation ii, but not conversely: saying that 'Socrates is cultivated' is true involves saying that Socrates is cultivated; however, saying that Socrates is cultivated does not involve saying that 'Socrates is cultivated' is true. More broadly, predicating a truth-value of a declarative statement involves predicating an attribute of a substance, but not conversely. In this sense, the veridical is parasitic on the *per se* use of 'to be'. We can corroborate this result by turning our attention to the relationship between assertions of *per accidens* being, such as (iii) 'the just thing is cultivated',

[100] I take it that lines 1017a33-35 involve at least two unequivocal examples of *per se* 'being' and 'not being': first, 'Socrates is cultivated', namely a (true) *per se*$_3$ affirmation; secondly, 'Socrates is not pale', namely a (false) *per se*$_3$ denial. In addition, I take it that Aristotle is treating 'the diagonal is commensurate' as an example of *per se* 'being' for illustrative purposes: let us assume, for the sake of argument, that lines are substances [Δ8, 1017b17-21; Z2, 1028b16-18]; if so, we may regard 'the diagonal is commensurate' as a (false) *per se*$_3$ affirmation. For the sake of simplicity, I focus on those cases wherein a truth-value is predicated of a *per se*$_3$ affirmation, like 'Socrates is cultivated', rather than a *per se*$_3$ denial, like 'Socrates is not pale'.

and their corresponding assertions of veridical being, such as (iv) 'it is (sc. it is true to state/it is the case) that the just thing is cultivated'. Affirmation iii is obviously part of affirmation iv, but not conversely: saying that 'the just thing is cultivated' is true involves saying that the just thing is cultivated; however, saying that the just thing is cultivated does not involve saying that 'the just thing is cultivated' is true. Note, though, that affirmation iii is parasitic on some or other assertion of *per se*$_3$ being, such as 'Socrates is cultivated': indeed, predicating *cultivation* of the just thing involves predicating it of an underlying human, such as Socrates, but not conversely. In such cases, then, the veridical use is doubly parasitic on the *per se* use of 'to be'.[101]

To sum up: the veridical use is either directly or indirectly parasitic on the *per se* use of 'to be'. Further support for this suggestion could perhaps be garnered from other chapters of the *Metaphysics*, such as E4 and Θ10, which are undeniably connected to Δ7. Since an accurate exegesis of these controversial texts is obviously out of my current focus, though, I will put them aside, and proceed to examine the last section of Δ7.[102]

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[101] There are at least two ways of construing the relationship between the *per accidens* and the veridical use of 'to be'. On the one hand, we may have reasons to regard the veridical use as a certain type of *per accidens* use of 'to be': indeed, something is said to 'be' *per accidens* iff an attribute is predicated of a non-substance; moreover, something is said to 'be' veridically iff truth is predicated of a certain type of non-substance (i.e. a declarative statement). On this point, see in particular *Cat*. 5 [4a10-b19], where Aristotle assumes that declarative statements, such as 'someone is sitting', are not substances. On the other hand, we may have reason to regard the veridical and the *per accidens* as distinct uses of 'to be': indeed, in each of Δ7's examples of *per accidens* 'being', an attribute is predicated of a real (viz. non-linguistic or mind-independent) item, such as the cultivated thing; by contrast, something is said to 'be' veridically iff an attribute is predicated of a certain type of linguistic item, namely of a declarative statement. Furthermore, Aristotle himself seems to treat the *per accidens* and the veridical as two distinct uses of 'to be' in E2: indeed, see the contrast between 'ἓν μὲν' and 'ἕτερον δὲ' in 1026a33-35. In order to strike a middle ground between these two approaches, we may distinguish between two types of *per accidens* use of 'to be': the former is exemplified by ordinary *per accidens*$_3$ predications, such as 'the just thing is cultivated', wherein an attribute is predicated of a real type of non-substance; the latter is exemplified by veridical *per accidens*$_3$ predications, such as 'it is (sc. it is true to say/it is the case that) the just thing is cultivated', wherein an attribute is predicated of a linguistic type of non-substance; intuitively, the former type of *per accidens* use of 'to be' is prior to the latter.

[102] I have specifically in mind E4 [1027b28-1028a33] and Θ10 [1051a34-b6]. On one possible interpretation (Charles & Peramatzis, 2016: 124-138), these passages indicate that *per se* or categorial being is prior to veridical being: first, Aristotle seems to distinguish what is either true or false from what is strictly (τῶν κυρίων, 1027b31) or most strictly (τὸ δὲ κυριώτατα, 1051b1); secondly, Aristotle seems to identify what is strictly or most strictly with what is said to 'be' *per se* or in accordance with the figures of predication (κατὰ τὰ σχήματα τῶν κατηγοριῶν: on which point, compare the two aforementioned passages with 1026a33-b2); finally, Aristotle is wont to use the expressions '(most) strictly' and 'primarily' interchangeably (on which point, see, for instance, *Cat*. 5, 2a11-14; 2b37-3a1).

4. Potential and actual ‘being’

Aristotle concludes Δ7 by distinguishing between what, for the sake of convenience, I shall call the ‘potential’ and the ‘actual’ use of the verb ‘to be’ [1017a35-b9].

ἔτι τὸ εἶναιση-
μαίνει καὶ τὸ ὂν τὸ μὲν δυνάμει ῥητὸν τὸ δ’ ἐντελεχείᾳ (1017b1)
τῶν εἰρημένων τούτων· ὁρῶν τε γὰρ εἶναί φαμεν καὶ τὸ δυ-
νάμει ῥητῶς ὁρῶν καὶ τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ, καὶ τὸ ἐπίστασθαι
ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ δυνάμενον χρῆσθαι τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ τὸ
χρώμενον, καὶ τὸ ἠρεμοῦν καὶ ᾧ ἤδη ὑπάρχει ἠρεμία καὶ (5)
τὸ δυνάμενον ἠρεμεῖν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οὐσιῶν· καὶ
γὰρ Ἑρμῆν ἐν τῷ λίθῳ φαμὲν εἶναι, καὶ τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς
γραμμῆς, καὶ σῖτον τὸν μήπω ἀδρόν. πότε δὲ δυνατὸν καὶ
πότε οὔπω, ἐν ἄλλοις διοριστέον.

Again, for something ‘to be’ and something’s ‘being’ signifies what is potentially, on the one hand, and what is actually, on the other, among these aforementioned things: for we assert both that which sees potentially and that which sees actually to ‘be seeing’, and in the same way both that which is capable of using knowledge and that which is using it to ‘know’, and both that to which rest already belongs and that which is capable of resting to ‘rest’. And similarly as regards substances: indeed, we assert both Hermes to be in the stone and the half of the line [to be in the whole line] and that which is not yet ripe to be wheat. When a thing is or is not yet capable must be determined elsewhere.

The passage roughly divides into three sections. (1) Aristotle claims that something may be said to ‘be’ in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually [1017a35-b2]. (2) This distinction, which I will call ‘Modal OM’, is illustrated through several examples [1017b2-8]. (3) Aristotle promises to examine the conditions under which something is or is not capable (sc. presumably,

capable of being) on a separate occasion [1017b8-9]. My aim in what follows is to interpret Modal OM by examining the way in which it is exemplified at 1017b2-8. On that basis, I will make two main claims. First, Δ7 consistently exemplifies Modal OM by way of predicative statements: hence, Δ7 quite plausibly distinguishes a potential from an actual use of the 'is' of predication; whether Aristotle distinguishes a potential from an actual use of the 'is' of existence is an additional question, which cannot be settled on the basis of Δ7 alone. Secondly, Δ7 explicitly distinguishes between two ways in which Modal OM may be exemplified: on my view, this contrast is more fully developed in Θ6; accordingly, I will distinguish between two applications of Modal OM, one of which relies on Aristotle's hylomorphic account of substance, and the other on his account of change. To conclude, I will comment on the relationship between Modal OM and Global OM: I will suggest that the potential and the actual use depend on the *per se* use of 'to be'; indeed, 'potentially' and 'actually' are copula-modifiers, meaning that they signify how a complement-term attaches to a subject-term, and ultimately to a substance-term.[103]

4.1

Lines 1017a35-b2 introduce the following claim.

> For something 'to be' signifies that something is in either of two ways: in one way (τὸ μὲν), it signifies that it is potentially (δυνάμει); in another way (τὸ δὲ), it signifies that it is actually (ἐντελεχείᾳ).[104]

The same claim—which, for the sake of simplicity, I will refer to as 'Modal OM'—may be equivalently formulated as follows.

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[103] I gloss over lines 1017b8-9: these are most naturally understood as a cross-reference to Δ12 [1019a32-b15 et 1019b21ff], or Θ7 [1017b8-9], or perhaps to both chapters; the cross-reference is obviously not meant to clarify the distinction between potential and actual 'being'.

[104] For the time being, I deliberately abstain from fixing the referent of 'something'. Is it *some or other* type of being, or rather *a certain* type of being, among those which have been discussed up to this point (τῶν εἰρημένων τούτων)? If the latter: is it a *per se*, or a *per accidens*, or a veridical being?

> Something is said to 'be' in either of two ways, namely potentially (κατὰ δύναμιν) or actually (κατ' ἐντελέχειαν).[105]

Even so reformulated, Modal OM lends itself to either of two main interpretations, depending on whether we assume that the passage relies on an absolute/existential or on an elliptical predicative use of 'to be'.

a. Something is said to 'exist' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.
b. Something is said to 'be F' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.

In order to decide in favour of either interpretation, it is useful to examine how this distinction is exemplified at 1027b2-8: as I go on to show, each example tells strongly in favour of the elliptical predicative but not obviously in favour of the existential reading.

Lines 1017b2-6 introduce the following three statements.

i. Something is said to 'be seeing' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.[106]
ii. Something is said to 'be knowing' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.[107]
iii. Something is said to 'be resting' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.[108]

Thus construed, each statement exhibits the following syntactical form.

> Something is said to 'be F' in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually.

[105] See Θ1 [1045b32-1046a1].

[106] We state (φαμεν) both what is potentially seeing (τὸ δυνάμει ὁρῶν) and what is actually seeing (τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ) to 'be seeing (ὁρῶν εἶναί)'. Where 'τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ' is an ellipsis for 'τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ ὁρῶν'.

[107] We state (φαμεν) both what is capable of using its knowledge (τὸ δυνάμενον χρῆσθαι τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ) and what is using it (τὸ χρώμενον) to 'know (ἐπίστασθαι)'. Where 'τὸ δυνάμενον χρῆσθαι' is a notational variant of 'τὸ δυνάμει χρώμενον' and 'τὸ χρώμενον' an ellipsis for 'τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ χρώμενον'. Note that, unlike statements i and iii, statement ii does not obviously involve a predicative use of 'to be'. However, it can be suitably recast in predicative terms. Indeed, recall 1017a27-30, where Aristotle remarked that 'human walks' is no different from 'human is walking'. Similarly, saying that something 'knows' is no different from saying that something 'is knowing'.

[108] We state (φαμεν) both what is capable of resting (τὸ δυνάμενον ἠρεμεῖν) and that to which rest already belongs (ᾧ ἤδη ὑπάρχει ἠρεμία) to 'be resting (ἠρεμοῦν, sc. ἠρεμοῦν εἶναί)'. Where 'τὸ δυνάμενον ἠρεμεῖν' is a notational variant of 'τὸ δυνάμει ἠρεμοῦν' and 'ᾧ ἤδη ὑπάρχει ἠρεμία' of 'τὸ ἐντελεχείᾳ ἠρεμοῦν'.

Each statement is meant to exemplify Modal OM: indeed, see 'γὰρ' at 1017b. Hence, lines 1017b2-6 lend direct support to the elliptical predicative interpretation of Modal OM: something is truly said to 'be F' in either of two ways, namely in virtue of being potentially F or in virtue of being actually F; in other words, an attribute is truly predicated of a subject in either of two ways, namely in virtue of potentially or of actually belonging to that subject.

Lines 1017b6-8 exemplify Modal OM by way of three additional statements. Though Aristotle does not explicitly resort to the notions of potentiality and actuality at this stage, the contrast is easily borne out due to the nature of each example.

iv. The stone is said to 'be Hermes-shaped' [potentially rather than actually].[109]

v. The line is said to 'be bisected' [potentially rather than actually].[110]

vi. The seed is said to 'be wheat' [potentially rather than actually].[111]

In each case: something is truly said to 'be F' in virtue of being potentially rather than actually F; in other words, an attribute is truly predicated of a subject in virtue of potentially rather than

[109] We state (φαμεν) the shape of Hermes (Ἑρμῆν) to 'be in the stone (ἐν τῷ λίθῳ εἶναι)'. A virtually identical version of this example is given in Θ6 [1048a32-35]. In the main text, I have set it out in what I take to be a more regimented though essentially equivalent form. Indeed, the stone should be regarded as the material substrate which admits of possessing some or other shape, such as Hermes': on which point, see Δ23 [1023a11-16]. For a different, existential construal of the example, see Kirwan (1993: 40, 146-147).

[110] We state (φαμεν) the half line (τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς γραμμῆς) (to 'be'). According to some commentators, this (clearly compressed) example involves an existential use of 'to be': we state the half line to 'exist' (Kirwan,1993: 40, 146-147; Menn, 2021: 248). On my preferred reading, it involves an elliptical use of 'to be': we state (φαμεν) the half line (τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς γραμμῆς) to 'be in the whole line (ἐν τῇ ὅλῃ εἶναι)'. Indeed, as I go on to point out, this is precisely how the example is presented in Θ6. Also see Δ11, where Aristotle notes that the half line (ἡ ἡμίσεια) is potentially prior to the whole line (τῆς ὅλης) [1019a4-11]. Again, in the main text, I have opted for a more regimented though essentially equivalent formulation of the example: to say that the half line is in the whole line is presumably to say that the (whole) line is bisected.

[111] We state (φαμεν) that which is not yet mature (τὸν μήπω ἀδρόν) (to 'be') wheat (σῖτον). In the main text, I have paraphrased 'that which is not yet mature' as 'the seed'. Indeed, see Θ8, where Aristotle states that the seed (τὸ σπέρμα) is potentially wheat (δυνάμει ἐστιν σῖτος) [1049b19-23]. Again, for a different, presumably existential construal of the example, see Kirwan (1993: 40). Menn thinks that the example lends itself to a predicative as well as to an existential reading. He translates the example as follows: "[we say] that what is not yet ripe *is* grain" (2021: 246), where 'what is not yet ripe' serves as the subject-term (S) and 'grain' as the complement-term (F). Menn makes a further point: given that S is F, Aristotle is willing to infer that F (or, perhaps: F-ness) exists (ibid: 248). When applied to example iii, this yields the following result: what is not yet ripe is potentially grain; therefore, grain (or, perhaps: grain-ness) potentially exists. To be sure, Menn takes the inference to be "implicit" (ibid): indeed, there is no textual evidence to suggest that Aristotle draws any such inference in this passage. Therefore, I am inclined to follow a more cautious approach, and to simply opt for a predicative reading of the example.

actually belonging to that subject. As such, the three examples lend support to the elliptical predicative reading of Modal OM.

To sum up: the examples of lines 1017b35-b8 lend support to the elliptical predicative reading of Modal OM; on the other hand, they do not obviously lend support to the existential reading of Modal OM; whether Aristotle endorses an existential version of Modal OM is an additional question, which cannot be settled based on Δ7 alone.[112]

4.2

As we saw, Aristotle exemplifies Modal OM by way of two sets of predicative statements: in each case, the verb 'to be' serves to join a subject-term with a complement-term; in each case, the adverbs 'potentially' and 'actually' act as copula-modifiers, meaning that they qualify how a complement-term attaches to a subject-term. In this regard, the two sets of examples clearly resemble each other: still, Aristotle insists that they are not altogether identical; the three examples which are given at 1017b2-6 differ from the three examples which are given at 1017b6-8 since (unlike the former) the latter concern substances.[113] Since Aristotle does not elaborate on this suggestion, there is some room for speculation about the nature of this distinction: in what follows, I will not survey all possible alternatives, but will present what I take to be the most plausible interpretation.

[112] Aristotle holds that what is actually F and what is potentially (rather than actually) F are said to 'be F' in different ways from one another. This obviously presupposes that being actually F is different from being potentially F: though Aristotle does not motivate this contention in Δ7, he does so in Θ3 [1046b29-1047a24]. Furthermore: given Aristotle's account of multivocity, Modal OM quite plausibly presupposes that potentiality and actuality are not species of one and the same genus; in other words, for something to be actually F and for something to be potentially F are not merely specifically but *generically different* kinds of way for something to be F. Aristotle seems to acknowledge this in Θ6, by discouraging his readers from looking for definitions of potentiality and actuality [1048a35-37]. In what follows, I ignore how the potentiality–actuality distinction is further refined in such writings as *DA* II.1 [412a22-27] and II.5 [417a21-b1], where Aristotle distinguishes primary from secondary actualities.

[113] See 'ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οὐσιῶν', 1017b6.

On my view, Aristotle is anticipating a distinction which he will develop more fully in Θ6.[114] There, the distinction between potentiality and actuality is illustrated in two consecutive stages. In the first, introductory stage, it is exemplified by means of the following three statements [1048a30-35].

vii. The wood is said to 'be Hermes-shaped' potentially [rather than actually].[115]

viii. The line is said to 'be bisected' potentially [rather than actually].[116]

ix. What is not contemplating is said to 'be knowledgeable' potentially [rather than actually].[117]

The distinction is then exemplified by means of the following distinctions [1048a35-b4].

x. What is building v what is skilled in building.[118]

xi. What is awake v what is asleep.[119]

xii. What is seeing v what has closed eyes but has sight.[120]

xiii. What has been separated from the matter v the matter.[121]

xiv. What has been finished off v what is unwrought.[122]

At this second, more advanced stage, Aristotle draws on this list in order to distinguish between two ways in which potentiality may differ from actuality. The examples resemble each other

[114] Note, though, that the potentiality–actuality distinction is drawn differently across Δ7 and Θ6: Δ7 distinguishes δύναμις from ἐντελέχεια; Θ6 distinguishes δύναμις from ἐνέργεια. Whether these are two different guises for one and the same distinction or two different distinctions is a complex question which hinges on the relationship between the notions of ἐντελέχεια and ἐνέργεια, which is amply discussed by Beere (2009).

[115] We state (λέγομεν) Hermes (Ἑρμῆν) (to 'be') in the wood (ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ) potentially (δυνάμει).

[116] We state (λέγομεν) the half line (τὴν ἡμίσειαν) (to 'be') in the whole line (ἐν τῇ ὅλῃ) since the latter could be bisected (ὅτι ἀφαιρεθείη ἄν).

[117] We state (λέγομεν) what is not (sc. what is not actually) contemplating (τὸν μὴ θεωροῦντα) (to 'be') knowledgeable (ἐπιστήμονα) should it be capable of contemplating (ἂν δυνατὸς ᾖ θεωρῆσαι).

[118] τὸ οἰκοδομοῦν ν τὸ οἰκοδομικόν.

[119] τὸ ἐγρηγορὸς ν τὸ καθεῦδον.

[120] τὸ ὁρῶν ν μῦον μὲν ὄψιν δὲ ἔχον.

[121] τὸ ἀποκεκριμένον ἐκ τῆς ὕλης ν τὴν ὕλην.

[122] τὸ ἀπειργασμένον ν τὸ ἀνέργαστον.

inasmuch as they each exhibit the following structure: the item on the left exemplifies what is actually F; the item on the right exemplifies what is potentially but not actually F [1048b4-6]. The examples nonetheless differ as follows. On the one hand (see x, xi, and xii), Aristotle distinguishes what is actually undergoing a change (κίνησις) from what possesses an unexercised capacity for undergoing that change (δύναμιν): assume that for something to be Φ-ing is to undergo some or other type of change; for something to be actually Φ-ing, then, is not the same as to be potentially (rather than actually) Φ-ing. On the other hand (see xiii and xiv), he distinguishes a fully formed substance (οὐσία) from some type of unformed matter (τινα ὕλην): for matter to be actually enformed is not the same as to be potentially (rather than actually) enformed. On Aristotle's view, these are analogically though not generically identical ways in which what is potentially F may differ from what is actually F [1048b6-9].[123]

There are clearly strong parallels between Δ7 [1017b2-8] and Θ6 [1048a30-b9]. First, there is significant overlap between the examples whereby the potentiality–actuality distinction is exemplified across the two chapters: examples i and ii from Δ7 are virtually identical to examples ix and xii from Θ6; examples iv and v from Δ7 are virtually identical to examples vii and viii from Θ6. Secondly, both chapters underscore that the potentiality–actuality distinction may be instantiated in either of at least two ways, one of which is tied to the notion of substance. That said, Θ6 goes beyond Δ7 in two respects.

First: Δ7 alludes to but does not clearly elucidate the connection between the potentiality–actuality distinction and the notion of substance; Θ6 arguably fills this gap by explicitly resorting to hylomorphic notions. One way for something to be F is for matter to be enformed: matter may be enformed in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually; thus, one way for something to be potentially or to be actually F is for matter to be potentially or to be actually enformed. Though Aristotle does not explicitly invoke the nature–craft distinction in either

[123] Given my current aims, it is not necessary for me to discuss the possible grounds or implications of Aristotle's appeal to the notion of analogical sameness. For a dedicated discussion of this topic, see Makin (2006: 128-135)

chapter, it seems safe to regard a herm (example iv or vii) as an artificial and a grain of wheat (example vi) as a natural hylomorphic compound: it also seems safe to assume that natural hylomorphic compounds are substantial compounds; whether artificial hylomorphic compounds also qualify as substantial compounds is a more controversial question which I must bracket; assuming that they do not, they nonetheless serve to illustrate certain features of substantial compounds, since they share the latter's hylomorphic structure. Either way, examples iv and vi clearly illustrate the potentiality–actuality distinction in hylomorphic terms: in one case, matter is said to 'be enformed' in virtue of being potentially though not actually enformed; this is true in the case of artificial as well as of natural hylomorphic, and therefore of substantial compounds.[124]

Secondly: while examples iv, v, and vi are explicitly unified via the notion of substance, Δ7 does not explicitly state what, if anything, unifies examples i, ii, and iii; Θ6 arguably fills this gap by resorting to the notion of change. One way for something to be F is for a subject to undergo a change: a subject may undergo a change in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually; thus, one way for something to be potentially or to be actually F is for a subject to be potentially or to be actually changing. What bears emphasising is that Θ6 operates under a fairly generous conception of change, which need not strictly conform to the more fine-grained account which we encounter in *Phys.* III.1 [201a9-15; 201a25-29; 201b3-5]: at least, this is true of the aforementioned portion of Θ6; the more fine-grained account may very well be at work throughout 1048b18-35, where Aristotle famously distinguishes changes* (κινήσεις), like housebuilding, from activities (ἐνέργειαι), like seeing.[125] Under the more generous conception, a change may consist in a change*, like housebuilding (x), or an activity, like waking (xi) or

[124] Though example v is less straightforward, it does not necessarily undercut this suggestion. Perhaps, on Aristotle's view, bisecting a line is at least alike to imposing a certain type of form onto a certain type of matter, insofar as it involves delimiting it. It is also worth noting that lines were regarded as substances by some of Aristotle's predecessors [B5, 1002a20-23; Δ8, 1017b17-21]. From this vantage point, a line may serve a similar illustrative function as a herm: it allows us to illuminate certain salient features of substantial hylomorphic compounds (e.g., how the latter exemplify the potentiality–actuality distinction).

[125] On which point, also see *Phys.* II.2 [201b29-33] and *NE* X.4.

seeing (xii): though activities are not changes* they nonetheless resemble changes* in the following respect; for something to undergo a certain change* or to undertake a certain activity are different kinds of way for it to be Φ-ing. With these considerations in mind, let us look back to Δ7. According to examples i and ii, something is said to 'be seeing' or to 'be knowing' either potentially or actually. Seeing and knowing look very much like different types of activity: though activities are not changes*, they certainly qualify as changes under the more generous conception; as such, seeing and knowing can still be used in order to illuminate certain salient features of changes*, such as the way in which the latter exemplify the potentiality–actuality distinction. According to example iii, something is said to 'be resting' not only when it is actually resting but also when it is potentially rather than actually resting. Resting looks very much like the sort of state which something is in, or like the sort of activity which something is undertaking, precisely while it is not (actually) undergoing a change* [*Phys.* II.1, 192b21-23]. From this vantage point, then, example iii exhibits an even stronger reliance on the notion of change: something is said to 'be resting' not only when it is actually resting but also when it is actually undergoing a certain type of change* (e.g., since he is capable of resting, a house-builder is said to 'be resting' even when he is actually building a house).[126]

To sum up: Δ7 distinguishes potentiality from actuality, but also between two kinds of way in which potentiality may differ from actuality; in other words, Δ7 distinguishes between two types of potentiality–actuality distinction, one of which is tied to Aristotle's hylomorphic account of substance and the other to his account of change. What I wish to emphasise, though, is that Δ7's discussion of the potentiality–actuality distinction *does not* presuppose familiarity with either account. In Δ7, the potentiality–actuality distinction is set out in predicational terms: like '*per se*' and '*per accidens*', 'potentially' and 'actually' adverbially qualify how an attribute

[126] For the sake of accuracy, I have chosen to invoke the distinction between changes* and activities. However, I have also chosen not to interpret it. Indeed, this is a notoriously controversial topic, which falls outside of the scope of our ongoing discussion. For a seminal discussion of this topic, see Ackrill (1997: 142-162).

belongs to a subject. In addition, Aristotle's account of predication does not presuppose familiarity with his hylomorphic account of substance or his account of change. In fact, we may think that the latter presuppose the former: Aristotle may draw on predicational notions in order to illustrate what it is for matter to be enformed or what it is for a subject to undergo a change; indeed, this is precisely what he seems to do in Θ6 by observing that each case involves an attribute belonging to a subject (τοῦτο ἐν τούτῳ […] τόδ' ἐν τῷδε, 1048b6-9).[127] In addition, Aristotle recurrently resorts to the notions of potentiality and actuality in order to describe the relationship between matter and form throughout *Met.* H. He also recurrently defines change in terms of potentiality and actuality over the course of *Phys.* III.1. I take it, then, that the potentiality–actuality distinction need not be understood in terms of Aristotle's more fine-grained accounts of substance and of change. That said, the two accounts may contribute toward refining this distinction, by allowing us to better appreciate the range of ways in which potentiality may differ from actuality. Again, this suggestion seems to be very much in line with Aristotle's own procedure in Θ6: the distinction is first introduced by means of examples vii, viii, and ix, and then by means of examples x, xi, xii, xiii, and xiv; though present in the latter stage, the notions of substance and of change are absent in the former.

This observation is particularly important since it allows us to underscore the abstract and therefore open-ended character of the potentiality–actuality distinction. Though Aristotle's hylomorphic account of substance and his account of change may very well pick out two salient applications of this distinction, they need not exhaust the range of all possible ways in which potentiality may differ from actuality: indeed, for something to be potentially rather than actually F may consist in being potentially rather than actually qualified, or quantified, etc. in

[127] For parallel expressions, see Z4 [1030a14-16] and Z5 [1030b16-20].

some way or other; for instance, something may be potentially rather than actually pale, or five feet tall, etc.[128]

Interim Conclusions

In §II.4.1, I suggested that Modal OM has a significant predicational backdrop: on Aristotle's view, something may be said to 'be F' in either of two ways, namely in virtue of being potentially F or in virtue of being actually F. In §II.4.2, I sought to refine this suggestion by discerning two ways in which what is potentially F may differ from what is actually F: in one way, for something to be potentially rather than actually F is for a certain type of matter to be potentially rather than actually enformed; in another way, it is for a certain type of subject to be potentially rather than actually undergoing a certain type of change. Drawing on this suggestion, I aim to address two additional questions concerning 1017a35-b9, which naturally arise when the passage is situated within the overall context of Δ7.

As we saw, Aristotle not only distinguishes between various uses of 'to be' but is also sensitive about their possible interconnections. In particular, and as I argued in §II.1, the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' are not only distinct, but also hierarchically connected with one another, inasmuch as the former is prior to the latter. On my view, this gives rise to at least two questions.

1. How do the potential and the actual use relate to the aforementioned uses of 'to be'?
2. How do the potential and the actual use of 'to be' relate to one another?

Aristotle touches upon, but does not exhaustively address question 1, at 1017a35-b1. There, he states that an attribute may be predicated of a subject in either of two ways, namely potentially or actually. He also identifies the subject in question with one of those items which have been

[128] On this point, see Θ3 [1046b29-1047a24]: being potentially F is different from being actually F; this is true of changes (including changes*, like building, and activities, like perceiving) [1046b29-1047a17]; it is also true of the other categories (ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων κατηγοριῶν) [1047a17-24].

discussed up to this point (τῶν εἰρημένων τούτων). Presumably, this need not be identified with a *per se*$_3$ to the exclusion of a *per accidens*$_3$, or vice versa, but may be identified with either type of subject of predication. Assuming that this suggestion is correct, it makes for a quite generous reading of Modal OM.

> An attribute is said to belong to either of two types of subject (namely to a substance or to a non-substance) in either of two ways (namely potentially or actually).

For instance: we may say that something is potentially rather than actually resting; on the one hand, we may say that *a walking thing* (i.e. a non-substance) is potentially rather than actually resting, in which case *resting* is predicated of a subject potentially as well as *per accidens*$_3$; on the other hand, we may say that *a human* (i.e. a substance) is potentially rather than actually resting, in which case *resting* is predicated of a subject potentially as well as *per se*$_3$. On this reading, then, the potential and the actual use depend on the *per se* or on the *per accidens* use of 'to be': 'potentially' and 'actually' signify whether an attribute potentially or actually belongs to a subject; signifying whether an attribute potentially or actually belongs to a subject involves predicating the attribute in question of a substance or of a non-substance. Recall, then, that the *per accidens* use is in turn parasitic upon the *per se* use of 'to be': predicating an attribute of a non-substance involves predicating an attribute of a substance, but not conversely. Hence, the potential and the actual use ultimately depend on the *per se* use of 'to be': signifying whether an attribute potentially or actually belongs to a subject involves predicating the attribute in question of the subject in question and, ultimately, of a substance.[129]

[129] Whether the *per se* and the *per accidens* use are in turn independent of the potential and of the actual use of 'to be' is a more complex question which deserves further consideration. *Prima facie*, they are: predicating an attribute of a substance or of a non-substance does not necessarily involve signifying whether the attribute in question potentially or actually belongs to the subject in question; indeed, Aristotle clearly refrains from using either copula-modifier throughout the bulk of Δ7, when offering examples of *per se*$_3$ or *per accidens*$_3$ predications. From this vantage point, then, the *per se* and *per accidens* use certainly look prior to or more basic than the potential and the actual use of 'to be'. This suggestion is not invulnerable to certain challenges. Let us take, for example, the true predication 'humans are walking'. This predication is true in virtue of the fact that humans are walking. Presumably, though, it is impossible for humans to be walking, unless they are either potentially or actually walking. Thus, the predication 'humans are walking' is true in virtue of the fact that humans are either potentially or actually walking. On this basis, one may retort that the predication 'humans are walking' is in fact an elliptical

Though Δ7 does not indicate how the potential and the actual use of 'to be' relate to one another, Aristotle discusses how potentiality relates to actuality in Θ8. There, he claims that actuality is prior to potentiality in at least three ways: (i) in substance (οὐσίᾳ); (ii) in account (λόγῳ); (iii) in time (χρόνῳ) [1049b10-12].[130] Could this suggest that, on Aristotle's view, the actual is somehow prior to the potential use of 'to be'? A satisfactory reply to this question would require an in-depth analysis of Θ8's various arguments for the priority of actuality over potentiality: however, this task obviously falls outside of the scope of our reading of Δ7; hence, I will remain non-committal as to how the potential and the actual use of 'to be' relate to each other.

formulation of either of two predications, namely 'humans are potentially walking' or 'humans are actually walking'. More broadly, one may suggest that a given *per se* or *per accidens* use of 'to be' necessarily involves either a potential or an actual use of 'to be', whether explicitly or implicitly.

[130] Two cautionary notes are in order. First: like Θ6, Θ8 does not contrast δύναμις with ἐντελέχεια but rather with ἐνέργεια. Secondly: Θ8 discerns two ways in which something may be prior in time to something else; Aristotle claims that actuality is chronologically prior to potentiality in one such way alone.

Conclusions

My main aim in this chapter has been to settle on a plausible interpretation of what is arguably the most fundamental aspect of Global OM, namely the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. To that end, I have extensively drawn on Aristotle's account of predication in the *Posterior Analytics*. This has equipped us with various conceptual tools which, on my view, will continue to be useful throughout our ensuing discussion of OM.

In *A.Po.* A4, Aristotle draws at least three distinctions between *per se* and *per accidens* predication:

1. *per se*$_1$ or essential v *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential;
2. *per se*$_2$ or proper v *per accidens*$_2$ or non-proper;
3. *per se*$_3$ or genuine v *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine.

According to my interpretation of Δ7 [1017a7-30], the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' should be identified with the distinction between *per se*$_3$ and *per accidens*$_3$ predication. However, it should not be confused with the distinction between *per se*$_1$ and *per accidens*$_1$ predication, for one and the same attribute may be predicated of one and the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_1$: indeed, all of Δ7's examples of *per se* 'being' are examples of *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predication; for example, 'human is cultivated' [1017a9] and 'human is walking' [1017a29] are *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predications, since for a human to be what it is involves neither being cultivated nor walking. In addition, the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' should not be confused with the distinction between *per se*$_2$ and *per accidens*$_2$ predication, for one and the same attribute may be predicated of one and the same subject *per se*$_3$ as well as *per accidens*$_2$: indeed, most of Δ7's examples of *per se* 'being' are examples of *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_2$ predication; for example, while 'human is cultivated' [1017a9] looks like a *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ predication (for, presumably, humans are the only animals which are capable of being cultivated), 'human is walking', 'staying healthy',

and 'cutting' [1017a27-30] are *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_2$ predications, for humans are not the only animals which are capable of walking, of staying healthy, or of cutting something. This should suffice to illustrate that the three aforementioned distinctions intersect with each other in several interesting ways.

While Aristotle does not explicitly explore these in Δ7, he arguably does so in two subsequent chapters of the *Metaphysics*, namely Z1 and Z4: each of these chapters involves his endorsement of Focal OM, namely the claim that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. In what follows, I will argue that these two occurrences of Focal OM involve a refinement of Δ7's distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be'. Δ7 indicates that substances are *per se*$_3$ or genuine whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine subjects of any old type of predication, including *per se*$_1$ or essential as well as *per accidens*$_1$ or non-essential predication. Z1 and Z4 advance the more circumscribed claim that substances are *per se*$_3$ or genuine whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine subjects of a certain type of predication, namely *per se*$_1$ or essential predication. This makes for what we might call a 'predicative-essentialist' specification of Focal OM, which states that different types of being are said to 'be' (sc. to 'be what they are') in different ways from one another: substances are said to 'be what they are' *per se*$_3$ or genuinely, whereas non-substances are said to 'be what they are' *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely; indeed, saying what a non-substance is involves saying what its underlying substance is, but not conversely. In Z1 and Z4, Aristotle arguably conveys this insight by identifying substances as 'primary' subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication. As we shall see, there are two possible interpretations of this view: on one such interpretation, saying what a non-substance is involves saying what its *per se*$_2$ or proper underlying substance is, but not conversely. This makes for a philosophically plausible and, I take it, Aristotle's considered statement of the predicative-essentialist specification of Focal OM. Indeed, it is explicitly presented as a plausible account of definitional priority in Z5.

III. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Z1

Following his comprehensive discussion of Global OM in Δ7, Aristotle's main endorsement of OM, throughout the *Metaphysics*, occurs in Z1: this is arguably his most extensive discussion of the topic of the primacy of substance; it can be broken down into roughly four stages.

1. Aristotle endorses a refined version of OM, i.e. Focal OM: different types of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another; indeed, substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively [1028a10-20].

2. Aristotle raises and attempts to solve a puzzle arising from his endorsement of this refined version of OM: this leads him to conclude that substances are prior in being to non-substances [1028a20-31].

3. Aristotle discerns and attempts to elucidate several ways in which substances are prior to non-substances: in particular, he claims and attempts to clarify how the former are prior in account and in knowledge to the latter [1028a31-b2].

4. Aristotle identifies substance as the primary object of concern of ongoing debates about being and sets out to investigate it [1028b2-7].

My main aim in this chapter is to settle on a plausible interpretation of the version of Focal OM which Aristotle endorses at stage 1. Most readers of Z1 subscribe to an existential reading of this claim, according to which substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively. In what follows, I will pursue a predicative-essentialist alternative, according to which substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively. I will defend this interpretation based on a close scrutiny of stages 2, 3, and 4. Whether Aristotle also endorses an existential version of Focal OM is an additional question which cannot be settled on the basis of Z1 alone.

1. 1028a10-20

Τὸ ὂν λέγεται πολλαχῶς, καθάπερ διειλόμεθα πρό- (10)
τερον ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς· σημαίνει γὰρ τὸ μὲν τί
ἐστι καὶ τόδε τι, τὸ δὲ ὅτι ποιὸν ἢ ποσὸν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον
τῶν οὕτω κατηγορουμένων. τοσαυταχῶς δὲ λεγομένου τοῦ
ὄντος φανερὸν ὅτι τούτων πρῶτον ὂν τὸ τί ἐστιν, ὅπερ σημαί-
νει τὴν οὐσίαν. ὅταν μὲν γὰρ εἴπωμεν ποιόν τι τόδε, ἢ ἀγα- (15)
θὸν λέγομεν ἢ κακόν, ἀλλ' οὐ τρίπηχυ ἢ ἄνθρωπον· ὅταν δὲ
τί ἐστιν, οὐ λευκὸν οὐδὲ θερμὸν οὐδὲ τρίπηχυ, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπον
ἢ θεόν. τὰ δ' ἄλλα λέγεται ὄντα τῷ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος τὰ
μὲν ποσότητας εἶναι, τὰ δὲ ποιότητας, τὰ δὲ πάθη, τὰ δὲ
ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον. (20)

Being is said in as many ways as we have earlier distinguished in the writings concerning the number of ways in which things are said. For it signifies in one way what it is and a *this*, and in another way that it is a quality or a quantity or any of the other things which are so predicated. This being the number of ways in which being is said, it is clear that, among these, what is called a 'being' primarily is precisely the what it is which signifies the substance. For when we say how a *this* is qualified, we say either that it is good or that it is bad, but we do not say that it is five feet tall or that it is a human; whereas when we say what it is, we say neither that it is pale, nor that it is warm, nor that it is five feet tall, but rather that it is a human, or that it is a god. The others, on the other hand, are called 'beings' either in virtue of being quantities, or qualities, or affections, or some other such attribute, of what is [sc. of what is called a 'being'] in this way.

Stage 1 divides into roughly three steps. Aristotle:

1. endorses OM [1028a10-11];[131]

2. clarifies OM [1028a11-13];[132]

3. clarifies OM even further [1028a13-20].[133]

Based on a close scrutiny of each of these steps, I will suggest that at stage 1 Aristotle endorses the following version of OM, i.e. Focal OM.

> Different types of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another: substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively.[134]

I conclude by identifying two different interpretations of this claim, which I set out to evaluate over the rest of this chapter.

1.1

Aristotle's opening commitment to OM may be rendered in either of two ways, namely as the claim that the word 'being' is used in many ways, or that something is called a 'being' in [one out of] many ways. There is no need to settle on either rendition of OM to the exclusion of the other: instead, we may take them as notational variants of the same view.[135] Our main task is to establish how this view should be interpreted, based on Z1's two subsequent clarificatory steps.

1.2

Aristotle's first clarificatory step is to introduce the following distinction: different types of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another; specifically, substances are said to

[131] Step 1 clearly involves a cross-reference to Δ7: I will momentarily bracket this and revisit it in this chapter's Conclusions.

[132] See 'γὰρ' [1028a11].

[133] See 'φανερὸν ὅτι' [1028a14]. Step 3 involves a further clarificatory sub-step [1028a15-18]: see 'γὰρ' [1028a15].

[134] Though Aristotle does not explicitly employ focal jargon in Z1, this version of OM looks equivalent to the one which he endorsed earlier on in Γ2.

[135] On these points, see §I.1.1.2.

'be' in a different way from non-substances. In this sub-section, I will defend this suggestion by examining the text of lines 1028a11-13 and by discussing some possible ways in which they have or might be interpreted.

In order to clarify OM, Aristotle marks off two overarching significates of 'being' or 'what is':

i. τί ἐστι καὶ τόδε τι;

ii. ὅτι ποιὸν ἢ ποσὸν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον τῶν οὕτω κατηγορουμένων.[136]

On a widespread interpretation of this passage, claim i introduces two joint requirements which something must satisfy in order to qualify as a substance:

i.a. in one way, for something 'to be' signifies that it is a substance; moreover, for something to be a substance requires that it be a what-it-is (τί ἐστι)—namely an essence, or species, or form—as well as a *this* (τόδε τι)—namely a particular or individual object.[137]

The results of this reading are highly puzzling by its proponents' own admission: indeed, Aristotelian essences, species, or forms, are most intuitively understood as universal objects; however, universality and particularity look like mutually incompatible properties; hence, it is hard if not impossible to see how anything may satisfy both of the requirements for substancehood which are allegedly introduced at 1028a11-13. This leads me to pursue an alternative interpretation of claim i, which relies on a fundamentally different construal of the expressions 'τί ἐστι' and 'τόδε τι'.

First, for something to be τί ἐστι is to be the determinate type of being which it is. I take this reading to be supported by such passages of the *Organon* as *Top.* I.5 [102a31-35] and *Cat.* 5 [2b7-21]. These passages indicate that for something to be what it is (τί ἐστι) is to fall under a determinate sub-division of a given genus: for example, for a particular human to be what it is

[136] ὅτι om. A^b Al^p.

[137] Ross, 1924: 159-160; Owen, 1978: 2; Code, 1984: 7; Irwin, 1988: 202; Lewis, 2013: 15. This makes for what Menn has called the 'criteria-and-candidates' reading of Z (2011).

involves being an animal as well as being biped, or being rational, or whatever makes it a human, as opposed to a different type of animal; that is why species are more informative than genera when it comes to identifying particular substances as what they are. The same is presumably true of substance and non-substance *types*: for example, for the substance type *human* to be what it is is to be a certain type of animal, whereas for the quality type *pallor* to be what it is is to be a certain type of colour.

Secondly, something is a τόδε τι iff it is a substance. This reading is strongly encouraged by Aristotle's subsequent remarks about predication at 1028a15-18: there are several ways in which an attribute may be predicated of a *this* (τι τόδε); one such way is to identify the *this* in question as the determinate type of being which it is (τί ἐστιν); this does not consist in saying that it is thus-and-so qualified, or that it is thus-and-so quantified, but rather that it is some or other type of substance, such as a human or a god. Some may wish to set further restrictions on the range of substances which qualify as *thises*. For example, in *Cat*. 5 [3b10-23], Aristotle takes the property of *thisness* to be distinctive of particular substances, such as this or that particular human, in relation to universal substances, such as the type *human*: suppose, then, that the same conception of *thisness* were at work in Z1; it would follow that, within this chapter, something is a *this* iff it is a *particular* substance. The main reason why I wish to resist this conclusion is that Aristotle does not obviously operate under the same conception of *thisness* across the two chapters. In *Cat*. 5, *thisness* is clearly identified with *individual* subjecthood: according to this conception of *thisness*, substance types clearly fail to qualify as *thises*; for though they do qualify as subjects [3a1-6] they are not individuals (οὐ γὰρ ἕν ἐστι τὸ ὑποκείμενον ὥσπερ ἡ πρώτη οὐσία) [3b16]. However, the notion of individual subjecthood is conspicuously absent throughout Z1. What we encounter, instead, is the notion of *determinate* subjecthood: substances are the determinate types of being which underlie non-substances as subjects (ἐστί τι τὸ ὑποκείμενον αὐτοῖς ὡρισμένον) [1028a26-27]. Particular substances obviously satisfy this description: in effect, they may be especially useful for illuminating the

notion of determinate subjecthood (τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ καθ' ἕκαστον, ὅπερ ἐμφαίνεται ἐν τῇ κατηγορίᾳ τῇ τοιαύτῃ) [1028a27-28]. However, we have no reason to restrict the class of determinate subjects to that of particular substances: indeed, substance types are determinate types of being; moreover, they underlie non-substances as subjects. Suppose, then, that Aristotle were to identify the notion of *thisness* with that of determinate subjecthood: according to this conception of *thisness*, substance types would indeed qualify as *thises*. Since this looks like an equally if not even more plausible way of cashing out the notion of *thisness* in Z1, I see no reason to restrict the class of *thises* to that of particular substances. Assuming that what I have said so far is correct, I will opt for the following alternative interpretation of claim i:

i.b. in one way, for something 'to be' signifies that it is a certain type of being, namely some or other type of substance.

On this reading of claim i, Aristotle need not be taken to identify the class of substances with that of particular forms, or of individual essences, or of any comparable type of item. He is clearly committing to the view that some beings are substances, or that certain things are called 'beings' in virtue of being substances: however, this does not entail any determinate commitment as to what it is for something to be a substance, or (relatedly) as to which types of being qualify as substances. For all we know so far, the class of substances may very well include but need not be restricted to particular items, such as this or that particular human, or universal items, such as the type *human*.

Claim ii also lends itself to at least two possible interpretations:

ii.a. in another way, for something 'to be' signifies that it is thus-and-so qualified, or that it is thus-and-so quantified, or that it is F in some other non-essential way;

ii.b. in another way, for something 'to be' signifies that it is a different type of being, namely a quality, or a quantity, or some other type of predicable non-substance.

Each of these readings may be justified by appealing to different intuitions as to what Aristotle might mean by 'ποιὸν' or 'ποσὸν': for example, to call something 'ποιὸν' may be to say that something is thus-and-so qualified or that something is a quality; similarly, to call something 'ποσὸν' may be to say that something is thus-and-so quantified or that something is a quantity. Though there is certainly more to be said about the respective advantages of each of these readings, I am inclined to prefer ii.b, since, when combined with i.b, it makes for a more coherent picture of the overall argumentative strategy of 1028a10-20.[138]

This makes for the following interpretation of lines 1028a11-13.

> For something 'to be' (τὸ ὂν) signifies that something is what it is (τί ἐστι) in either of two ways: in one way (τὸ μὲν), it signifies that something is some or other type of substance (τόδε τι); in another way (τὸ δὲ), it signifies that something is a quality (ποιὸν) or a quantity (ποσὸν) or some other type of predicable non-substance.

Since these lines are obviously meant to clarify Aristotle's opening commitment to OM, we may settle on the following, preliminary interpretation of OM.

> Different types of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another, namely in virtue of being substances, or in virtue of being qualities, or quantities, or some other type of predicable non-substance.

In short: substances and non-substances are said to 'be' in different ways from one another.

1.3

Aristotle's second clarificatory step divides into roughly three sub-steps [1028a13-15; 1028a15-18; 1028a18-20]. Taken together, the first and the third sub-step clarify the way in which substances and non-substances are said to 'be', respectively: substances are said to 'be'

[138] On this point I have changed my mind with respect to a previous draft on Z1. There, I opted for ii.a, following Bostock (1994: 53) and Code (1997: 365).

primarily and non-substances derivatively. The second section, which is usually bracketed by editors, identifies three different kinds of way in which an attribute may be predicated of a substance. As a whole, the passage serves to introduce the central idea which Aristotle sets out to corroborate and refine over the rest of Z1: namely, that substances are prior to non-substances.

Aristotle begins by advancing a somewhat cryptic primacy claim: among the aforementioned types of being (τούτων), what is called a 'being' primarily (πρῶτον ὂν, sc. πρῶτον ὂν λέγεται) is precisely the what it is which signifies the substance (τὸ τί ἐστιν ὅπερ σημαίνει τὴν οὐσίαν) [1028a13-15]. On my view, this primacy claim should be interpreted as follows: something is said to 'be' primarily iff it is a substance. I take this suggestion to be supported by the remainder of 1028a13-20. Roughly put: lines 1028a15-18 indicate that non-substances are (truly) predicated of substances;[139] lines 1028a18-20 indicate that non-substances belong to the type of being which is so called primarily;[140] hence, lines 1028a15-20 indicate that substances are called 'beings' primarily.[141]

[139] Here is how I interpret 1028a15-18. An attribute may be predicated of a *this* in either of at least three different ways: one such way involves saying what it is (τί ἐστιν), namely that it is some or other type of substance, e.g., that it is a human or that it is a god; another such way involves saying how it is qualified (ποῖόν), e.g., that it is good, or bad, or pale, or warm; yet another way involves saying how it is quantified, e.g., that it is five feet tall. Thus construed, lines 1028a15-18 distinguish between three kinds of way in which an attribute may be predicated of a substance: the first is *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_1$ or *essential* genuine predication; the second and the third are different types of *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ or *non-essential* genuine predication.

[140] Here is how I interpret 1028a18-20: different types of non-substance, such as qualities and quantities, are called 'beings' (λέγεται ὄντα) in virtue of belonging to what is called a 'being' in this way (τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος, sc. τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος λεγομένου, cf. 1028a13-14), i.e. primarily (cf. πρῶτον, 1028a15).

[141] Here is my modest attempt to make sense of the cryptic 1028a13-15. Among the aforementioned types of being (τούτων), the one which is called a 'being' primarily (πρῶτον ὂν, sc. πρῶτον ὂν λέγεται) is precisely the type of being (τὸ τί ἐστιν) for which 'what it is' (τὸ τί ἐστιν) signifies the type of substance which it is (ὅπερ σημαίνει τὴν οὐσίαν). Thus, I assume that the expression τὸ τί ἐστιν is being used in two different ways: on the one hand, it designates a real item, which is said to 'be what it is'; on the other hand, it designates a linguistic expression, which signifies what the real item in question is; this switch between use and mention is accounted for by the fact that τὸ may serve as a determinate article as well as a quotational device. This proposal allows us to solve an otherwise puzzling feature of 1028a13-14, namely Aristotle's apparent choice to identify the primary type of being with a significant linguistic expression (τὸ τί ἐστιν ὅπερ <u>σημαίνει</u> τὴν οὐσίαν).

Interim Conclusions

If what I have said so far is correct, we may take lines 1028a10-20 to introduce the following claim, namely Focal OM.

Substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively.[142]

Thus formulated, Focal OM lends itself to at least two possible interpretations.

a. Substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

b. Substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Each of these readings may be justified by appealing to different intuitions as to how Aristotle employs the verb 'to be (εἶναι)' throughout 1028a10-20. For a start, Focal OM does not obviously involve a predicative use of 'to be': as it stands, it states that different types of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another; here, 'to be' does not obviously serve to join a subject-term with a complement-term. This has led several prominent commentators to subscribe to the existential interpretation of OM, whereon lines 1028a10-20 distinguish a primary from a derivative use of 'is' of existence.[143] However, this should not lead us to discard

[142] At this stage, one may perhaps wonder *which types of* substance are said to 'be' primarily: is it particular substances, or universal substances, or both? Based on 1028a10-20, it seems safe to assume that particular substances are meant to satisfy this description: Aristotle has claimed that substances are called 'beings' primarily [1028a13-15]; in order to illustrate this claim, he has resorted to certain putative examples of substances, which are most plausibly identified as particular members of the species *human* or *god* [1028a15-18]. Also see 1028a20-31: Aristotle claims that substances *are* primarily [1028a30-31]; he partly motivates this by observing that particular substances (ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ καθ' ἕκαστον) underlie non-substances as subjects [1028a25-28]. This suggests that our question should be reformulated as follows: do particular substances alone qualify as ontological primaries, or do universal substances do so as well? It is difficult if not impossible to answer this question based on 1028a10-20 alone: in effect, we are not even clear as to why particular substances should qualify as ontological primaries in the first place; lines 1028a13-20 certainly suggest a connection between the notions of primacy and subjecthood; however, the exact nature of this connection is not wholly perspicuous. For the time being, we should remain agnostic on this issue: I come back to it toward the end of §III.2.

[143] For example, see Bostock (1994), who goes as far as to discern two possible existential interpretations of OM (1994: 51-52). On one such interpretation, Aristotle distinguishes between two uses of the 'is' of existence: he holds that substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively. On another such interpretation, Aristotle distinguishes between as many uses of the 'is' of existence as there are categories: this implies that different types of non-substance (e.g., qualities, on the one hand, and quantities, on the other) are said to 'exist' in different ways from one another. The former interpretation corresponds to the existential interpretation of Focal OM which I have laid out in the main text: it is also the version of Focal OM which Bostock takes Aristotle to endorse in Z1 (1994: 54).

the latter interpretation. For all we know, Focal OM may very well involve an elliptical use of 'to be': 'to be' may serve to join a subject-term with a complement-term, which need not be made explicit for contextual reasons; in that case, it would state that different types of being are said to 'be F' in different ways from one another, or that substances and non-substances are different types of subject of predication. We should be cautious not to exclude this possibility, since lines 1028a10-20 reveal a strong interest in predicational matters, and even more specifically in *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: for something 'to be' signifies that it is either of two types of being (τί ἐστι), namely a substance or a non-substance [1028a10-13]; substance is the type of being (τὸ τί ἐστιν) which is called a 'being' primarily [1028a13-15]; one way for us to predicate an attribute of a substance is to say which type of being it is (τί ἐστιν) [1028a15-18]; non-substances are called 'beings' in virtue of being qualities, or of being quantities, or of being affections, or of being some other type of attribute of substances (τῷ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος τὰ μὲν ποσότητας εἶναι, τὰ δὲ ποιότητας, τὰ δὲ πάθη, τὰ δὲ ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον) [1028a18-20]. These may very well be taken as indications that substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: my main aim in what follows is to defend this suggestion, based on a close reading of the remainder of Z1.

2. 1028a20-31

So far, Aristotle has claimed that substances are said to 'be' primarily in relation to non-substances: this obviously presupposes that substances *are* primarily in relation to non-substances; this is precisely what Aristotle goes on to contend in stage 2.

διὸ κἂν ἀπορήσειέ τις πότερον τὸ βαδί-
ζειν καὶ τὸ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τὸ καθῆσθαι ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ὂν ἢ
μὴ ὄν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὁτουοῦν τῶν τοιούτων·
οὐθέν γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐστὶν οὔτε καθ' αὑτὸ πεφυκὸς οὔτε χωρίζε-
σθαι δυνατὸν τῆς οὐσίας, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον, εἴπερ, τὸ βαδίζον
τῶν ὄντων τι καὶ τὸ καθήμενον καὶ τὸ ὑγιαῖνον. ταῦτα δὲ
μᾶλλον φαίνεται ὄντα, διότι ἐστί τι τὸ ὑποκείμενον αὐτοῖς
ὡρισμένον· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ καθ' ἕκαστον, ὅπερ
ἐμφαίνεται ἐν τῇ κατηγορίᾳ τῇ τοιαύτῃ· τὸ ἀγαθὸν γὰρ ἢ
τὸ καθήμενον οὐκ ἄνευ τούτου λέγεται. δῆλον οὖν ὅτι διὰ
ταύτην κἀκείνων ἕκαστον ἔστιν. ὥστε τὸ πρώτως ὂν καὶ οὐ τὶ
ὂν ἀλλ' ὂν ἁπλῶς ἡ οὐσία ἂν εἴη.

For this reason one may also be puzzled as to whether *walking* and *staying-healthy* and *sitting* are each of them a being, or something which is not, and similarly for any other thing of this sort: for none of them is either of such a nature as to be *per se* or capable of being separated from the substance; if anything, *the walking thing*, *the sitting thing*, and *the thing which stays-healthy* is more of a being. However, the reason why these things appear to be beings to a greater degree is that something determinate underlies them: and this is the substance and the particular, just as is clear in such a predication; for the good thing, or the sitting thing, is not said without it. Evidently, then, it is because of this that

each of these things is as well. Hence, that which is *primarily*, and not *some* being but what *genuinely* is, would be substance.

In this section, I will present and defend an essentialist interpretation of this argument's conclusion: on this reading, Aristotle contends that substances are *the types of being which they are* primarily in relation to non-substances; in order to motivate this proposal, I will draw on Aristotle's discussion of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication in *Posterior Analytics* A4.

2.1

By way of introduction, I will break down Aristotle's argument for the ontological primacy of substance.

P1. Non-substances are ontologically dependent on substances.

Non-substances *are not* separately from, without, or (in other words) independently of their underlying substances. This is true of non-substantial attributes like *walking*, *staying-healthy*, or *sitting*: for none of them is either of such a nature as to be *per se* (οὔτε καθ' αὑτὸ πεφυκὸς) or capable of being separated from its underlying substance (οὔτε χωρίζεσθαι δυνατὸν τῆς οὐσίας) [1028a23-24]. It is also true of non-substantial compounds like *the walking thing*, *the thing which stays-healthy*, or *the sitting thing*: for none of them is called a 'being' without its underlying substance (οὐκ ἄνευ τούτου λέγεται) but *is* on account of the latter (διὰ ταύτην κἀκείνων ἕκαστον ἔστιν) [1028a28-30].

P2. Substances are not ontologically dependent on non-substances.

Substances *are* genuinely or unqualifiedly (ἁπλῶς), i.e. separately from or without non-substances [1028a31]. In short: non-substances depend upon substances for being, but not conversely; on this basis, Aristotle draws the following conclusion.

C. Substance is the primary type of being (τὸ πρώτως ὂν) [1028a30-31].

We can grant this conclusion on the assumption that Aristotle construes ontological primacy as a relation of asymmetrical independence in being: to wit, x is ontologically prior to y iff y's *being* depends on x's *being*, but not conversely. This looks consistent with Aristotle's own account of priority in Δ11, and specifically with his account of priority in substance or in nature: x is prior in substance or in nature to y iff x can *be* without y, but not conversely [1019a1-4]. It is also consistent with at least one possible interpretation of the immediately subsequent lines of Z1. There, Aristotle discerns at least three ways in which substances are called 'prior' to non-substances, namely in account (λόγῳ), in knowledge (γνώσει), and in time (χρόνῳ) [1028a31-33]. He clarifies this by saying that substances are separate from non-substantial attributes, but not conversely: τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἄλλων κατηγορημάτων οὐθὲν χωριστόν, αὕτη δὲ μόνη [1028a33-34]. We may plausibly understand this as an abstract clarification of the notion of priority in general, as opposed to an exclusive characterisation of one out of the three aforementioned types of priority: x is prior to y under respect F iff x is (or: can be) F separately from, without, or independently of y being F, but not conversely. If that is correct, lines 1028a33-34 serve to illustrate how substances are prior *in being* to non-substances: substances *are* separately from, without, or independently of non-substances, but not conversely.[144]

Thus construed, the ontological primacy of substance is still open to various possible interpretations. Most commentators—including Gail Fine (1984: 35-36), Bostock (1994: 58), and presumably Ward (2008: 115)—interpret it as what has come to be known as a 'modal-existential' account of ontological primacy (Kit Fine, 1995: 271). On this view, substances are

[144] On this point, see Peramatzis (2011: 232). For a different reading, see Bostock (1994: 57-60), who takes 1028a33-34 to narrowly clarify the notion of priority in time: this leads Bostock to identify priority in time with asymmetrical separability. It bears remarking that lines 1028a23-24 describe non-substantial attributes as not being *separable* from substances, whereas lines 1028a33-34 describe them as not being *separate* from substances. Here I will largely ignore the nature of this distinction, and simply focus on the assertoric claim that substances are *separate* from non-substances, but not conversely. I will also gloss over past academic controversies surrounding the Aristotelian notion of separation, such as the debate between Fine (1984; 1985) and Morrison (1985a; 1985b). Whether 'priority in time' and 'priority in being' are different designations for the same or for different types of priority is a further point of controversy which I will have to ignore: on this question, see Peramatzis (2011: 249-253).

ontologically prior to non-substances in that they can exist without non-substances also existing, but not conversely. This reading faces a variety of well-known challenges (Peramatzis, 2011: 233-238; Judson, 2019: 45-46). Rather than rehearse these, I will pursue an alternative reading, whereon substances are prior to non-substances in *being what they are*. On this picture of ontological primacy, x is ontologically prior to y iff *what* y is depends on *what* x is, but not conversely. According to this picture of ontological primacy, substances are ontologically prior to non-substances, due to the fact that the former underlie the latter as subjects, but not conversely: thus, for a non-substance to be the type of being which it is depends on its underlying substance being the type of being which it is, but not conversely. I will defend this reading based on Aristotle's distinction between genuine or *per se*$_3$ and non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ predication in *A.Po.* A4 [73a5-10].[145]

2.2

In such chapters as *A.Po.* A19 and A22, this distinction is exemplified by way of different types of non-essential or *per accidens*$_1$ predication, such as 'the log is pale' (a *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predication) and 'the cultivated thing is pale' (a *per accidens*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$ predication). Though A4 does not fully exemplify this distinction, the latter is clearly meant to be illustrated by reference to different types of essential or *per se*$_1$ predication: lines 73a5-10 indicate that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication; in order to motivate this distinction, Aristotle observes that non-substances depend on substances for being what they are, but not conversely. On the one hand, for a non-substance to be what it is involves having a different type of being (i.e. a certain type of substance) as a subject. This is obviously true of non-substantial attributes,

[145] The ensuing proposal meaningfully draws on, while also seeking to corroborate and expand upon, previous essentialist interpretations of the ontological primacy of substance, like Spellman's (1995: 83-99) and Peramatzis' (2011: 238-243). I defend a stricter version of Peramatzis' proposal, by arguing that non-substances depend upon substances for being the *determinate* (and not merely the *generic*) types of being which they are.

like *walking*, since for them to be what they are clearly involves belonging to a different type of being (i.e. to a certain type of substance).[146] Though it may not be as obvious, the same is also true of non-substantial compounds: for a non-substantial compound to be what it is involves being [coincidentally the same as] a different type of underlying being (i.e. a certain type of substance); for example, for a walking thing to be a walking thing involves being [coincidentally the same as] a further underlying substance (i.e. an underlying animal).[147] On the other hand, for a substance to be what it is does not involve having a different type of being (i.e. a certain type of non-substance) as a subject. For example, for the substance-type *human* to be a certain type of animal does not involve being [coincidentally the same as] a different type of underlying being (i.e. a certain type of non-substance).[148] To sum up: for something to be a certain type of non-substance involves having a certain type of substance as a further underlying subject, but not conversely; as such, non-substances depend upon substances for being the determinate types of being which they are, but not conversely.[149]

A4's account of *per se*$_3$ or genuine predication looks like a wholly adequate basis for interpreting Z1's argument for the ontological primacy of substance. This is partly due to the clear overlap between the lexicon and conceptual apparatus which Aristotle employs across these chapters. A4 indicates that substances are *per se*$_3$ or genuine (καθ' αὑτό or ἁπλῶς) whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine (κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς or μὴ ἁπλῶς) subjects of predication [73a5-10, cf. A22, 83a14-23]. Similarly, Z1 indicates that substances are genuinely or *per se* (ἁπλῶς) whereas non-substances are non-genuinely or *per accidens* (μὴ καθ' αὑτὸ) [1028a20-31]. In both chapters, this distinction is clearly underpinned by the notion of

[146] καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεται ἄλλου τινός [73b5-6].

[147] οἷον τὸ βαδίζον ἕτερόν τι ὂν βαδίζον ἐστὶ [73b6-8].

[148] ἡ δ' οὐσία, καὶ ὅσα τόδε τι σημαίνει, οὐχ ἕτερόν τι ὄντα ἐστὶν ὅπερ ἐστίν [73b8-10].

[149] Aristotle's use of the expression 'ὅπερ ἐστίν' clearly indicates his intent to distinguish genuine from non-genuine types of *essential* predication. This becomes particularly clear once we turn to his discussion of genuine and non-genuine predication in *A.Po*. A22: the substance-type *human* (a genuine or *per se*$_3$ subject of predication) is not precisely pale (ὅπερ λευκὸν) or precisely a type of pale thing (ὅπερ λευκόν τι); rather, it is precisely an animal (ὅπερ γὰρ ζῷόν) [83a34-35]. On these points, also see Rapp (2022: 49).

subjecthood: for a non-substance to be involves having a substance as an underlying subject, but not conversely; hence, non-substances depend on substances for being, but not conversely. The two chapters nonetheless differ, and in effect complement one another, under two important respects: unlike *Met.* Z1, *A.Po.* A4 explicitly cashes out the ontological aspect of this dependence relation in essentialist (rather than, say, existential) terms; unlike *A.Po.* A4, *Met.* Z1 explicitly cashes out the asymmetrical aspect of this dependence relation in terms of priority; thus, taken together, the two chapters quite plausibly indicate that substances *are what they are primarily* in relation to non-substances.

Aside from being plausible, this interpretation of stage 2 is indispensable to our reading of the remainder of Z1. At stage 3, Aristotle goes on to make at least two additional primacy claims, which I shall examine in greater detail in §III.3. First, substances are prior in account to non-substances: by that, he undeniably means that non-substances depend on substances for being called or defined as the types of being which they are, but not conversely. Secondly, substances are prior in knowledge to non-substances: by that, he quite plausibly means that non-substances depend on substances for being known to be the types of being which they are, but not conversely. Thus construed, each claim obviously presupposes that non-substances depend on substances for being the types of being which they are, but not conversely: on my proposal, this is precisely what Aristotle has claimed at stage 2.

Interim Conclusions

Assuming that what I have said so far is correct, we have strong reasons to endorse an essentialist interpretation of Z1's argument for the ontological primacy of substance. This lends considerable support to the predicative-essentialist interpretation of Focal OM which I set out in §III.1. On this interpretation, stage 1 states that substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily in relation to non-substances: this obviously presupposes that substances are prior to non-substances in being what they are; this is precisely what Aristotle turns out to argue at stage

2, on my proposed reading of 1028a20-31. Moreover, reading stage 1 against the background of *A.Po.* A4 [73b5-10] allows us to refine the predicative-essentialist interpretation of Focal OM, by analysing the notion of primacy in terms of the notion of genuine or *per se*$_3$ subjecthood. For a non-substance to be what it is involves having a certain type of substance as an underlying subject, but not conversely: hence, saying what type of being a non-substance is involves saying what type of being its underlying substance is, but not conversely; as such, non-substances depend on substances for being called what they are, but not conversely; in short, substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily in relation to non-substances. Across *A.Po.* A4 and *Met.* Z1, Aristotle conveys this distinction in roughly equivalent ways: substances are said to 'be what they are' genuinely or *per se*$_3$ and non-substances non-genuinely or *per accidens*$_3$ [73b5-10]; substances are said to 'be' (sc. to 'be what they are') primarily and non-substances derivatively [1028a10-20]. In what follows, I aim to lend further support to this suggestion based on a close reading of the two subsequent stages of Z1's discussion of the primacy of substance. Before doing so, I will comment on certain salient aspect of my proposal.

On my view, Z1 relies on the following picture of ontological primacy: x is ontologically prior to y iff what y is depends on what x is, but not conversely. The reason why substances prove ontologically prior to non-substances is that substances underlie non-substances as subjects, but not conversely: indeed, for something to be a certain type of non-substance depends on its underlying subject's being a certain type of substance, but not conversely. Assuming that this interpretation is correct, a question which naturally arises at this point is *which types of* substance prove ontologically prior to *which types of* non-substance. This problem may be formulated in either of two ways: (a) by invoking the *Categories* distinction between particular and universal substances; (b) by invoking the *Posterior Analytics* distinction between genuine or *per se*$_3$ and proper or *per se*$_2$ subjecthood. Traditionally, commentators have focussed on, but have struggled to solve, problem a: are non-substances ontologically posterior to particular

substances or to universal substances?[150] That said, Aristotle's appeal to the notion of *per se* subjecthood [1028a23] gives at least equal weight to problem b: are non-substances ontologically posterior to their mere *per se*$_3$ or rather to their *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ underlying subjects? Take, for example, the quality type *pallor*: this is a *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ attribute of corporeal substances but a *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_2$ attribute of humans. Then is *pallor* ontologically posterior to corporeal substances or to humans? Supposing that the former is the case: is it ontologically posterior to the type *corporeal substance* (i.e. a universal substance) or to particular corporeal substances? Crucially, Aristotle does not explicitly address either problem in Z1: in what follows, I will outline a possible solution to each problem; for disclosure, my proposed solutions are interdependent.

Let us start with problem a. At least on my proposed interpretation of 1028a20-31, a substance is ontologically prior to a non-substance iff the former underlies the latter as a subject, but not conversely: presumably, this condition is satisfied by particular as well as by universal substances; hence, both particular and universal substances prove ontologically prior to non-substances. This is very much in line with Aristotle's own remarks in *Cat*. 5 [2b37-3a6]: both types of substance underlie non-substances as subjects, but not conversely; hence, both types of substance relate to non-substances in the same way; presumably, that is to say that both types of substance prove ontologically prior to non-substances. What bears emphasising, on my view, is that they do so *in different though interdependent ways*. On the one hand, universal substances depend on particular substances for being ontologically prior to non-substances: indeed, for a universal substance to underlie a non-substance involves having something else, namely its particular members, as subjects. On the other hand, particular substances depend on universal substances for being ontologically prior to non-substances: indeed, for a particular substance to underlie a certain type of non-substance involves being *a certain type of* substance,

[150] According to Bostock, this is precisely "the main problem for the interpretation of Z1" (1994: 45).

or falling under a determinate substance type. For example: *pallor* does not belong to the type *corporeal substance* unless it belongs to some or other particular corporeal substance; conversely, though, *pallor* does not belong to a particular substance unless the latter is a substance of the corporeal type. Admittedly, the proposed solution to problem a presupposes a determinate solution to problem b, since it implicitly relies on the notion of proper or *per se*$_2$ subjecthood. Take, for example, the quality type *pallor*: for *pallor* to be what it is (i.e. to be a certain type of colour) involves belonging to a certain type of substance; but which type of substance, exactly? To put the problem into context, consider that *pallor* is a genuine though not a proper attribute of humans, for humans are not the only type of substance which admits of being pale; by contrast, *pallor* is a genuine as well as proper attribute of corporeal substances, for corporeal substances are the only type of substance which admits of being pale; presumably, then, for *pallor* to be what it is involves belonging to corporeal substances, including though not exclusively to humans. More broadly: non-substances are ontologically posterior to their *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ underlying subjects, or to their *proper* underlying substances. I will further motivate this proposal in §III.3, while discussing the notion of priority in account: though Aristotle does not explicitly endorse it in Z1, I will assume that it is correct. If so, we can presume that particular and universal substances are ontologically prior to non-substances in different though interdependent ways. On the assumption that ontological primacy grounds definitional and epistemic primacy, particular and universal substances will prove definitionally and epistemically prior to non-substances in an analogous way.[151]

[151] Textual support for this proposal can be garnered from *Cat*. 5 [2b1-3; 3a4-5]. There, Aristotle explicitly acknowledges that particular and universal substances somehow depend on each other for being subjects of predication: predicating a non-substantial attribute of a universal substance involves predicating it of the latter's underlying particulars (e.g., predicating *colour* of the type *body* involves predicating it of this or of that particular body); conversely, predicating a non-substantial attribute of this or that particular substance involves predicating it of the latter's species or genus (e.g., predicating *knowledge of grammar* of this or of that particular human involves predicating it of the type *human*). Tellingly, both of Aristotle's examples are cases of *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ predication: *being coloured* is a proper attribute of corporeal substances; similarly, *being knowledgeable of grammar* is a proper attribute of humans.

Having discussed the relationship between substances and non-substances, readers of Z1 may perhaps venture to ask some additional questions concerning the relationship: (i) between different types of substance; (ii) between different types of non-substance. Nor would this be unjustified. For a start, Z1 explicitly touches upon question ii: specifically, lines 1028a20-31 state that non-substantial compounds look ontologically more basic (μᾶλλον φαίνεται ὄντα) than non-substantial attributes; for example, *the walking thing* is presumably ontologically more basic (μᾶλλον τῶν ὄντων τι) than *walking*. Does Aristotle accept this endoxon? If so: why? While these are admittedly interesting questions, I am inclined to bracket them since, although Aristotle may seem to motivate his suggestion (see 'διότι', 1028a26), what he goes on to say does not so much serve to shed light on how non-substantial compounds relate to non-substantial attributes, but rather to substances: like non-substantial attributes, non-substantial compounds are ontologically dependent on substances. For our present purposes, suffice it to say that Aristotle may take certain types of non-substance to be ontologically prior to other types of non-substance. Then let us turn to question i. Though Aristotle does not explicitly address it in *Met.* Z1, he famously does so in *Cat*. 5. There, the notion of primacy is quite firmly underpinned by the notion of basic subjecthood: x is ontologically prior to y iff x underlies y as a subject, but not conversely; particular substances are basic subjects, meaning that they underlie all other types of being as subjects, but not conversely; hence, particular substances are ontologically prior to all other types of being (τὰ ἄλλα πάντα), including universal substances [2b3-6ᶜ]; indeed, this is precisely why particular substances are called 'substances' above all, chiefly, or primarily [2b15-17; 2b37-3a1]. That said, we should not be hasty to import such a rigid picture of ontological primacy into Z1. Within the context of Z1, the ontological primacy of substance is underpinned by the notion of *genuine* subjecthood: at least on my preferred interpretation of *A.Po.* A4, this notion should not be confused with the kindred notion of *basic* subjecthood, which is at work in *Cat*. 5; hence, particular substances need not be treated as the most basic types of being within the overall ontology of Z1. To wit: part of what makes

non-substances ontologically posterior to substances is that the former are different in nature or in type from the latter; however, universal substances are not different in nature or in type from their underlying particulars; hence, at least within the context of Z1, the former need not prove ontologically posterior to the latter. In fact, Z1 relies on a quite generous conception of ontological primacy, according to which universal substances may very well prove ontologically prior to particular substances, rather than the other way around. Under this conception, x is ontologically prior to y iff what y is depends on what x is, but not conversely. From this vantage point, universal substances look ontologically prior to particular substances, rather than the other way around: indeed, what a particular substance is depends on what its species or genus is, but not conversely. For example, for this or that particular human to be what it is is to be a human: thus, the type *human* makes a particular human what it is; however, the converse is obviously not true.

Based on what I have said so far, we may venture to suggest that Aristotle accepts a 'stratified' picture of ontological primacy: substances are ontologically prior to non-substances; moreover, certain types of substance (presumably, universal substances) are ontologically prior to other types of substance (i.e. to particular substances); finally, certain types of non-substance (presumably, non-substantial compounds) are ontologically prior to other types of non-substance (i.e. to non-substantial attributes). With these clarifications in mind, we may now turn to the topic of priority in account and in knowledge.[152]

[152] This 'stratified' picture of ontological priority draws on and can perhaps help to refine the one which is offered by Peramatzis (2011: 244-248). In proposing this picture, I assume that universal substances, i.e. species and genera, are responsible for making particular substances what they are. This is certainly in line with the *Categories* 5 account of substance: whether universal substances continue to play this role throughout the rest of *Metaphysics* Z is a more controversial issue; still, due to Z1's clear reliance on the overall ontological framework of the *Categories*, this assumption looks plausible within the context of this chapter.

3. 1028a31-b2

Following his discussion of ontological primacy, Aristotle discerns and discusses at least two additional ways in which substances are prior to non-substances.

πολλαχῶς μὲν οὖν λέγε-
ται τὸ πρῶτον· ὅμως δὲ πάντων ἡ οὐσία πρῶτον καὶ λόγῳ
καὶ γνώσει καὶ χρόνῳ. τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἄλλων κατηγορημά-
των οὐθὲν χωριστόν, αὕτη δὲ μόνη. καὶ τῷ λόγῳ δὲ τοῦτο
πρῶτον· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἐν τῷ ἑκάστου λόγῳ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον ἐν- (35)
υπάρχειν. καὶ εἰδέναι δὲ τότ' οἰόμεθα ἕκαστον μάλιστα, ὅταν
τί ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος γνῶμεν ἢ τὸ πῦρ, μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ποιὸν ἢ τὸ
ποσὸν ἢ τὸ πού, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτῶν τούτων τότε ἕκαστον ἴσμεν, (1028b1)
ὅταν τί ἐστι ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ ποιὸν γνῶμεν.[153]

Now, what is primary is so called in many ways: all the same, of all beings, substance is called 'primary' both in account and in knowledge and in time. For none of the other predicable items is separate, but it alone is. And in account as well this is primary: for the account of substance necessarily inheres in the account of each thing. And we think we grasp each thing to the highest degree precisely when we know what *human* or *fire* is, rather than the quality or the quantity or the location, since we also know each of these very items precisely when we know either what the quality or the quantity is.

Stage 3 can be broken down into four steps. Lines 1028a31-33 discern three ways in which substances are said to be prior to non-substances, namely in account, in knowledge, and in time. Lines 1028a33-34 quite plausibly characterise priority as a relation of asymmetrical separation (or, perhaps: separability, cf. 1028a23-25): x is prior to y under respect F iff x is F (or, perhaps:

[153] Reading πάντων (with Π) instead of πάντως (with Ab) at 1028a32.

can be F) independently of y being F, but not conversely. Lines 1028a34-36 and 1028a36-b2 clarify how substances satisfy priority in account and priority in knowledge, respectively.

It is notoriously difficult to explain what it could mean for substances to be prior in time to non-substances. In what follows, I will bracket this question, and focus on Aristotle's claim that substances are primary in account as well as in knowledge. I will conclude by remarking on how these two additional types of priority may relate to the ontological type of priority which was argued for at stage 2.[154]

3.1

Based on the abstract characterisation of priority which is offered at 1028a33-34, it seems plausible to assume that Z1 relies on the following conception of priority in account: x is prior in account to y iff saying what y is (necessarily) involves saying what x is, but not conversely. Since Aristotle holds that substances are prior in account to non-substances, he must endorse the following two claims.

i. The account which states what a non-substance is (necessarily) includes the account which states what a substance is.
ii. The account which states what a substance is does not (necessarily) include the account which states what a non-substance is.

Aristotle explicitly endorses claim i at 1028a35-36: though he does not explicitly endorse claim ii, he must do so implicitly, since priority involves asymmetry; the main aim of this sub-section is to fully spell out the details of the resulting picture of priority in account.

[154] Following Asclepius, recent commentators like Fine (1984: 35) read 'καὶ φύσει' alongside 'καὶ χρόνῳ' at 1028a33. This would allow us to include primacy in nature or in substance (i.e. the ontological kind of priority which is discussed at Δ11, 1019a2-4) among the types of primacy which Aristotle ascribes to substance in this passage. Other commentators, like Peramatzis (2011: 249-253), have proposed to simply retain 'καὶ χρόνῳ', while subscribing to a metaphorical reading of Aristotle's use of the expression 'primary in time'. By portraying his ontology as a chain of command, Aristotle may be conveying the notion that substances are ontologically prior to non-substances by speaking of them as being 'senior' or higher in rank than the latter.

For disclosure, I take lines 1028a34-36 to convey roughly the same view as lines 1028a10-20. There, Aristotle claimed that substances are said to 'be' primarily in relation to non-substances: in §III.1, I suggested that this claim may lend itself to either of two interpretations; on my preferred predicative-essentialist alternative, substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily in relation to non-substances. This looks very much like a notational variant of Aristotle's claim that substances are prior in account to non-substances (τῷ λόγῳ): for, presumably, the account in question is precisely the sort of account which states what something is (τί ἐστι). In other words: at 1028a34-36, Aristotle explicitly endorses the predicative-essentialist interpretation of Focal OM. That said, lines 1028a34-36 do not merely reiterate, but also enrich our understanding of this claim, by portraying it as a relation of account-containment: substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily in relation to non-substances; indeed, saying what a non-substance is involves saying what a substance is, but not conversely. One of the main challenges confronting readers of Z1 is to develop a theoretically plausible interpretation of this claim.

For the sake of accuracy, it is also worth remarking that, strictly speaking, lines 1028a34-36 need not be taken to introduce a claim for priority in definition. As will become clear in chapter IV, Aristotle holds that not every account qualifies as a definition: a definition (ὁρισμὸς)—or, more accurately, a defining expression (ὅρος)—is a *certain type of* true account; specifically, it is the account of a thing's essence (ὁ λόγος τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι ἑκάστῳ) [*Top.* I.5, 101b38; Z4, 1029b20 & 1029b25-26; Z5, 1031a12; H1, 1042a17]. However, the notion of essence (τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι) is not explicitly deployed throughout Z1, which instead relies on the kindred (though perhaps less theory-laden) notion of what something is or of the type of being which something is (τὸ τί ἐστιν): thus, Z1 undeniably presupposes that substances, and so too that non-substances, are beings of a determinate type; however, it does not obviously presuppose that non-substances, or for that matter that substances, have essences. For example, Aristotle would readily accept that the substance type *human* is a certain type of animal and that the quality type

pallor is a certain type of colour: however, he would not obviously accept that being a certain type of animal, or that being a certain type of colour, qualifies as a thing's essence; relatedly, he would not obviously accept that colours, or for that matter that humans, have essences. Consequently, in Z1, Aristotle need not commit as to whether the account which states what a substance or what a non-substance is qualifies as a definition. That said, he could resort to a less partisan or metaphysically charged notion of definition: on such a conception, a definition (ὁρισμὸς) need not be strictly understood as the account of a thing's essence but, more loosely, as the account of what something is (λόγος τοῦ τί ἐστι); for example, this conception of definition seems to be at work in *A.Po.* B10 [93b29]. Subject to this qualification, then, we may take 1028a34-36 to advance a thesis about definitional priority: throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will use the label 'definitional priority' in this attenuated way. With these two observations in mind, let us turn to some more obscure or even more controversial details of this thesis.

The first question confronting us is: what makes substances definitionally prior to non-substances? Though lines 1028a34-36 do not explicitly address this question, lines 1028a20-31 suggest a plausible answer by linking the notion of primacy to that of *per se*$_3$ or genuine subjecthood: for a non-substance to be what it is involves having a certain type of substance as a subject, but not conversely; hence, non-substances depend upon substances for being what they are, but not conversely; as such, substances are ontologically prior to non-substances. Lines 1028a34-36 quite plausibly introduce the definitional counterpart to his claim: saying which type of non-substance something is involves saying which type of substance its underlying subject is, but not conversely; hence, non-substances depend upon substances for being called what they are, but not conversely; as such, substances are prior in account (or: definitionally prior) to non-substances.

The second question confronting us is: which types of substance are definitionally prior to which types of non-substance? This question naturally emerges from Aristotle's attempt to spell

out the notion of definitional primacy at 1028a34-36: saying what a non-substance is involves saying what its underlying substance is or, in other words, *which type of* substance underlies it as a subject. This looks like an entirely reasonable demand: for a non-substance to be what it is involves having certain substances, but presumably not others, as subjects; accordingly, defining a non-substance must involve demarcating the class of its underlying substances. Take, for example, the quality type *pallor*: for *pallor* to be what it is (i.e. to be a certain type of colour) involves belonging to a certain type of substance; hence, saying what *pallor* is (i.e. saying that it is a certain type of colour) involves saying that it belongs to a certain type of substance; but which type of substance, exactly? What Aristotle says at 1028a20-31 suggests broadly two answers to this question. On one such approach, defining a non-substance will involve predicating it of its genuine or *per se*$_3$, though not necessarily of its proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying subjects. For example, *pallor* is a *per se*$_3$ or genuine, though not a *per se*$_2$ or proper attribute, of such different types of substance as humans or logs. This may lead one to stipulate several candidate definitions of *pallor*, including the ones below.

a. *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to humans.
b. *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to logs.

Of course, Aristotle will not accept *both* accounts as correct definitions of *pallor*: indeed, one and the same type of being may not have more than one correct definition [*Top.* VI.5, 142b35]. Nor would he accept *either* account as the correct definition of *pallor*: indeed, such a definition should successfully mark off those substances which admit of being pale from those which do not; however, neither of the proposed accounts succeeds in this respect, since *pallor* may very well belong to humans as well as to logs. In order to overcome this obstacle, one may suggest that we drop the aforementioned requirement for definitional unity, and venture to define *pallor* in either of two ways: namely, by means of a conjunction or of a disjunction of accounts a and b. On the one hand, one may venture to define *pallor* as a certain type of quality which belongs

to humans *and* logs: obviously, though, this definition will prove incorrect, should *pallor* happen to belong to humans alone or to logs alone. On the other hand, one may venture to define *pallor* as a certain type of quality which belongs to humans *or* logs. This alternative may be developed in either of two ways. The first would be to define *pallor* as a certain type of quality which belongs exclusively to humans or exclusively to logs: obviously, though, this definition will prove incorrect, should *pallor* happen to belong to humans as well as to logs. The second would be to define *pallor* as a certain type of quality which belongs to humans, to logs, or to both: obviously, though, this definition will prove incorrect, should *pallor* belong neither to humans nor to logs, but to some other type of corporeal substance.

Alternatively, Aristotle may follow a more rigid approach, whereon defining a non-substance involves predicating it of its genuine or *per se*$_3$ as well as *per se*$_2$ or proper underlying subjects. For example: *pallor* is a *per se*$_3$ or genuine as well as *per se*$_2$ or proper attribute of corporeal substances. Hence, on this stricter approach, there will be a single account of pallor.

Pallor $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to corporeal substances.

Unlike the above, this definition of *pallor* successfully marks off those substances which admit of being pale from those which do not: it does so by individuating the feature in virtue of possessing which some substances admit of being pale, and in virtue of lacking which other substances do not admit of being pale, namely corporeality.

To sum up, Aristotle may subscribe to either of two accounts of definitional priority. A non-substance is definitionally posterior to a certain type of substance, namely: (a) to its *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_2$ underlying subjects; (b) to its *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ underlying subjects. Both alternatives are arguably available to Aristotle in Z1: indeed, the notions of *per se*$_2$ and of *per se*$_3$ subjecthood are both officially introduced and exemplified in *A.Po.* A4 [73a37-b3]; moreover, as we saw in §III.2, *Met.* Z1 quite plausibly presupposes *A.Po.* A4 as part of its background. That said, Aristotle does not explicitly endorse either option in Z1: perhaps, this is due to the

introductory nature of his discussion; given his present aims, Aristotle need only state *that* substances are definitionally prior to non-substances; he may reserve the right to state *how* substances are definitionally prior to non-substances on a later occasion. Indeed, as we shall see in chapter IV, Aristotle will explicitly come back to this problem in Z4–5: there, he will contemplate both of the two aforementioned accounts of definitional priority; though he endorses the looser and flawed account in Z4, he evidently favours the stricter and correct account in Z5. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will occasionally assume the latter account of definitional priority for the sake of argument: in doing so, I do not aim to suggest that Aristotle endorses this account in Z1 (for on my view he is still non-committal), but simply to avoid certain unnecessary complications in my presentation of this chapter.[155]

3.2

Based on the abstract characterisation of priority which is offered at 1028a33-34, it seems plausible to assume that Z1 relies on the following conception of priority in knowledge: x is prior in knowledge to y iff knowing y (necessarily) involves knowing x, but not conversely.

[155] On the most natural reading of 1028a34-36, Aristotle holds the following two views: x is definitionally prior to y iff defining y involves defining x but not conversely; moreover, substances are definitionally prior to non-substances. At this stage, one may insist that substances are in their own turn definitionally posterior to their genera. Suppose, then, that a substance were definitionally posterior to its genus in the very manner which Aristotle describes at 1028a34-36: defining a substance involves defining its genus. This would imply that any given non-substance is definitionally posterior to an infinite or at any event to an intolerably vast number of substances. Indeed, defining a non-substance involves defining its underlying substance: defining this substance involves defining its genus; this genus is a certain type of substance; defining this substance involves defining its genus; and so on and so forth, either *ad infinitum* or up to a highly remote limit. In what follows, I shall not engage with this type of objection to the proposed picture of definitional priority. For a start, it bears emphasising that this objection does not target the proposed picture of definitional priority as such, but constitutes a more general preoccupation as to whether anything can be defined without giving in to an infinite regress. For example, let us define humans as a certain type of animal: suppose, now, that defining humans also involves defining animals, say, as a certain type of living being; suppose, then, that defining animals involves defining living beings; and so on and so forth. This seems to be precisely the sort of problem which Aristotle addresses in Z10 [1034b20-24]. However, an adequate solution of this problem clearly lies beyond the scope of Z1. In addition, this problem need not arise in the context of Z1: according to 1028a34-36, defining a non-substance (y) involves defining its underlying substance (x); defining x certainly involves differentiating it from other types of substance (z), namely those types of substance which are not fit to underlie y as a subject; however, it need not involve defining the genus of x. For example, defining *pallor* involves demarcating those substances which admit of being pale from those which do not: to that end, we need to identify the underlying subject of *pallor* as a corporeal substance; however, we need not fully specify what it is for something to be a corporeal substance. For a more extensive discussion of this type of objection to the proposed picture of definitional priority, see Peramatzis (2011: 25-27).

Since Aristotle holds that substances are prior in knowledge to non-substances, he must endorse the following two claims.

i. Knowing a non-substance (necessarily) involves knowing a substance.

ii. Knowing a substance does not (necessarily) involve knowing a non-substance.

I take it that, throughout 1028a36-b2, Aristotle operates under what we may call an 'essentialist' conception of knowledge: under this conception, to know something—whether it be a substance or a non-substance—is to know what it is (τί ἐστι).[156] This calls for the following refinement of the proposed conception of priority in knowledge: x is prior in knowledge to y iff knowing what y is (necessarily) involves knowing what x is, but not conversely.[157] Since Aristotle holds that substances are prior in knowledge to non-substances, he must endorse the following two claims.

i. Knowing what a non-substance is (necessarily) involves knowing what a substance is.

ii. Knowing what a substance is does not (necessarily) involve knowing what a non-substance is.[158]

Assuming that this interpretation is correct, the main question confronting us at this stage is: what makes substances prior in knowledge to non-substances? Though lines 1028a36-b2 do not explicitly address this question, we may venture to answer it based on the proposed interpretation of Aristotle's argument for the ontological primacy of substance. For something to be a certain type of non-substance involves having a certain type of substance as a subject:

[156] On this point, see 1028b1-2. We know each thing (ἕκαστον ἴσμεν) precisely when we know *what* it is (τότε […] ὅταν τί ἐστι […] γνῶμεν). This is true of substances as well as of non-substances (καὶ αὐτῶν τούτων), including qualities, or quantities, etc. (ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ ποιὸν).

[157] I take Aristotle to use 'μάλιστα' interchangeably with 'πρώτως' throughout 1028a36-b2: on which point, see *Cat*. 5 [2a11-14].

[158] On this point, see 1028b36-b1. Presumably, we know something primarily (εἰδέναι δὲ […] οἰόμεθα ἕκαστον μάλιστα) precisely when we know what a *substance*—like *human* or *fire*—is (τότε […] ὅταν τί ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος γνῶμεν ἢ τὸ πῦρ) rather than when we know what a *non-substance*—like a quality, or a quantity, or a location—is (μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ποιὸν ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ πού, sc. μᾶλλον ἢ ὅταν τί ἐστι τὸ ποιὸν ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ πού γνῶμεν). The upshot of this reading is that substances are known, sc. known to be what they are, primarily in relation to non-substances. Given how primacy is spelled out at 1028a33-34, this view should be interpreted as the conjunction of claims i and ii above.

hence, knowing that something is a certain type of non-substance involves knowing that its underlying subject is a certain type of substance. For example: for the type *pallor* to be a certain type of colour involves belonging to corporeal substances; hence, knowing that *pallor* is a certain type of colour involves knowing that its underlying subject is some or other type of corporeal substance. By contrast, for something to be a certain type of substance does not involve having a certain type of non-substance as a subject: hence, knowing that something is a certain type of substance does not involve knowing that its underlying subject is a certain type of non-substance. For example: for the type *human* to be a certain type of corporeal substance does not involve belonging to colours, like *pallor*; hence, knowing that *human* is a certain type of corporeal substance does not involve knowing that its underlying subject is a certain type of colour or of coloured object.[159]

Interim Conclusions

Before turning to the final stage of Z1, I will comment on some of the most salient aspects of my proposed reading of stage 3.

On this proposal, Aristotle has offered a systematic account of the primacy of substance. At stage 3, he has claimed that substances *are said to be* and *are known to be* what they are primarily in relation to non-substances: this obviously presupposes that substances *are* what they are primarily in relation to non-substances, which is precisely what he has claimed at stage

[159] I am aware of at least one alternative reading of 1028a36-b2. On this alternative, we may know a substance in either of two ways, i.e. by knowing what it is, or by knowing how it is qualified, or quantified, etc.; that said, we know a substance primarily precisely when we know what it is (εἰδέναι δὲ τότ' οἰόμεθα ἕκαστον μάλιστα, ὅταν τί ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος γνῶμεν ἢ τὸ πῦρ), rather than when we know how it is qualified, or quantified, etc. (μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ποιὸν ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ πού) [1028a36-b1]. As it stands, though, this reading obviously fails to account for Aristotle's remarks at 1028b1-2. There, he goes on to claim that we also know a non-substance, whether it be a quality or a quantity, precisely when we know what it is (καὶ αὐτῶν τούτων τότε ἕκαστον ἴσμεν, ὅταν τί ἐστι ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ ποιὸν γνῶμεν). This naturally gives rise to the following question: how does our knowledge (a) of what a *substance* is compare to our knowledge (b) of what a *non-substance* is? On the alternative reading of 1028a36-b2, Aristotle does not explicitly address this question. This has led proponents of the alternative reading to opt for either of two alternatives. For example, Bostock seems to think that the two types of knowledge (a and b) are equally basic (1994: 62), whereas Witt seems to think that the former is more basic than the latter (1989: 57-58). These complications do not arise on my preferred reading of the passage.

2. Hence, at least as I have construed it, the ontological primacy of substance grounds their definitional and epistemic primacy.[160]

In §III.2, I defended a generous picture of ontological primacy, whereon non-substances are ontologically posterior to particular as well as to universal substances. Assuming that their ontological priority grounds their definitional priority, it seems natural to presume that non-substances are definitionally and epistemically posterior to particular as well as to universal substances. Yet some commentators may wish to resist this conclusion: specifically, they may wish to deny that non-substances are definitionally or epistemically posterior to particular substances; indeed, this obviously presupposes that substances can be known and defined; however, Aristotle seems to deny this across certain passages of the *Metaphysics* [B6, 1003a13-15; Z15, 1039b27-30]. These are controversial passages, to which I cannot do full justice in the course of my reading of Z1: here, I will simply outline certain reasons why they do not conclusively tell against my suggestion. For a start, Aristotle need not be suggesting that particular substances are altogether unknowable or undefinable: instead, he might be making a more modest claim, namely that particular substances are not definitionally or epistemically independent of everything else; for example, he might think that particular substances are not

[160] For a competing attempt to offer a systematic account of the primacy of substance, see Witt (1989: 58-62). On this picture: (a) the ontological primacy of substance grounds its definitional primacy; (b) its definitional primacy grounds its epistemic primacy; (c) by transitivity, its ontological primacy grounds its epistemic primacy. My proposal differs from Witt's under two main respects. (1) Witt and I endorse different interpretations of the ontological primacy of substance: on her view, substances are prior to non-substances in existing; on mine, substances are prior to non-substances in being what they are. Note that my proposal makes for a direct link between ontological and definitional primacy: substances *are* what they are primarily; hence, they *are said to be* what they are primarily. The same is not true on Witt's picture: assuming that substances *exist* primarily, it does not follow that substances are defined or said to *be what they are* primarily; in order to secure the inference, we would need to assume that for something to exist either wholly or at least partly consists in its being what it is; yet that is precisely to assume that substance are ontologically primary in my preferred essentialist way. (2) Witt and I endorse different interpretations of the epistemic primacy of substance, for we differently understand what it is to know a substance: on Witt's view, it is to know the account which states what a substance is (i.e. a linguistic item); on my view, it is to know what a substance is (i.e. a real item). Note that my proposal makes for a direct link between ontological and epistemic primacy: substances *are* what they are primarily; hence, they *are known to be* what they are primarily. The same is not true on Witt's picture: on her view, the ontological primacy of substance grounds its epistemic primacy indirectly, i.e. by grounding its definitional primacy. On both accounts, my proposed picture of the primacy of substance looks more economical than Witt's.

definitionally or epistemically independent of their essences, species, or forms.[161] This would be very much in line with Aristotle's own remarks in *Cat*. 5: several passages of this chapter rather clearly indicate that particular substances *are* in a way knowable and definable; however, particular substances are not definitionally or epistemically bedrock, for they are neither known nor defined independently of universal substances; indeed, we know or define a particular substance by grasping or saying *which type of* substance it is. For example, this or that particular human *is* in a way knowable and definable; however, it is not definitionally or epistemically independent of everything else, for it is known and defined in terms of its species; indeed, we know or define this or that particular human by grasping or saying that it is a human, namely a certain type of animal.[162] Presumably, though, universal substances *are* definitionally and epistemically independent of their underlying particulars: e.g., defining or knowing the type *human* involves saying or grasping that it is a certain type of animal, but does not involve saying or grasping that this or that particular human is a human; indeed, for this or for that particular human to be a human is not part of what it is for the type *human* to be a certain type of animal. Assuming that what I have said so far is correct, we may venture to suggest that Aristotle accepts a stratified account of definitional and epistemic primacy: substances are definitionally and epistemically prior to non-substances; moreover, certain types of substance (i.e. universal substances) are definitionally and epistemically prior to other types of substance (i.e. to particular substances). Whether certain types of non-substance are definitionally or epistemically prior to other types of non-substance is an additional question which Aristotle

[161] See, for example, Z10 [1035b18-20], where Aristotle states that particular compounds of form and matter (e.g., this or that particular animal) are posterior in account or in definition to their form (or to some of the latter's parts). This obviously presupposes that particular hylomorphic compounds are in a way definable. Indeed, Aristotle seems to explicitly accept this conclusion in Z11 [1037a26-29]. On these points, see Peramatzis (2011: 32-35).

[162] As regards definability, see 2a19-34, 3a7-32, and 3a33-b9: a particular substance is defined in terms of its species, and therefore in terms of the latter's genus and differentia(e). As regards knowability, see 2b7-14 and 2b29-37: a particular substance is known when we grasp the type of substance which it is, rather than (say) how it is qualified; moreover, a particular substance is better known when we grasp the specific rather than the generic type of being which it is (e.g., we are better acquainted with a particular human when we grasp that it is a human, namely *a certain type of* animal, rather than when we grasp that it is an animal *simpliciter*).

does not explicitly address in Z1: while he does so in other chapters of the *Metaphysics*, I will bracket this question.[163] Suffice it to say that, if correct, the stratified picture of definitional and epistemic primacy largely coheres with the stratified picture of ontological primacy which I presented at the end of §III.2. With these clarifications in mind, let us move to the last stage of Z1.

[163] See, in particular, M2 [1077a36-b11], where Aristotle suggests that non-substantial attributes, like *pallor*, are prior in account (though not in substance) to non-substantial compounds, like *pale human*.

4. 1028b2-7

In the final lines of Z1, Aristotle takes stock of his foregoing argument: having identified substance as the ontologically, definitionally, and epistemically primary type of being, he embarks upon a dedicated inquiry into substance.

> καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ
> πάλαι τε καὶ νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ ζητούμενον καὶ ἀεὶ ἀπορούμενον,
> τί τὸ ὄν, τοῦτό ἐστι τίς ἡ οὐσία. τοῦτο γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἓν εἶναί
> φασιν οἱ δὲ πλείω ἢ ἕν, καὶ οἱ μὲν πεπερασμένα οἱ δὲ (5)
> ἄπειρα. διὸ καὶ ἡμῖν καὶ μάλιστα καὶ πρῶτον καὶ μόνον
> ὡς εἰπεῖν περὶ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος θεωρητέον τί ἐστιν.
>
> And indeed, what has long ago, and now, and always been sought after and puzzled over—'what is being?'—is the question 'which is the substance?' For some say that it is one thing and others more than one, and some say that they are finite and others infinite. For which reason it befalls us as well to investigate chiefly, primarily, and so to speak exclusively, with respect to what is *in this way*, what it is.

My main aim in this section is to suggest that Aristotle is embarking upon what we may call an 'intensional' inquiry into substance: the primary task which confronts him is to investigate what it is for something to be a substance.[164]

[164] In what follows, I will distinguish extensional from intensional questions. Extensional and intensional questions have *prima facie* the same syntactical form: 'what is an F?' However, the syntax of this question lends itself to either of two interpretations. On either interpretation, the copula ('is') joins a subject-term with a complement-term. On the extensional interpretation, 'what' serves as the subject-term and 'an F' as the complement-term. On the intensional interpretation, 'what' serves as the complement-term and 'an F' as the subject-term. The difference between the two types of question can be illustrated by examining the difference between the two types of answer which they admit of, respectively. Take, for example, the question: 'what is an animal?' When interpreted extensionally, this question will admit of different answers, such as 'humans are animals' or 'horses are animals'. Each answer identifies a certain type of being as an animal. When interpreted intensionally, the same question will admit of at most one answer, say: 'animals are ensouled natural substances which are capable of perceiving.' This answer identifies animals as a certain type of ensouled being. More broadly: an extensional answer identifies a certain type of being as an F; an intensional answer specifies what it is for some or other type of being to be an F. Note that intensional questions do not admit of extensional answers, or conversely: for example, to say that humans are animals is not to say what it is for something to be an animal; conversely, to say that animals are ensouled natural substances which are capable of perceiving is not yet to identify a certain type of being as an animal.

At 1028b2-4, Aristotle raises two questions:

i. τί τὸ ὄν;

ii. τίς ἡ οὐσία.

Each question can perhaps be understood in either of two ways, namely extensionally or intensionally. Taken extensionally, they may be reformulated as follows:

i. what qualifies as a being;

ii. what qualifies as a substance.

Taken intensionally, they may be reformulated as follows.

i. what is it for something to be;

ii. what is it for something to be a substance.[165]

Either way, Aristotle clearly presents questions i and ii as a constant source of philosophical puzzlement.[166] Moreover, he clearly suggests that they somehow boil down to one and the same question: τί τὸ ὄν τοῦτό ἐστι τίς ἡ οὐσία. But how should we take this suggestion, exactly? To wit: is Aristotle suggesting that questions i and ii are one and the same question (a) as a matter of fact or (b) according to his predecessors and contemporary thinkers? On reading a, Aristotle turns out to be making a prescriptive claim, namely that the study of being should be identified with the study of substance: indeed, to investigate what is (which items are, what it is for them to be, etc.) is precisely to investigate what is primarily (which items are substances, what it is for them to be substances, etc.) (Berti, 2006: 84). On reading b, Aristotle is making a more

However, the two sorts of question are interconnected. For example, the answer to the intensional question of what it is to be an F seems to set certain constraints on the answers which might be given to the extensional question of which things qualify as F's: e.g., assuming that being an animal involves being capable of perceiving, we may disqualify certain types of being (e.g., trees) from being animals.

[165] On which points, see Burnyeat (2001: 12-13), Menn (2011: 165), and Rapp (2022: 40).

[166] See 'τὸ πάλαι τε καὶ νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ ζητούμενον καὶ ἀεὶ ἀπορούμενον' [1028b2-3]. The occurrence of 'ἀεὶ' in this passage is controversial. Here, I will not engage with such controversy, but simply take Aristotle to refer to questions i and ii as ones which philosophers *have* always puzzled over: this would not commit Aristotle to the view that this question is a source of *endless* puzzlement or dispute.

modest, descriptive claim, namely that the study of being has thus far been identified with the study of substance: on paper, past and contemporary thinkers have been broadly investigating what is (which items are, what it is for them to be, etc.); in fact, they have been narrowly investigating what is primarily (which items are substances, what it is for them to be substances, etc.)

Aristotle's remarks at 1028b4-6 do not tell in favour of either reading. If anything, they give rise to more questions. On Aristotle's view, his predecessors and/or contemporary thinkers have disagreed with each other as to whether there is one or more than one (primary) being. Moreover, those who have agreed that there is more than one (primary) being, have disagreed as to whether (primary) beings are limited or unlimited. However, the nature of the dispute is not sufficiently clear. Is it about whether there is *numerically* one or more than one (primary) being? Is it about whether there is *essentially* one or more than one (primary) being? Are pluralists disagreeing as to whether (primary) beings are finitely or infinitely many in number, or rather about whether there are finitely or infinitely many types of (primary) being?

Thus construed, lines 1028b2-6 call our attention to, but do not offer any clear-cut answers, to certain questions about substance. Moreover, they clearly introduce substance as the sole or at least central concern of ongoing debates about being. In the last two lines of Z1, Aristotle clearly sets out to make a contribution to this debate, by embarking on a dedicated inquiry into substance: specifically, he aims to ascertain *what is* substance (τί ἐστιν).[167] Again, this question can perhaps be understood in either of two ways. Extensionally: what qualifies as a substance? Intensionally: what is it for something to be a substance? At least based on the proposed

[167] περὶ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος θεωρητέον τί ἐστιν. Where 'τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος' is presumably used in order to designate what is *primarily* (τὸ πρώτως ὂν), i.e. substance, just like at 1028a18.

interpretation of 1028a36-b2, it would certainly be in order for Aristotle to tackle the latter, intensional question.[168]

At the present stage of his argument, Aristotle obviously takes himself to be following in the footsteps of his predecessors, by carrying out an inquiry into being (τὸ ὄν). The nature of this inquiry may be interpreted in several ways. For a start, the student of being may be asking either of the following two questions: (a) what qualifies as a being; (b) what is it for something to be. Moreover, the second question may be formulated in either of at least two ways: (b_1) what is it for something to exist; (b_2) what is it for something to be what it is. Suppose, then, that students of being were after the answer to question b_2: they seek to know what something is, or (equivalently) what it is for something to be what it is. As we know from 1028a36-b2, we know what something is chiefly or primarily when we know what a substance (rather than what a non-substance) is. Accordingly, the chief or primary task which befalls students of being (including Aristotle) is to examine what substances are, or (equivalently) what it is for something to be a substance.[169]

This task may be pursued in either of two ways. On the one hand, it may involve examining the *generic* type of being which some or other substance is: what makes something a substance as opposed to a non-substance? For example: what makes this or that particular human a substance as opposed to a non-substance?[170] On the other hand, it may involve examining the *determinate* type of being which some or other substance is: what makes something a certain type of substance, as opposed to a different type of substance? For example: what makes this or that

[168] Note that Aristotle explicitly distinguishes the extensional from the intensional question at the end of Z2, since he takes the latter to be somehow prior to the former: τίνες εἰσὶν οὐσίαι [1028b28]; ὑποτυπωσαμένοις τὴν οὐσίαν πρῶτον τί ἐστιν [1028b31-32].

[169] On which point, also see Lewis (2013: 12).

[170] This task seems to be pursued in Z3: having described substancehood in terms of subjecthood, Aristotle there claims that what substance is (τί ποτ' ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία) has been roughly sketched out (τύπῳ εἴρηται) [1029a8]. In this regard, Z3 seems to answer the intensional question which was raised at the end of Z2. It is worth remarking that, in Z3, Aristotle takes himself to have offered a *rough description* as opposed to a *correct definition* of substance: indeed, one may wonder whether such a definition is achievable at all, for substance and non-substances cannot be defined as different species of one and the same genus of being.

particular human a human, as opposed to some other type of animal?[171] Given Aristotle's earlier emphasis on definitional matters [1028a34-36], it seems safe to assume that he is at least interested in pursuing the latter task: this would involve examining the conditions under which substances are correctly defined as the determinate types of being which they are.[172]

[171] This task seems to be pursued in Z4-5, where Aristotle examines the way in which substances have essences and definitions, and therefore the way in which they are and are defined as the *determinate* types of being which they are.

[172] I have thus far glossed over a potentially puzzling feature of 1028b6-7. Here, Aristotle seems to make the following two claims: (i) the study of being consists chiefly (μάλιστα) or primarily (πρῶτον) in the study of substance; (ii) the study of being consists solely (μόνον) in the study of substance. The two claims are evidently incompatible: claim i evidently implies that the study of being includes but does not wholly reduce to the study of substance; this evidently contradicts claim ii. Note, though, that Aristotle does not unqualifiedly endorse claim ii: on his view, the study of being does not strictly speaking reduce to the study of substance, but only does so in a qualified sense (ὡς εἰπεῖν). His thought is, presumably, that the study of substance is the sole type of inquiry that is (necessarily) involved in every departmental study of being. Presumably, to investigate what something is is to seek to know what it is. As we saw in §III.3, knowing what a non-substance is (necessarily) involves knowing what its underlying substance is, but not conversely. Hence, investigating what a non-substance is (necessarily) involves investigating what its underlying substance is, but not conversely. To sum up: investigating what some or other type of being is (necessarily) involves studying what a substance is, but does not (necessarily) involve studying what a non-substance is; as such, the intensional inquiry into substance is the sole type of intensional inquiry which is (necessarily) involved in every type of intensional inquiry into being.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have sought to offer a systematic account of the primacy of substance: at 1028a31-b2, Aristotle claims that substances are said to be and are known to be what they are primarily in relation to non-substances; this obviously presupposes that substances are what they are primarily in relation to non-substances; indeed, this is precisely what he claims at 1028a20-31. Thus construed, the ontological primacy of substance grounds their definitional and epistemic primacy. If correct, this proposal tells quite strongly in favour of an essentialist interpretation of Focal OM, whereon substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively: indeed, Aristotle seems to explicitly endorse this view, when he claims that substances are prior in account or in definition to non-substances. Thus construed, Z1's distinction between a primary and a derivative use of 'to be' looks very much like a specification of Δ7's distinction between a *per se* and a *per accidens* use of 'to be': in Δ7, Aristotle claimed that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of any old type of predication, including essential or *per se*$_1$ and non-essential or *per accidens*$_1$ predication [1017a7-30]; in Z1, he has made and motivated the narrower claim that substances are genuine, *per se*$_3$, or in other words primary, whereas non-substances are non-genuine, *per accidens*$_3$, or in other words derivative subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication [1028a10-31]. By doing so, he has called our attention to the ways in which substances and non-substances are called or defined as the types of being which they are, respectively. As we shall see in chapter IV, Aristotle will shed clearer light on the nature and grounds of this distinction in Z4.

IV. Ontological Multivocity in *Metaphysics* Z4

In Z4, Aristotle embarks on a dedicated investigation of essence (τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι). One of the ways in which he carries out this enquiry is by asking: which types of being have essences? Over the course of Z4, he offers two different answers to this question. At 1030a2-17, he presents a restrictive thesis (RT), according to which substances alone have essences at all. He then presents the following, more liberal alternative (LT).

Substances have essences primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Z4's discussion of LT divides into roughly three stages:

1. 1030a17-32;
2. 1030a32-b7;
3. 1030b7-13.[173]

At each stage, Aristotle introduces LT in conjunction with the following version of OM, namely Focal OM.

Substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

This gives rise to two main exegetical questions. First: how should Focal OM be interpreted within the context of Z4? Secondly: how does Focal OM relate to LT? This chapter aims to answer both questions.[174]

As we have seen, Focal OM lends itself to either of two main interpretations. On one such interpretation, Aristotle aims to distinguish a primary from a derivative use of the 'is' of existence.

[173] For a slightly different tripartite division of 1030a17-b13, see Bostock (1994: 92-95).

[174] As such, this chapter aims to contribute to two different though related strands of Aristotelian scholarship. On the one hand, Aristotle's endorsement of Focal OM has been at best peripheral to past debates concerning Z4: see, for instance, Peramatzis (2010), Angioni (2014), Lewis (2013: 69-94), and in particular Menn's claim (IIγ1b) that what Aristotle says at 1030a17-b13 "does not really add anything" to his argument in Z4. On the other hand, Z4 has been largely overlooked by past entries in the debate concerning Focal OM: for a case in point, see Shields (1999: 217-267) and Ward (2008: 103-136).

Substances are said to ‘exist’ primarily and non-substances derivatively.

On another possible interpretation, Focal OM involves an elliptical predicative use of the verb ‘to be’: specifically, Aristotle aims to distinguish a primary from a derivative use of the ‘is’ of essential predication.

Substances are said to ‘be what they are’ primarily and non-substances derivatively.

In what follows, I will argue that, throughout Z4, Aristotle consistently subscribes to the latter, predicative-essentialist version of Focal OM: whether he also subscribes to the existential version is an additional question which bears little, if at all, on the immediate argumentative aims of Z4.

I will also argue that Focal OM presupposes LT, for two reasons. First, Aristotle’s discussion of LT relies on the following assumption: to say what something is is to define it. Hence, Focal OM may be reformulated as follows.

Substances have definitions primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Secondly, Aristotle assumes that to define something is to give an account of its essence. Hence, Focal OM presupposes LT.

Substances have essences primarily and non-substances derivatively.

This reading allows us to bring into focus one of the main limitations of Aristotle’s defence of LT in Z4. This defence relies on the assumption that substances are definitionally prior to non-substances. One of Aristotle’s main tasks in Z4 is to fully spell out this priority relation: *which types of* substance are definitionally prior to *which types of* non-substance? Aristotle explicitly addresses this question at stage 3: however, his answer is vulnerable to certain important objections; hence, Z4’s defence of LT is inconclusive. I will suggest that this limitation can be overcome by deploying certain conceptual resources which are available to Aristotle in Z4, and in particular the notion of *per se*$_2$ or proper subjecthood: this makes for a more plausible account

of definitional priority, which is expressly laid out in Z5; this suggests that Z4 does not constitute a dead end, but rather a stepping-stone toward a more regimented defence of LT.[175]

[175] My argument meaningfully draws on material from an Oxford graduate seminar on *Metaphysics* Z run by David Charles and Michail Peramatzis in 2020-2021.

0. 1029b1-1030a17

I will first offer an overview of the portion of Z4 which precedes Aristotle's defence of LT [1029b1-1030a17]. In doing so, I do not aim to do full justice to the exegetical complexities of this passage: rather, I intend to illustrate how Aristotle's defence of LT ties into the wider argumentative structure of Z4, and the extent to which LT departs from RT. I briefly discuss some of the most salient aspects of this portion of Z4 in my footnotes.[176]

In the opening lines of Z4, Aristotle sets out to investigate the notion of essence [1029b1-3].[177] He first does so by asking which types of being *are* essences [1029b13-22]. Specifically, he seems to lay down four main constraints which something must satisfy in order to qualify as an essence.

1. *Per se* predication. The essence of F is what F is called or said to 'be' *per se*.
2. Coextensiveness. If F is essentially G, every F is G and every G is F.
3. Isomorphism. Compound entities are not essences of simple ones or conversely.
4. Non-circularity. The account of F's essence does not include F's name.[178]

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[176] Among other things, I bracket the question of whether lines 1029b3-12 should be transposed to the end of Z3. For an attempt to justify these lines' original manuscript position, see Peramatzis (2017: 124-130).

[177] Specifically, Aristotle claims to be investigating the notion of essence 'logically (λογικῶς)' [1029b13-14]. This gives rise to at least two questions (Burnyeat, 2001: 19-26). What is distinctively logical about Z4's foray on the topic of essence? And how far into Z4 does the logical level of investigation extend? For a recent attempt to tackle both questions, see Peramatzis (2017). On this reading, Z4's investigation of essence is logical inasmuch as it relies on fairly non-partisan principles regarding predication, as opposed to more partisan principles regarding the relationship between matter and form or potentiality and actuality: Aristotle attempts to determine which types of being are essences or have essences by examining what is predicated of what, and in what way. Accordingly, the logical level of investigation carries on throughout the whole of Z4. For a different reading, see Angioni (2014: 75-77; 82-83).

[178] For two extensive discussion of these constraints, and of how they emerge from this passage, see Peramatzis (2010: 124-134) and Angioni (2014: 77-83). Among the above, the *per se* predication constraint deserves particular consideration. Indeed, the relationship between an essence and the relevant essence-possessor is clearly meant to be grasped in terms of a certain type of *per se* predication, among those which have been distinguished in such writings as *A.Po*. A4 and *Met.* Δ18. In this passage, Aristotle seems to demarcate the type of *per se* predication in question by way of elimination. He clearly rules out mere *per se*$_3$ (i.e. *per se*$_3$+*per accidens*$_1$) predications, such as 'humans are cultivated' [1029b14-15]. He also rules out mere *per se*$_2$ (i.e. *per se*$_2$+*per accidens*$_1$) predications, such as 'surfaces are pale' [1029b16-18]. *Per se*$_4$ predication is clearly irrelevant to the ongoing discussion: indeed, *per se*$_4$ predication involves the notion of causation; however, Aristotle steers clear of causal jargon throughout the whole of Z4. It seems safe to conclude that the type of *per se* predication at stake is a type of *per se*$_1$ predication. Note that, in order to satisfy the coextensiveness requirement, a thing's essence should be understood as a *set* of its *per se*$_1$ attributes, consisting in genus-plus-differentia (as opposed to genus-minus-differentia or differentia-minus-genus); for instance, the essence of the substance-type *human* is *to be a biped animal* (as opposed to

Aristotle then turns to the question of which types of being *have* essences [1029b22-27]. In order to answer this question, he relies on the customary distinction between substances, like the type *human*, and non-substances: in addition, he distinguishes between two types of non-substance, namely non-substantial attributes, like the type *pallor*, and non-substantial compounds, like the type *pale human*. The question is, then, whether both types of being (i.e. substances and non-substances) have essences, or if only some of them do.[179]

Over the rest of Z4, Aristotle offers two different answers to this question. Throughout 1030a2-17, he defends a restrictive account of essence-possessors [RT], which states that substances have essences, whereas non-substances do not have essences in any way whatsoever (ὅλως).[180] Aristotle's argument for RT roughly runs as follows.

P1. Primaries alone have essences.

P2. Substances alone are primaries.

C. Hence, substances alone have essences.[181]

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animality or *bipedality* alone). That said, we may still wonder how comprehensive of a notion of *per se*$_1$ predication is at stake. To wit: is essence-possession supposed to be understood in terms of any old type of *per se*$_1$ predication, including *per se*$_1$+*per se*$_3$ as well as *per se*$_1$+*per accidens*$_3$ predication? Or is it confined to a certain type of *per se*$_1$, namely *per se*$_1$+*per se*$_3$ predication? On my view, Aristotle does not endorse either option at the current stage of his argument: I take him to endorse the latter option throughout his defence of RT; by contrast, I take him to endorse the former option throughout his defence of LT. I will briefly motivate and clarify this suggestion in §IV.1.

[179] Aristotle's first reply to this question, namely RT, clearly focuses on non-substantial compounds: the chief implication of 1030a2-17 is that substances have essences whereas non-substantial compounds, like *pale human*, do not have essences in any way whatsoever. Conversely, his second reply, namely LT, clearly focuses on non-substantial attributes: the chief implication of 1030a17-b13 is that substances and non-substantial attributes, like *pallor*, have essences in different ways from one another. That said, both types of non-substance are mentioned in the final lines of Z4 [1030b12-13]. I take this as an indication that each of the aforementioned accounts of essence-possessors is meant to be comprehensive: they provide different answers to the question of whether, and if so how, non-substances *at large* (i.e. non-substantial compounds or non-substantial attributes) have essences; they do so by focusing on different types of non-substance.

[180] Aristotle takes some preliminary steps towards addressing the question of which types of being have essences throughout 1029b27-1030a2: specifically, he seems to defuse two unsuccessful objections to the claim that the non-substantial compound *pale human* has an essence. (Curiously, this passage relies on the assumption that the name 'cloak' signifies the same as the expression 'pale human', or that the name 'cloak' signifies the non-substantial compound *pale human*: I will not discuss the motivations for or possible implications of this assumption.)

[181] Aristotle actually concludes that essences belong to γένη εἰδῶν alone [1030a11-14]. I take the expression 'γένη εἰδῶν' to refer to species, and specifically to substantial species, rather than to the formal constituents of hylomorphic compounds (Bostock, 1994: 91; Peramatzis, 2010: 157, n42). Note, in addition, that Aristotle's claim may be interpreted in either of two ways. On a more conservative reading, Aristotle thinks that having essences distinguishes substantial species from everything else. On a more liberal reading, Aristotle thinks that having

In the following paragraph, I will offer a summary of what looks like a plausible interpretation of this argument (Peramatzis, 2010: 143-157): in doing so, I will overlook several potential points of controversy.

Aristotle's argument for RT is undeniably underpinned by the notion of primacy. At 1030a2-17, Aristotle appears to cast light on this notion by stating which types of being are primaries (πρῶτα): beings of this type are said to 'be what they are', or called the types of being which they are, independently of something being said of something different (ὅσα λέγεται μὴ τῷ ἄλλο κατ' ἄλλου λέγεσθαι).[182] This primacy criterion lends itself to at least two different interpretations, hinging on two different conceptions of difference. On one such interpretation, the primacy criterion relies on a notion of strict numerical difference: calling a primary the type of being which it is does not involve predicating anything of anything else. On an alternative interpretation, the primacy criterion relies on a looser notion of difference in nature: calling a primary the type of being which it is does not involve predicating a determinate type of being of a different type of being. There are two main reasons why I am inclined to endorse the latter interpretation of Z4's primacy criterion. First: unlike its stricter counterpart, the looser interpretation allows us to accept substance-types, like *human*, as primaries. In Z4, Aristotle clearly holds that substance-types have essences [1030a11-14]: in addition, he clearly holds that primaries alone have essences; hence, he must hold that substance-types are primaries. On the stricter interpretation, substance-types do not qualify as primaries, since they are not predicatively basic types of being: for example, the type *human* is predicated of its underlying

essences distinguishes substantial species from non-substantial types of being (such as *pale human*). On the more liberal reading, RT does not disqualify particular substances from having essences as well.

[182] I take it that this expression involves an elliptical use of the verb 'λέγεται', meaning that 'λέγεται' has an implicit complement-term: primaries are called (sc. are called what they are) or said (sc. are said to 'be what they are') independently of something being said of something different. In support of this interpretation, see 1029b13-14, where Aristotle speaks of a thing's essence as *what* it is called or said to 'be' *per se* (ὁ λέγεται' καθ αὐτό, where 'ὁ' serves as the explicit complement-term of 'λέγεται'). Also see 1029b20, where he speaks of a thing's definition as the account of that thing's essence, or (equivalently) as the account which states what that thing essentially is (ὁ λόγος τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι ἑκάστῳ). For a further parallel construction, from a hylomorphic rather than 'logical' context, see *Phys.* II.1 [193b7-8]: ἕκαστον γὰρ τότε λέγεται, sc. τί ἐστι λέγεται, ὅταν ἐντελεχείᾳ ᾖ, μᾶλλον ἢ ὅταν δυνάμει; cf. 193b2, where τί ἐστι serves as the explicit complement-term of λέγομεν.

members, such as this or that particular human. The same is not true on the looser interpretation, since substance-types are not different in nature from their underlying subjects: for example, the type *human* and this or that particular human are not different in nature from one another. Secondly: the looser interpretation allows us to disqualify non-substances from being primaries. On Aristotle's view, substances underlie non-substances as subjects: this is obviously true as regards non-substantial attributes, like *walking* or *pallor* [Z1, 1028a18-20; Z4, 1029b23-25]; though this might be less obvious, it is also true as regards non-substantial compounds, like the walking thing or the type *pale human* [Z1, 1028a25-28]. So let us take the following as putative accounts of *pallor* and of *pale human*: *pallor* is a certain type of quality which belongs to a certain type of substance; a pale human is a certain type of substance-quality compound consisting in a certain type of quality belonging to a certain type of substance. To call either type of non-substance the type of being which it is involves predicating a certain type of non-substantial attribute of a certain type of underlying substance, and therefore of a different type of being: hence, neither type of non-substance qualifies as a primary.[183] To sum up: the looser interpretation allows us to explain why Z4's primacy criterion is met by substances alone, such as the type *human*, as opposed to non-substances, such as the type *pallor* or *pale human*. Assuming that primaries alone have essences, it follows that substances alone have essences.

Throughout the remainder of Z4, Aristotle defends an alternative account of essence-possessors, according to which non-substances have essences as well, though in a different way from substances. Throughout his defence of this more liberal alternative, Aristotle does not question but preserves the second premiss of his defence of RT: indeed, he continues to assume that substances alone are primaries; on this basis, he concludes that substances have essences primarily whereas non-substances do so derivatively [LT]. Hence, Aristotle's defence of LT

[183] Aristotle claims that substances alone are *thises* (τόδε). Moreover, *thisness* and primacy look like equivalent notions. Indeed, in order to explain why non-substances fail to qualify as *thises*, Aristotle observes that, when they are called what they are, something is said of something different (ἄλλο κατ' ἄλλου λέγηται) [1030a3-6]. This is precisely what disqualifies them from being primaries.

must involve a rejection of the first premiss of his defence of RT. This naturally gives rise to the question of how Aristotle might motivate his rejection of P1 throughout 1030a17-b13.

In order to grasp this more clearly, it is useful to examine how Aristotle motivates P1 throughout 1030a2-17. On my view, he does so on the basis of the following two assumptions.

i. Something does not have an essence unless it has a definition [1030a6-7].

ii. Something does not have a definition unless it is a primary [1030a7-10].

Assumption i looks plausible enough: if something has an essence, there must be a correct way to define it. This is not to say that a thing's essence is any less fundamental than its definition. In fact, one would intuitively presume that the converse is true. On the one hand, for something to have an essence is part of what it is for it to have a definition: indeed, a thing's definition is precisely the type of account which signifies its essence [1029b20; 1029b25-26]. On the other hand, for something to have a definition is not part of what it is for it to have an essence: indeed, there must be more to a thing's essence than its being signified by a certain type of account. To sum up: while having an essence may very well *entail* having a definition, it need not (and presumably does not) *consist in* having a definition. Subject to these provisos, then, we may safely preserve assumption i.

Let us turn to assumption ii. As long as he accepts this assumption, Aristotle must also deny that non-substances have definitions, for substances alone are primaries (P2). Indeed, Aristotle expressly accepts this conclusion at 1030a14-17: to say what a non-substance is involves saying that a certain type of being belongs to a different type of being (ὁτι τόδε τῷδε ὑπάρχει); as a result, non-substances fail to qualify as primaries (suppressed premiss); hence, non-substances lack definitions. As we shall see, Aristotle's defence of LT involves a rejection of this assumption: upon closer inspection, non-substances turn out to have definitions; that is in spite of the fact that they fail to qualify as primaries. One would expect Aristotle to motivate this

amendment to his account of essence-possessors: on my view, this expectation is met at 1030a7-13; however, certain salient aspects of Aristotle's proposal look unsatisfactory.

1. 1030a17-32

Following his discussion of RT, Aristotle introduces LT as an alternative account of essence-possessors: to that end, he distinguishes between different ways in which something may be said to 'be what it is'.

ἢ καὶ ὁ ὁρισμὸς ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ τί
ἐστι πλεοναχῶς λέγεται; καὶ γὰρ τὸ τί ἐστιν ἕνα μὲν τρό-
πον σημαίνει τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸ τόδε τι, ἄλλον δὲ ἕκαστον
τῶν κατηγορουμένων, ποσὸν, ποιὸν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα. (20)
ὥσπερ γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἔστιν ὑπάρχει πᾶσιν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως,
ἀλλὰ τῷ μὲν πρώτως τοῖς δ' ἐπομένως, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τί ἐστιν
ἁπλῶς μὲν τῇ οὐσίᾳ πὼς δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις· καὶ γὰρ τὸ ποιὸν
ἐροίμεθ' ἂν τί ἐστιν, ὥστε καὶ τὸ ποιὸν τῶν τί ἐστιν, ἀλλ'
οὐχ ἁπλῶς, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος λογικῶς φασί (25)
τινες εἶναι τὸ μὴ ὄν, οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἀλλὰ μὴ ὄν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ
ποιόν.—δεῖ μὲν οὖν σκοπεῖν καὶ τὸ πῶς δεῖ λέγειν περὶ ἕκα-
στον, οὐ μὴν μᾶλλόν γε ἢ τὸ πῶς ἔχει· διὸ καὶ νῦν ἐπεὶ τὸ
λεγόμενον φανερόν, καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι ὁμοίως ὑπάρξει πρώ-
τως μὲν καὶ ἁπλῶς τῇ οὐσίᾳ, εἶτα καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, ὥσπερ (30)
καὶ τὸ τί ἐστιν, οὐχ ἁπλῶς τί ἦν εἶναι ἀλλὰ ποιῷ ἢ ποσῷ
τί ἦν εἶναι.

Or is the definition too, just as what it is, said in many ways? For 'what it is' too signifies in one way the substance and the *this*, and in another way each predicable item: a quality, a quantity, and the other things of this sort. For just as 'is' belongs everything, though not in the same way but to one thing primarily and to the others derivatively, so too 'what it is' belongs unqualifiedly to substance and in a qualified way to the others. Indeed, we

> may 'what is it?' about qualities as well, so that qualities too are among the things which are called what they are, though not unqualifiedly: but just as in the case of what is not some say, logically, that what is not is—sc. not that it is unqualifiedly but that it is what is not—so too with qualities. So we also ought to examine how we must speak about each thing, though certainly not more than how each thing is: hence, in the present case too, since what is said is clear, 'what-it-was-to-be' too will similarly belong primarily and unqualifiedly to substance, and then to the others as well, just as 'what it is'; not what-it-was-to-be *unqualifiedly* but what-it-was-to-be *a quality* or *a quantity*.

Aristotle begins stage 1 by suggesting that the expression 'what it is', and so too 'definition', is used in many ways [1030a17-18].[184]

He immediately proceeds to clarify this by marking off two overarching significates of 'what it is' (τὸ τί ἐστι) [1030a18-20]:

i. τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸ τόδε τι;

ii. ἕκαστον τῶν κατηγορουμένων, ποσὸν, ποιὸν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα.

[184] On my view, 'τὸ τί ἐστι' designates a certain type of predicate-term, involving a genus-term as well as a differentiator, such as 'being a biped animal': this reading is likely supported by such passages of the *Organon* as *A.Po*. A4 [73a34-37] and *Top.* I.5 [102a31-32]. The word 'ὁρισμὸς' is customarily translated as 'definition'. I will follow this practice subject the following proviso: at least in the context of Z4, 'ὁρισμὸς' designates a defining expression, such as '$=_{def}$ a biped animal', as opposed to a whole definition, such as '*human* $=_{def}$ a biped animal'. Indeed, the Aristotle of Z4 consistently describes a ὁρισμὸς as the account of a thing's essence (ὁ λόγος τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι ἑκάστῳ; ὁ τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι λόγος ἑκάστῳ) [1029b20; 1029b25-26]: however, essences look very much like features or ways of being, such as *being a biped animal*; thus construed, the account of an essence is not given by a whole definition, but rather by a defining expression. For further support, see *Top.* I.5, where Aristotle speaks of a ὅρος or defining expression, as opposed to a ὁρισμὸς or whole definition, as the account which signifies a thing's essence (λόγος ὁ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι σημαίνων) [*Top.* I.5, 101b38]. (On which point, also see Chiba, 2010: 217-220.) This naturally gives rise to the question of whether, and if so how, a τί ἐστι predicate differs from a defining expression. On my view, a defining expression should be understood as a certain type of τί ἐστι predicate: a τί ἐστι predicate signifies what it is for something to be what it is; whether a τί ἐστι predicate also qualifies as a defining expression depends on whether what it signifies qualifies as an essence. For example, 'being a biped animal' signifies what it is for a human to be what it is (namely, *to be a biped animal*): since *human* is a certain type of substance, *being a biped animal* qualifies as an essence regardless of whether we opt for RT or LT; hence, 'being a biped animal' qualifies as a τί ἐστι predicate as well as a defining expression on either account of essence-possessors. Let us stipulate, then, that 'being a bright colour' signifies what it is for *pallor* to be what it is (namely, *to be a bright colour*): since *pallor* is a certain type of non-substance, *being a bright colour* does not unequivocally qualify as an essence. So does a non-substantial τί ἐστι predicate, like 'being a bright colour', qualify as a defining expression? On my view, Aristotle unconditionally denies this throughout his defence of RT, whereas he conditionally accepts this throughout his defence of LT.

The second type of significate can be straightforwardly identified as some or other type of predicable non-substance, such as a quality (ποιὸν) or a quantity (ποσὸν). The first type of significate (τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸ τόδε τι) is not as easy to demarcate, but should likely be identified as some or other type of substance. For a start, it makes good sense to construe τὴν οὐσίαν as a determinate type of categorial being alongside ποσὸν, ποιὸν, and so forth (i.e. as the type *substance*, as opposed to—say—the substance *of something*). It also makes good sense to construe τὸ τόδε τι as a distinctive attribute of substances, i.e. *thisness*: indeed, as Aristotle previously pointed out, the attribute of *thisness* (τὸ τόδε) belongs to substances alone [1030a3-6]. Some prominent commentators, like Ross (1924: 170), narrowly construe *thisness* as particularity: if this were correct, the first type of significate of 'what it is' should be narrowly identified as some or other particular substance. This interpretation of the notion of *thisness* may seem to be encouraged by some of Aristotle's remarks in *Cat*. 5 [3b10-24]: however, it certainly looks too strict within the context of Z4. Here, Aristotle clearly accepts substance types as unproblematic types of essence-possessor, on the assumption that they are primaries or *thises* [1030a2-17]: however, substance-types are not particulars, but universals; hence, at least in the context of Z4, *thisness* cannot amount to particularity. It seems more promising to assume that the Aristotle of Z4 uses the labels 'substance' and 'a *this*' interchangeably in order to designate some or other type of substance, including particular substances (such as this or that human) as well as substance-types (such as the type *human*). If so, we should subscribe to the following, looser interpretation of 1030a18-20.

> In one way, for something to 'be what it is' signifies that something is a substance, and in another way that something is a non-substance.

As I anticipated, this claim is meant to shed clearer light on the earlier suggestion that 'what it is' is used in many ways [1030a17-18]. Hence, lines 1030a17-20 must introduce the following claim.

> Substances and non-substances are said to 'be what they are' in different ways from one another.

This claim is further refined throughout 1030a20-27.

> Substances are said to 'be what they are' genuinely (ἁπλῶς) and non-substances non-genuinely (πὼς or μὴ ἁπλῶς).

One promising way for us to make sense of this contrast is, once again, to refer back to Aristotle's discussion of predication in *A.Po.* A4 [73b5-10], A19 [81b24-29], and A22 [83a1-23]. Across these chapters, Aristotle claims that substances are *per se*$_3$ or genuine whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine subjects of predication, including *per se*$_1$ or essential predication: substances are said to 'be what they are' *per se*$_3$ or genuinely (καθ' αὐτό or ἁπλῶς), whereas non-substances are said to 'be what they are' *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely (κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς or μὴ ἁπλῶς). In A4, this distinction is underwritten by the asymmetrical character of subjecthood: substances underlie non-substances as subjects, but not conversely; hence, calling something a certain type of non-substance involves saying that a certain type of substance underlies it, but not conversely; hence, substances are said to 'be what they are' *per se*$_3$ or genuinely and non-substance *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely. The distinction may be exemplified as follows: the substance type *human* is said to 'be a certain type of animal' *per se*$_3$ or genuinely, since for it to be a certain type of animal does not involve belonging to some or other non-substance; by contrast, the non-substance type *pallor* is said to 'be a certain type of colour' *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuinely, since for it to be a certain type of colour involves belonging to a certain type of substance. This looks very much like the sort of distinction which Aristotle draws in Z4.[185] Indeed, both texts indicate that a substance (οὐσία) or a *this* (τόδε τι) is said to 'be what it is' genuinely (ἁπλῶς) whereas a non-substance is said to 'be what it is' non-genuinely (μὴ ἁπλῶς). Moreover, both texts explicate this distinction in

[185] And, implicitly, in Z1 [1028a20-31]: on which point, see §III.2.2.

virtually identical terms: calling a substance or a *this* what it is does not involve predicating it of something different (μὴ καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεται ἄλλου τινός) whereas calling a non-substance what it is does [*A.Po.* A4, 73b5-10]; calling a substance or a *this* what it is does not involve predicating something of something different (μὴ τῷ ἄλλο κατ' ἄλλου λέγεσθαι) whereas calling a non-substance what it is does [Z4, 1030a2-17]. What is distinctive about Z4 is Aristotle's choice to expressly cash this distinction out in terms of priority: calling a non-substance the type of being which it is involves predicating a non-substance of an underlying substance, but not conversely; hence, non-substances depend on substances for being called the types of being which they are, but not conversely; as such, substances are primaries, meaning (presumably) that they are primary subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication [1030a10-11].[186] Based on what I have said so far, and subject to the proposed conception of primacy, we may safely take lines 1030a17-27 to introduce the following claim, which obviously corresponds to what I have previously called the 'predicative-essentialist' version of Focal OM.

Substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

At 1030a27-32, Aristotle endorses this claim in conjunction with the one below.

[LT] Substances have essences primarily and non-substances derivatively.

He obviously thinks that Focal OM and LT are mutually compatible (see 'ὁμοίως' and 'ὥσπερ'). In addition, though, he seems to *infer* LT from Focal OM (see 'διὸ' and 'ἐπεὶ τὸ λεγόμενον φανερόν'). In what follows, I will briefly attempt to account for this inference.[187]

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[186] For a fuller defence of this interpretation, see Peramatzis (2010: 157-165).

[187] Thus far, I have deliberately glossed over two potentially controversial aspects of 1030a20-27.

(1) At 1030a20-23, Aristotle jointly endorses the following two claims: (i) substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively; (ii) substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively. On my view, these lines lend themselves to at least two alternative interpretations. (a) Substances are said to 'be' (sc. to 'exist') primarily and non-substances derivatively: for something to *exist* is to *be what it is* (suppressed premiss); hence, substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively (Bostock, 1994: 93). (b) Substances are said to 'be' (sc. to 'be F', for any value of 'F' which is true of them) primarily and non-substances derivatively: one way for a substance or for a non-substance to *be F* is to *be what it is* (suppressed premiss); hence, substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively. The two interpretations of 1030a21-23 rely on two different interpretations of claim i: (i.a) substances are primary existents; (i.b) substances are primary subjects of any old type of predication. On either interpretation, Aristotle

At 1030a17-18, Aristotle sets out to distinguish between two uses of 'what it is' and so too of 'definition'. Throughout 1030a18-27, he clearly distinguishes between uses of 'what it is': however, 'definition' seems to have dropped out of the picture. Perhaps, we should take lines 1030a18-27 to have accomplished both tasks: Aristotle explicitly states that substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively; he implicitly assumes that to say what something is is to define it; he implicitly concludes that substances have definitions primarily and non-substances derivatively. In other words, substances are definitionally prior to non-substances: presumably, this is to say that defining something as a certain type of non-substance involves defining its underlying subject as a certain type of substance, but not conversely. It bears remarking that while Aristotle does not explicitly draw this conclusion at this stage of his discussion of LT, he does so at 1030b4-8. In addition, Aristotle explicitly assumes that to define something is to give an account of its essence [1029b20; 1029b25-26]. Hence, for something to have a definition involves having an essence: moreover, the way in which something has a definition hinges on the way in which it has an essence. With these considerations in mind, we may account for Aristotle's choice to infer LT from Focal OM as follows.

P1. Substances are said to 'be what they are' (or: have definitions) primarily and non-substances derivatively [Focal OM, 1030a17-27].

concludes that substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative subjects of essential predication, i.e. claim ii. Clearly, the main exegetical problem arising from 1030a17-32 is how claim ii is supposed to relate to LT. For this reason, I have refrained from committing to either interpretation of claim i or of its connection to claim ii.

(2) At 1030a23-27, Aristotle compares the way in which some or other type of non-substance, like a quality, is said to 'be what it is' with the way in which what is not is said to 'be what it is' (i.e. to 'be what is not'): the two ways are comparable inasmuch as a quality, and so too what is not, is said to 'be what it is' non-genuinely. That said, the exact nature of the comparison is far from perspicuous. First: we are not at all clear as to what is being meant by 'what is not'. Is it a non-entity, like a centaur? Is it a privative or a negative attribute, like *being not-pale* or *not being pale*? Secondly: on either reading, what could it mean for what is not to be what is not? Is it not to exist? Is it to be the type of non-entity, or perhaps the type of privative or negative attribute, which it is? (On which points, also see my remarks on 1003a33-b10 in the Appendix to Chapter I.) Since these issues are clearly peripheral to Aristotle's main line of argument at 1030a17-32, I have chosen not to commit with respect to them either.

P2. If something has a definition, it has an essence: if something has a definition primarily, it has an essence primarily; if something has a definition derivatively, it has an essence derivatively.

C. Substances have essences primarily and non-substances derivatively [LT, 1030a27-32].[188]

In other words, substances are essentially prior to non-substances: presumably, this is to say that for something to be a certain type of non-substance essentially involves having a certain type of substance as a further underlying subject, but not conversely.

Before proceeding to the next stage of Aristotle's defence of LT, I will briefly discuss some salient features of the proposed interpretation of 1030a17-32. First, Aristotle undeniably subscribes to the predicative-essentialist version of Focal OM: whether he also subscribes to the existential version is an additional question which is largely immaterial to our current discussion; indeed, our main exegetical task is to explain how Aristotle is able to progress from the predicative-essentialist version of Focal OM to LT. On my interpretation, the progression is accounted for by the two following assumptions: (i) to say what something is is to define it; (ii) to define something is to give an account of its essence. Out of these two, assumption ii looks fairly uncontroversial: indeed, it was set out prior to Aristotle's discussion of RT or of LT; hence, it is most likely meant to underpin his discussion of both RT and LT. The same is not true of assumption i. According to this assumption, to say what something is is to define it,

[188] On my proposed reading of the passage, this conclusion rests on the assumption that substances are genuine or *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are non-genuine or *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication. According to LT, then, the relation of essence-possession may be understood in terms of either of two types of *per se*$_1$ predication, namely *per se*$_1$+*per se*$_3$ or *per se*$_1$+*per accidens*$_3$ predication. By contrast, according to RT, the relation of essence-possession should be understood in terms of a single type of *per se*$_1$ predication, namely *per se*$_1$+*per se*$_3$ predication. It bears emphasising that *per accidens*$_3$ is parasitic upon *per se*$_3$ predication: hence, we cannot grasp how non-substances have essences unless we grasp how substances do; by contrast, we can grasp how substances have essences without grasping how non-substances do. Hence, the relation of essence-possession must be ultimately understood in terms of a certain type of *per se*$_1$ predication, namely *per se*$_1$+*per se*$_3$ predication. This may explain why Aristotle's defence of RT precedes his defence of LT in Z4's order of argumentation: by defending RT, he illustrates how substances have essences; according to LT, this is not the only but the primary way in which things have essences; subject to this proviso, Aristotle's defence of RT can be read as a preliminary step toward his defence of LT.

regardless of whether the type of being in question is a substance or a non-substance: hence, to say what a non-substance is is to define it; in other words, the account which states what a non-substance is qualifies as a definition. This assumption clearly has some pull: a *per se*$_1$ or essential predication like '*human* is a certain type of animal' or '*pallor* is a certain type of colour' clearly serves a definitory or demarcating function, inasmuch as it places this or that type of being within a determinate subdivision of a wider genus. However, the same assumption was explicitly rejected throughout Aristotle's previous defence of RT [1030a14-17]. Hence, one would naturally expect Aristotle to clarify it or corroborate it over the course of his defence of LT. He does not do so at 1030a17-32. Nor does he do so at 1030a32-b7. While he does so at 1030b7-13, I will suggest that his rationale is not unobjectionable.

2. 1030a32-b7

In stage 2, Aristotle sets out to lend further support to LT: to this end, he attempts to shed light on the way in which different types of being are said to 'be'.[189]

δεῖ γὰρ ἢ ὁμωνύμως ταῦτα φάναι εἶναι ὄντα,
ἢ προστιθέντας καὶ ἀφαιροῦντας, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ μὴ ἐπιστητὸν
ἐπιστητόν, ἐπεὶ τό γε ὀρθόν ἐστι μήτε ὁμωνύμως φάναι
μήτε ὡσαύτως ἀλλ' ὥσπερ τὸ ἰατρικὸν τῷ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ (35)
μὲν καὶ ἕν, οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ καὶ ἕν, οὐ μέντοι οὐδὲ ὁμωνύμως· (1030b1)
οὐδὲ γὰρ ἰατρικὸν σῶμα καὶ ἔργον καὶ σκεῦος λέγεται οὔτε
ὁμωνύμως οὔτε καθ' ἓν ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἕν. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν
ὁποτέρως τις ἐθέλει λέγειν διαφέρει οὐδέν· ἐκεῖνο δὲ φανερὸν
ὅτι ὁ πρώτως καὶ ἁπλῶς ὁρισμὸς καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι τῶν (5)
οὐσιῶν ἐστίν. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὁμοίως ἐστί, πλὴν
οὐ πρώτως.

For we must say that these are beings either homonymously or by adding and subtracting, just as what is not known is [said to be] known, since what is surely correct is to say [that they are beings] neither homonymously nor in the same way but, just as what is medical, in relation to one and the same thing, not [by being] one and the same, nor yet homonymously; and indeed a body, a procedure, and an instrument are called 'medical' neither homonymously, nor in accordance with one thing, but in relation to one thing. So it makes no difference whichever way one wishes to state these matters: but this much is clear, namely that the what-it-was-to-be and the definition [which is so called] primarily

[189] See the explanatory or clarificatory 'γὰρ' at 1030a32, which plausibly refers to Aristotle's immediately preceding contention, i.e. LT [1030a28-32].

and unqualifiedly is of substances. Admittedly it similarly is of the others too, though not primarily.

Aristotle's central contention is that different kinds of being are said to 'be' in different ways from one another, though not homonymously, but in relation to one and the same thing or focally (πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἕν or πρὸς ἕν). This looks very much like the version of OM which he endorsed earlier on in Γ2, namely Focal OM. My main aim in this section is to determine how this view should be interpreted, and how it contributes to Aristotle's ongoing defence of LT, in this section of Z4.

The basic contours of this version of OM are sufficiently clear. Aristotle distinguishes a 'focal' from various 'satellite' kinds of being. It seems uncontroversial to identify the former with substance and the latter with different kinds of non-substance, such as qualities and quantities.[190] Hence, Aristotle must be endorsing the following view.

> Different kinds of being (i.e. different kinds of non-substance) are said to 'be' in different ways from one another, as well as in relation to one and the same kind of being (i.e. substance).

This gives rise to at least two questions. How do the satellite kinds of being relate to one another? And how do they each relate to the focal kind of being? Since the former question is clearly peripheral to Aristotle's concerns in Z4, I will focus on the latter. Before addressing it, I will briefly discuss certain potentially problematic aspects of Aristotle's choice to identify OM as a type of focal multivocity in this passage.

Aristotle claims that different kinds of non-substance are said to 'be' in different ways from one another, as well as in relation to substance. While doing so, he makes two additional claims: different kinds of non-substance are said to 'be' either homonymously or by adding and subtracting; different kinds of non-substance are said to 'be' neither homonymously nor

[190] See 'ταῦτα' [1030a32], which quite plausibly refers to qualities and quantities, cf. 'ποιῷ ἢ ποσῷ' [1030a31].

synonymously.[191] For a start, it seems safe to conclude that different types of non-substance are said to 'be' by adding or subtracting: indeed, different types of non-substance are said to 'be' either homonymously or by adding and subtracting; however, different types of non-substance are not said to 'be' homonymously. This conclusion is also encouraged by some of Aristotle's later remarks in Z5: non-substantial attributes like *snubness* are called the types of being which they are by addition (ἐκ προσθέσεως); indeed, calling a non-substantial attribute the type of being which it is involves affirming that a non-substantial attribute belongs to an additional, generically different type of being, namely a certain type of underlying substance [1030b14-27].[192] Perhaps, multivocity by subtraction represents the negative counterpart of multivocity by addition: for instance, saying that what is not known is known (sc. that it is known not to be known, or to be unknown, *Rhet.* II.24, 1402a6-7) involves denying that a non-substantial attribute (i.e. *being known*) belongs to some or other underlying subject. At any event, we should likely conceive of multivocity by addition and of multivocity by subtraction as two different types of focal multivocity: indeed, Z4 clearly indicates that different types of non-substance are said to 'be' in different ways from one another, though not homonymously, but in relation to one thing or by addition and subtraction.[193] Having discussed how focal multivocity relates to multivocity by addition or subtraction, it would be pertinent to discuss how it relates to homonymy and synonymy. This is a notoriously controversial topic, which I

[191] Aristotle denies that different types of being are said to 'be' in one way (ὡσαύτως), by being one and the same (τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ καὶ ἕν), or in virtue of one thing (καθ' ἕν): presumably, that is to deny that they are said to 'be' synonymously (συνώνυμως).

[192] Unlike Z4, Aristotle's remarks on addition in Z5 expressly involve an appeal to the notion of proper or *per se*$_2$ subjecthood: calling a non-substantial attribute the type of being which it is involves predicating it of its proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substance; for example, we should call *snubness* the sort of concavity which belongs to some or other nose. This looks like a refined picture of the notion of multivocity by addition which is deployed at 1030a32-b7.

[193] Some commentators may express reservations about this conclusion. For example, Owen believes that 'focal multivocity' (or, as he calls it, 'focal meaning') and 'multivocity by addition and subtraction' are two competing ways of analysing Focal OM, the second being inappropriate or unphilosophical (1960: 166 n5, 176 n4, 179 n1). I find this suggestion puzzling: in Z5, multivocity by addition is explicated in terms of proper or *per se*$_2$ subjecthood, which (far from being inappropriate or unphilosophical) is part and parcel of Aristotle's official account of predication in *A.Po*. A4 [73a37-b3]. This suggests that we should be cautious not to brush off Z4's appeal to multivocity by addition and subtraction: instead, we should strive to regiment it.

have previously addressed in Chapter I. Here, I will simply assume that the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is exclusive, and that focal multivocity is a certain type of (associated or connected) homonymy: thus, Aristotle does not altogether deny that OM is a type of homonymy; rather, he denies that OM is a certain type of homonymy, namely discrete or unconnected homonymy; this is true of Z4 as also of Γ2. That said, the nature of these distinctions is a fairly technical matter which likely falls outside the scope of Z4's dedicated inquiry into essence: presumably, it calls for a separate discussion, such as the ones which we find in *Cat*. 1 and *Top.* I.15; perhaps, this is precisely what Aristotle is alluding to by saying that "it makes no difference whichever way one wishes to state these matters" [1030b3-4]. For the purposes of our ongoing discussion, we should focus on Aristotle's claim that OM is a type of focal multivocity. This brings us back to the original question: how do the satellites relate to the focal kind of being?

In the passage at hand, Aristotle does not explicitly answer this question. The most that he does is to compare OM with another example of focal multivocity, namely the multivocity of 'being medical'. However, the structure of this example is far from perspicuous: Aristotle clearly distinguishes a focal from several satellite types of medical thing; he also identifies certain satellite types of medical thing (i.e. a medical body, a medical operation, and a medical instrument); however, he does not identify the focal type of medical thing; nor does he specify how the satellites are supposed to relate to the focus. Hence, at least as it currently stands, the comparison can hardly serve to illustrate how the satellites are meant to relate to the focal type of being. In order to overcome these frustrations, readers of Z4 may wish to refer back to Γ2 [1003a33-b10]. There, Aristotle endorses a virtually identical version of OM, which I have previously called 'Focal OM'. Moreover, Γ2 explicates the structure of Focal OM more extensively than Z4: as we saw, Γ2 presents us with two analogue cases of focal multivocity; in each case, Aristotle explicitly identifies the satellites as well as the focus; moreover, he

explicitly takes the focal type of being to be prior to its satellites. As a result, Focal OM can be safely reformulated as follows.

Substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Presumably, the same goes for the version of OM which Aristotle endorses at the present stage of his defence of LT. That said, Γ2 can lend us no further assistance in our attempt to interpret Z4. First, Γ2 offers no clear indication as to whether Aristotle aims to distinguish a primary from a derivative use of the 'is' of existence, or predication, or both. Secondly, Γ2 fails to appropriately explicate the notion of primacy undergirding Focal OM. There, primacy was clearly understood as a dependence relation. Moreover, the primacy of substance was clearly underpinned by the notion of subjecthood. On the other hand, several aspects of this dependence relation deserved further clarification. Which types of substance are prior to which types of non-substance? What makes the former prior to the latter?

Whereas the present passage of Z4 is equally indeterminate on these various fronts, the previous two passages may lend us assistance in overcoming some of the main limitations of Γ2's account of Focal OM. Throughout his defence of RT [1030a2-17], Aristotle explicitly deploys the notion of primacy. In addition, he clarifies it by resorting to the notion of subjecthood. To this extent, Z4 clearly follows in the footsteps of Γ2. That said, Z4 goes significantly beyond Γ2 in two respects: first, Z4 resorts to the more robust notion of genuine or *per se*$_3$ subjecthood, which involves asymmetry; secondly, the notion of primacy is evidently entrenched in a discussion of essential or *per se*$_1$ predication. Thus, by saying that substances are primaries, Aristotle seemed to mean that substances are primary subjects of essential predication. This tells in favour of a predicative-essentialist interpretation of the version of Focal OM which we encounter at 1030a32-b3.

Substances are said to 'be what they are' primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Let us assume that this result is correct and, in addition, that to say what something is is to define it. If that is right, then Focal OM can be safely reformulated as follows.

Substances have definitions primarily and non-substances derivatively.

At 1030b4-7, Aristotle explicitly endorses this stance in conjunction with LT.

Substances have essences primarily and non-substances derivatively.

Once again, by introducing LT, Aristotle appears to be clarifying a key presupposition of Focal OM: Focal OM states that substances and non-substances are called or defined as the determinate types of being which they are in different ways from one another; as we saw, a definition is the account which states what something essentially is; hence, Focal OM presupposes that substances and non-substances have essences in different ways from one another. The predicative-essentialist reading of Focal OM thus allows us to explain how Aristotle is able to progress from Focal OM to LT throughout 1030a32-b7: the same is not obviously true of the existential alternative.

Before turning to the third and final stage of Z4's defence of LT, I will briefly discuss two possible objections which might be raised against Aristotle's commitment to the definitional primacy of substance.

Aristotle clearly construes definitional priority as a relation of asymmetrical independence between definitions: x is definitionally prior to y iff x is defined independently of y but not conversely. Aristotle holds that substances are definitionally prior to non-substances. Hence, he must hold that substances are defined independently of non-substances, but not conversely.[194] Accordingly, there are two ways in which a hypothetical objector may attempt to undermine Aristotle's commitment to the definitional primacy of substance.

[194] On this point, recall Z1 [1028a31-b2]: substances are prior in account to non-substances in that the former are called the types of being which they are separately from, without, or independently of the latter, but not conversely.

The first would be to object against Aristotle's claim that substances are defined independently of non-substances. For example, defining a substance involves differentiating it from other members of the same genus: however, *differentiae* do not look like substances; hence, defining a substance involves mentioning a certain type of non-substance. On this basis, one may retort that substances depend upon certain types of non-substance (i.e. upon their *differentiae*) for being defined as the types of being which they are. My preferred interpretation of Z4's primacy criterion allows us to defuse this objection, by leveraging on the notion of subjecthood: one type of being is definitionally dependent on another only if the latter underlies the former as a subject; non-substances do not underlie substances as subjects; hence, substances are definitionally independent of non-substances. Let us accept, for example, the following putative definition of the type *human*.

Human $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of animal.

Presumably, defining the type *human* as a certain type of animal involves saying that humans are biped, or rational, or whatever have you. For the sake of argument, let us assume that *bipedality*, *rationality*, or any such *differentia* is not a substance. Hence, defining the type *human* as a certain type of animal involves mentioning a certain type of non-substance. Of course, to mention the non-substance in question is not to say that it underlies the type *human* as a subject. Thus, defining *human* as a certain type of animal does not involve predicating it of such a non-substance (e.g., it does not involve saying that *bipedality* is a certain type of *humanity*, or that a biped thing is a certain type of human): on the contrary, it involves predicating such a non-substance of the type *human*. Therefore, the type *human* is definitionally independent of such a non-substance.[195]

[195] The aforementioned objection relies on the assumption that the *differentiae* of substances are not themselves substances. Support for this assumption may be garnered from such texts as *Cat.* 5 [3a7-3b9], where Aristotle does seem to disqualify *differentiae* from being substances, presumably on the ground that they are not subjects of predication. In this regard, *differentiae* have a weaker claim to substancehood than substantial species and genera [2b37-3a6]. One could retort that *differentiae* nonetheless have a sufficiently strong claim to substancehood, precisely because they are part of *what* particular substances are: in this regard, they do not seem to fare any worse

The second strategy would be to challenge Aristotle's claim that non-substances definitionally depend on substances. For example, Aristotle has thus far been conspicuously vague as to *which type of* underlying substance should be mentioned as part of the definition of some or other non-substance, such as the quality type *pallor*. Presumably, *pallor* should be defined as a certain type of quality which belongs to a certain type of substance: but which type of substance, exactly? Based on the conceptual resources which are available to him in Z4, there are broadly two ways in which Aristotle may answer this question. One such alternative would be to identify the underlying substance in question with any old type of *per se*$_3$ or genuine subject of *pallor*. On this looser approach, *pallor* may be correctly defined in multiple ways, such as the ones below.

a. *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to humans.

b. *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to logs.

This result is clearly unacceptable, for reasons which we saw in §III.3.1. The alternative would be to identify the underlying substance in question with a certain type of *per se*$_3$ or genuine subject of *pallor*, namely with its *per se*$_2$ or proper underlying substance. On this approach, *pallor* has a single correct definition.

> *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to some or other type of corporeal substance.

More generally, we may wonder whether non-substances broadly depend on their *per se*$_3$ or more strictly on their *per se*$_3$+*per se*$_2$ subjects for being defined as the types of being which they are.

The more rigid alternative is clearly available to Aristotle in Z4: indeed, the notion of proper or *per se*$_2$ subjecthood is officially introduced and exemplified in *A.Po.* A4 [73a37-b3], which as

than substantial species and genera [2b29-37]. The ontological status of *differentiae* is at any event controversial, and it seems best not to commit as to whether they qualify as substances or not in more 'mature' texts like *Met.* Z.

we saw clearly lurks in the background of Z4; moreover, it is explicitly invoked in the introductory lines of Z4, in order to more clearly demarcate the type of *per se* predication in terms of which the notion of essence should be understood [1029b16-18].[196] However, Aristotle has not opted for either alternative up to the present stage of his defence of LT. Hence, the proposed account of definitional priority is still too vague. As a result, one would expect Aristotle to accept either of these two alternatives in the final stage of his defence of LT: as we shall see, Aristotle will indeed opt for one such alternative; however, his choice is not unobjectionable.[197]

[196] In this passage of Z4, Aristotle exemplifies *per se*$_2$ predication by way of the predication 'surfaces are pale'. Two observations are in order at this point. (1) Aristotle is not thereby making a claim about definitional priority: to wit, he is not as of yet suggesting that *pallor* is definitionally posterior to its *per se*$_2$ subject (be it a surface, or a corporeal substance, or whatever have you). Instead, he is making a much more elementary claim: namely, that essences are not mere *per se*$_2$ attributes of their relevant essence-possessors; for instance, if the type *surface* had an essence, its essence would not be *to be pale*. (2) In Z4 (as also in Δ18) Aristotle treats the type (*corporeal*) *surface* as the *per se*$_2$ subject of *pallor*. Suppose, then, that *pallor* has a definition. Perhaps, then, Aristotle may treat the following as a correct definition of *pallor*.

Pallor =$_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to some or other corporeal surface.

However, the above need not be more than a mere stepping-stone toward the more regimented definition of *pallor* which I have offered in the main text. To wit, the type *corporeal surface* may be treated as a definitional primary for illustrative purposes, since corporeal surfaces have indeed been thought to be substances [Z2, 1028b16-17]. That said, corporeal surfaces are at best intermediate subjects of colours: for instance, predicating *pallor* of some or other corporeal surface involves predicating it of the underlying corporeal substance which that surface is a boundary of. Such a substance looks like a much more promising candidate than its bare surface for being definitionally prior to *pallor*: indeed, corporeal substances are *per se*$_2$+*per se*$_3$ subjects of *pallor*; yet that can hardly be true of their bare surfaces.

[197] Thus far, I have deliberately overlooked a determinate aspect of Aristotle's commitment to Focal OM, namely his claim that different types of non-substance, such as qualities and quantities, are called or defined as the types of being which they are in different ways from one another. How, exactly, should we interpret this claim? This problem is clearly peripheral to our ongoing discussion of Z4: indeed, Aristotle has shown little if any interest in how different satellite types of being relate to each other; what he is primarily interested in is how each satellite relates to the focal type of being. For the sake of completeness, I here briefly lay out my own take on this issue. (P1) To define a quality or a quantity is to state what it is for a quality or for a quantity to be the type of being which it is. (P2) For a quality and for a quantity to be the types of being which they are is not to be species of one and the same genus of being, for there is no such genus [B3, 998b22-28]. (C) Hence, a quality and a quantity are defined as not merely specifically but as generically different types of being. (Of course, the two definitions are systematically interconnected, inasmuch as they are both parasitic on the definition of one and the same type of being: indeed, defining a quality or a quantity as the type of being which it is involves predicating it of a certain type of underlying substance.)

3. 1030b7-13

In stage 3, Aristotle sets out to lend further support to LT by setting stricter constraints on which types of being have definitions.[198]

> οὐ γὰρ ἀνάγκη, ἂν τοῦτο τιθῶμεν, τούτου ὁρισμὸν
> εἶναι ὃ ἂν λόγῳ τὸ αὐτὸ σημαίνῃ, ἀλλὰ τινὶ λόγῳ· τοῦτο
> δὲ ἐὰν ἑνὸς ᾖ, μὴ τῷ συνεχεῖ ὥσπερ ἡ Ἰλιὰς ἢ ὅσα συν-
> δέσμῳ, ἀλλ' ἐὰν ὁσαχῶς λέγηται τὸ ἕν· τὸ δ' ἓν λέγεται (10)
> ὥσπερ τὸ ὄν· τὸ δὲ ὂν τὸ μὲν τόδε τι τὸ δὲ ποσὸν τὸ δὲ
> ποιόν τι σημαίνει. διὸ καὶ λευκοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔσται λόγος καὶ
> ὁρισμός, ἄλλον δὲ τρόπον καὶ τοῦ λευκοῦ καὶ οὐσίας.
>
> For it is not necessary, if we posit this, that there should be a definition of this, if it signifies the same as an account, but rather a certain type of account; and this [is the case] if it is [the account] of one thing, not by continuity like the *Iliad* or those things that are [one] by connectives, but if [it is one] in one of the ways in which that which is one may be said (sc. may be said to 'be one'); but *that which is one* is said (sc. is said to 'be one') just as *that which is* is said (sc. is said to 'be'); and 'being' in one way signifies a *this*, in another a quantity, and in another a quality. Hence, there will be an account and a definition of *pale human* as well, though in a different way from that of *pallor* and of a substance.

In order for something to have a definition, it must possess a certain type of unity: in Aristotle's words, a legitimate *definiendum* must be one in one the ways in which something may be said to 'be one'. The present passage distinguishes between various ways in which this unity requirement, or UR, may be satisfied: something is said to 'be one' in the same way as it is said

[198] See the explanatory or clarificatory 'γὰρ' at 1030b7, which plausibly refers to Aristotle's immediately preceding contention, i.e. LT [1030b4-7].

to ‘be’; however, different types of being are said to ‘be’ in different ways from one another; hence, different types of being are said to ‘be one’ in different ways from one another. On this basis, Aristotle concludes that different types of being, namely substances and non-substances, have definitions in different ways from one another (i.e. primarily and derivatively, respectively). Recall, then, that a thing’s definition is the account of its essence. Hence, Aristotle’s conclusion presupposes LT: substances and non-substances have essences in different ways from one another (i.e. primarily and derivatively, respectively).

Once again, Aristotle seems to be arguing for LT on the basis of OM: specifically, invoking OM allows him to distinguish between the ways in which UR may be satisfied. This naturally gives rise to two questions. First: how should we interpret OM, in the present context? Secondly, and relatedly: how do substances and non-substances satisfy UR, respectively? In what follows, I will attempt to answer both questions.

In order to clarify his commitment to OM, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of significate of ‘to be’ (τὸ ὄν): in one way (τὸ μὲν), for something to ‘be’ signifies that something is a substance (τόδε τι); in another way (τὸ δὲ), it signifies that something is a quantity (ποσὸν); in yet another way (τὸ δὲ), it signifies that something a quality (ποιόν τι) [1030a11-12]. The basic implication of this passage is, clearly, that substances and non-substances are said to ‘be’ in different ways from one another.[199] This claim lends itself to an existential as well as to an elliptical predicative reading. Here, I shall offer two main textual considerations in favour of the elliptical reading, which makes for an essentialist version of OM. First, Aristotle’s current claim about the signification of ‘to be’ is virtually identical to his earlier claim about the signification of ‘what it is’. For something to ‘be what it is’ has different types of significate: in one way, it signifies that something is a substance; in another way, it signifies that something

[199] On closer inspection, Aristotle appears to be making a more radical claim: namely, that different types of being, such as substances, qualities, and quantities, are said to ‘be’ in different ways from one another. This implies that different types of non-substance, such as qualities and quantities, are said to ‘be’ in different ways from substances as well as from one another. This is very much in line with one of his earlier claims [1030a32-b3].

is a quality, or a quantity, or some other type of predicable non-substance [1030a18-20]. The same is true of 'to be' [1030b11-12]. Since 'to be' signifies the same as 'to be what it is', we may presume that Aristotle endorses one and the same view across the two passages.

> Substances and non-substances are said to 'be what they are' in different ways from one another.

Secondly, the predicative-essentialist reading allows us to make particularly good sense of Aristotle's current remarks concerning the relationship between unity and being. Aristotle observes that something is said to 'be one' just as it is said to 'be'; substances and non-substances are said to 'be' in different ways from one another; hence, they are said to 'be one' in different ways from one another. Notice that Aristotle can hardly be distinguishing between different types of numerical unity or individuality: in Z4, substance-types like *human* are clearly accepted as unproblematic types of essence-possessor; this presupposes that substance-types enjoy one of the types of unity in question; however, substance-types are not individuals. Rather, Aristotle must be distinguishing between different types of definitional unity or determinacy: otherwise, he could not go as far as to infer that substances and non-substances have definitions in different ways from one another. This suggests that he endorses the following view: a substance and a non-substance are said to 'be one'—sc. to 'be one type of being'—in different ways from one another. On my proposed interpretation of 1030a18-20, OM makes the equivalent claim, that substances and non-substances are called the determinate types of being which they are in different ways from one another. Hence, the essentialist reading easily allows us to accommodate Aristotle's contention that something is said to 'be' just as it is said to 'be one': the same is not obviously true of the existential alternative.

Finally, the predicative-essentialist reading allows us to explain how Aristotle is able to lend further support to LT based on (Focal) OM. Aristotle states that substances and non-substances are said to 'be what they are' in different ways from one another (i.e. primarily and derivatively,

respectively) [1030b11-12]. Assume, then, that to say what something is is to define it. Hence (see διὸ, 1030b12), substances and non-substances are defined, or have definitions, in different ways from one another (i.e. primarily and derivatively, respectively) [1030b12-13]. Assume, further, that to define something is to give an account of its essence. Hence (see γὰρ, 1030b7), substances and non-substances have essences in different ways from one another (i.e. primarily and derivatively, respectively).[200]

On the current proposal, stage 3 follows the same argumentative pattern as stage 1 and stage 2 of Aristotle's defence of LT. However, I also take Aristotle to have made significant progress, by motivating one of the main unstated assumptions of his argument. As we saw, Aristotle's defence of LT relies on the following assumption: to say what something is is to define it; this is true of substances as well as of non-substances; hence, to say what a non-substance is is, in a way, to define it. In other words, the account which states what a non-substance is does in a way qualify as a definition. Whereas Aristotle fell short of motivating this assumption throughout 1030a17-32 and 1030a32-b7, he does so at 1030b7-13, by invoking the notion of unity.

[200] Up to the present stage of his defence of LT, Aristotle has focused on the relationship between substances and non-substances of a determinate type, namely non-substantial attributes. At the present stage, he seems to widen his focus, by distinguishing between substances, like the type *human*, non-substantial attributes, like the type *pallor*, and non-substantial compounds, like the type *pale human*. The main takeaway point from 1030a12-13 is, clearly, that substances and non-substantial compounds have definitions in different ways from one another: presumably, this is to say that substances have definitions primarily and non-substantial compounds derivatively. This looks like a particular instantiation of the more general claim that substances have definitions primarily and non-substances derivatively. Here, I wish to call attention to an additional view which emerges from this passage: namely, that non-substantial compounds, like *pale human*, and non-substantial attributes, like *pallor*, have definitions in different ways from one another. What is the nature of this distinction, exactly? Thus far, Aristotle has not answered this question: nor does he do so in the present passage; perhaps, he reserves the right to do so on a separate occasion. In order to tackle this problem, readers of Z4 may wish to refer to other chapters of the *Metaphysics*, such as M2: there, Aristotle claims that non-substantial attributes, like *pallor*, are prior in account (though not in substance) to non-substantial compounds, like *pale human* [1077a36-b11]. To be sure, that is not necessarily to say that *pallor* is definitionally prior to *pale human*: for that would presuppose that the account of *pallor*, and so too the account of *pale human*, qualify as a definition; however, this assumption is far from uncontroversial. Still: since Aristotle does accept this assumption throughout his defence of LT, he may very well be accepting that *pallor* is definitionally prior to *pale human*, at the end of Z4. Would he be right to endorse this conclusion? If so: how could the latter be motivated? Though admittedly interesting, this topic is obviously peripheral to the question of what makes non-substances definitionally posterior to substances.

According to Aristotle, an account (λόγος) may be called 'one (εἷς)' in either of two ways [*De Int*. 5, 17a15-17, and 8, 18a12-19; *A.Po.* B10, 93b35-37; *Poet.* 20, 1457a28-30]. One type of unified account consists in a simple declarative statement: an account of this type is called 'one' in virtue of revealing one thing (ἓν δηλῶν), namely in virtue of signifying that a single attribute belongs to a single subject (ἓν καθ' ἑνὸς). One such type of unified account, like '*human* is pale', is called 'one' in virtue of signifying that a single attribute belongs to a single type of substance, and therefore by predicating one attribute of one subject genuinely or *per se*$_3$ (ἓν καθ' ἑνὸς μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός).[201] Another type of unified account consists in a collection of simple declarative statements, such as the whole series of statements which, by being stitched together, make up the *Iliad*: an account of this type is called 'one' by continuity or connection (συνεχεῖ or συνδέσμῳ), namely in virtue of multiple simple declarative statements being stitched together through connectives like 'μέν' and 'δέ'. At the present stage of his defence of LT, Aristotle seems to be drawing on this contrast in order to explain why the accounts of canonical types of non-substance, like qualities and quantities, qualify as definitions, whereas the accounts of other types of non-substance, like whatever is signified by the name '*Iliad*', do not. For a start, each of these two types of account signifies the same as a name: indeed, the name '*pallor*' signifies the same as the account 'a certain type of quality which belongs to a certain type of substance'; so too, the name '*Iliad*' signifies the same as the whole series of statements which, by being stitched together, make up the *Iliad*. Signifying the same as a name is clearly insufficient for being a definition: if that were sufficient, *Iliad*-like accounts would qualify as definitions; however, this is plainly absurd [1030b7-8; also see 1030a7-10]. Note, then, that the two types of account enjoy different types of unity: the account of *pallor* is called 'one' in virtue of signifying that one type of non-substantial attribute (i.e. a certain type of quality) belongs to one type of underlying substance (which is yet to be determined); by

[201] *A.Po*. B10, 93b35-37. Also see *A.Po*. A22 [83a21-23], where Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of way in which one attribute may be predicated of one subject (ἓν καθ' ἑνὸς) *per se*$_3$ (μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός).

contrast, an *Iliad*-like account is called ‘one’ by connection or continuity. Enjoying the latter type of unity is clearly insufficient for being a definition, for the same reason why signifying the same as a name is [1030b8-10]. On the other hand, enjoying the former type of unity must be sufficient for being a definition: otherwise, Aristotle would not be able to infer (as he does) that non-substantial attributes like *pallor* or non-substantial compounds like *pale human* do in a way have definitions. To sum up: the account which states what a non-substance is qualifies as a definition iff it predicates exactly one type of non-substantial attribute of exactly one type of underlying substance.

We are now in a position to explain why substances and canonical types of non-substance, such as qualities and quantities, satisfy UR and have definitions in different ways from one another. Calling a substance the determinate type of being which it is does not involve predicating a substance of an underlying non-substance: hence, substances are called the determinate types of being which they are primarily; this makes them primary objects of definition. By contrast, calling a canonical type of non-substance, such as a quality or a quantity, the determinate type of being which it is involves predicating a non-substance of an underlying substance: specifically, it involves predicating exactly one type of non-substance of exactly one type of underlying substance; hence, non-substances are called the determinate types of being which they are derivatively; this makes them derivative objects of definition.

Conclusions

Does the above make for a sufficiently robust account of definitional priority? In order to tackle this question, let us go back to our previous example. Take the following accounts of *pallor*.

a. *Pallor* is a certain type of quality which belongs to humans.

b. *Pallor* is a certain type of quality which belongs to logs.

On Aristotle's current proposal, both of the above accounts qualify as correct definitions of *pallor*, for each of them predicates a single type of non-substantial attribute (i.e. a certain type of quality) of a single type of underlying substance (i.e. of the type *human*, in a, and of the type *log*, in b). However, this result is clearly unacceptable, for reasons which I explored in §III.3.1. In order to overcome this problem, Aristotle will likely need to set further constraints on the way in which non-substances satisfy UR: defining a non-substance involves predicating a single type of non-substance of a single type of underlying substance, *namely* of its proper or *per se*$_2$ type of underlying substance. If so, neither of the above will qualify as a correct definition of *pallor*, whereas the one below will.

> *Pallor* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of quality which belongs to some or other type of corporeal substance.[202]

[202] This shortcoming is made even more perspicuous by Aristotle's claim that the type *pale human* has a definition. Indeed, assume that the type *pale human* has a definition.

> *Pale human* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of non-substantial compound consisting in *pallor* belonging to humans.

The proposed defining expression predicates exactly one type of non-substantial attribute, i.e. *pallor*, of exactly one type of underlying substance, i.e. *human*. However, *human* is not the proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substance of *pallor*. Hence, the account of *pale human* does not qualify as a definition. Accordingly, *pale human* does not qualify as a *definiendum*. The same is not true of the more abstract type *pale thing*, though. Indeed, assume that the type *pale thing* has a definition.

> *Pale thing* $=_{\text{def}}$ a certain type of non-substantial compound consisting in *pallor* belonging to corporeal substances.

The proposed defining expression predicates exactly one type of non-substantial attribute, i.e. *pallor*, of exactly one type of underlying substance, and specifically of its proper or *per se*$_2$ type of underlying substance, namely the type *corporeal substance*. Hence, it qualifies as a definition. Accordingly, the type *pale thing* qualifies as a derivative type of *definiendum*.

We have important textual reasons to think that this illustrates Aristotle's considered account of definitional priority. Indeed, Aristotle explicitly favours it over the former, looser account in Z5. At 1030b14-28, he claims that, if non-substances have definitions, they do so in a qualified or derivative way: indeed, defining a non-substance involves predicating it of a determinate type of substance, namely of its proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substance (but not conversely); for example, if *snubness* has a definition, it must be definitionally posterior to the type *nose*. Crucially, in Z5, Aristotle explicitly denies that *pallor* is definitionally posterior to the type *human*: indeed, human is a *per se*$_3$ but *per accidens*$_2$ subject of *pallor*; while he does not explicitly do so, he would clearly prefer to treat *pallor* as definitionally posterior to the type *corporeal substance*.

Admittedly, Z5's argument for LT is not conclusive: in Z5, Aristotle does not endorse LT to the exclusion of RT (or vice versa) but simply presents these as two alternative answers to the question of which types of being have essences. Perhaps, this is partly due to the fact that Z5 does not explicitly invoke Focal OM: hence, based on Z5 alone, it is not wholly clear why he should opt for LT rather than for RT. Still, we can plausibly end on an optimistic note. Throughout Z4, and indeed throughout the *Metaphysics* more generally, Aristotle consistently endorses Focal OM: Focal OM presupposes LT; therefore, it seems highly plausible to suggest that Aristotle favours LT over RT. In Z5, Aristotle expressly deploys the notion of *per se*$_2$ or proper subjecthood in order to underpin the definitional priority of substance: this would allow him to overcome the shortcomings of Z4's defence of LT. To conclude, it very much looks like Z4 and Z5 complement each other: taken together, they pave the way toward a more regimented account of Focal OM and defence of LT.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have sought to distinguish between two versions of OM, namely Global OM and Focal OM. By way of conclusion, I will briefly comment on each of these two versions of OM and on how they relate to each other.

1. Focal OM

My main aim has been to settle on a determinate interpretation of Focal OM. Roughly, this is the view that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. Within the *Metaphysics*, this view is introduced and progressively refined across four successive chapters, namely Γ2 [1003a33-b10], Δ7 [1017a7-30], Z1 [1028a10-20], and Z4 [1030a17-b13].

It is first introduced in Γ2. At this stage, it is open to two possible readings: (a) substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively; (b) substances are said to 'be F' primarily and non-substances derivatively. It is then reintroduced, under a slightly different guise, in Δ7: one kind of being is said to 'be' *per se* and another *per accidens*. This should be understood as a claim about predication: substances are said to 'be F' genuinely or *per se*$_3$ and non-substances non-genuinely or *per accidens*$_3$; in other words, substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative subjects of any old type of predication. Focal OM is then reintroduced in Z1. At this stage, it should be understood as a claim about a certain type of predication: substances are *per se*$_3$, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$, non-genuine, or derivative subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication. Lastly, Focal OM is reintroduced in Z4. At this stage it should be understood as an even more definite claim about predication: substances are *per se*$_3$, genuine, or primary, whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$, non-genuine, or derivative subjects of *per se*$_1$ or essential predication; as long as they pass certain baseline requirements for predicational unity, such predications qualify as definitions; subject to this proviso, substances are primary whereas non-substances are derivative objects of definition. Admittedly, Aristotle's argument for this stance in Z4 is

inconclusive. However, its shortcomings can be aptly overcome by setting further constraints on definitional unity: this involves invoking the notion of *per se*$_2$ or proper subjecthood, which is undeniably available to Aristotle at this stage of his path. This yields the following picture of definitional priority, which he expressly expounds in Z5.

> Non-substances are definitionally posterior to their proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substances: indeed, defining something as a certain type of non-substance involves defining its underlying subject as a certain type of substance, namely as its proper or *per se*$_2$ underlying substance, but not conversely.

I take this to be a textually supported, as well as theoretically plausible, unified answer to the three key issues which I laid out in my Introduction, namely the ontological, the multivocity, and the priority problem. It is in line with recent accounts of Aristotelian multivocity, for Focal OM is ultimately understood as a relation of definitional priority. It is also in line with recent accounts of Aristotelian priority, for definitional priority is understood as a relation of asymmetrical independence between definitions. Finally, it improves upon past accounts of OM, for Focal OM is ultimately understood as a claim about definition, and therefore about essence, rather than about existence: indeed, the notion of existence does not look central to the aforementioned four chapters of the *Metaphysics*; by contrast, the notion of essence takes on progressively greater importance, until it takes centre stage at the end of our journey.

This result is particularly fascinating when we look back to our starting point. Like Γ2, Z4 puts forth the idea that substances are said to 'be' primarily and non-substances derivatively. Moreover, both chapters convey this idea in very much the same way: unlike Δ7 and Z1, Γ2 and Z4 explicitly employ the notion of focal or πρὸς ἕν multivocity; moreover, they strive to clarify Focal OM by means of the same example (i.e. by reference to the multivocity of 'being medical'). More generally, there are striking parallels between 1003a33-b10 and 1030a3-b3. On the other hand, Z4 affords us with a much clearer picture of Focal OM than Γ2. In particular,

at the start of our journey, it was hard to decide whether Focal OM should be understood as a claim about existence or about predication. At the end, it seems safe to understand it as a claim about predication: more specifically, it is a claim about essential predication and definition.

A question which may be understandably raised at this point is whether we have reached our ultimate destination. Are there any textual or theoretical reasons to take a step further, by also understanding Focal OM as a claim about existence?

Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the answer to this question is affirmative: according to Aristotle, substances are said to 'exist' primarily and non-substances derivatively. That would presuppose that substances exist primarily and non-substances derivatively. That is to say that the existence of non-substances depends on the existence of substances, but not conversely. In what way, if any, can we account for this claim? In order to answer this question, most commentators have resorted to what I have previously referred to as a 'modal-existential' conception of ontological priority: non-substances cannot exist unless substances also exist, but not conversely. However, this does not seem to make for a theoretically plausible view. Instead of rehearsing past criticisms of this approach, I will outline an alternative conception of existential priority, by revisiting Aristotle's argument for the ontological primacy of substance, in Z1 [1028a10-20].

Within the context of Z1, the ontological primacy of substance should be cashed out in essentialist terms: something's being a certain type of non-substance depends on something else's being a certain type of substance, but not conversely; indeed, for something to be a certain type of non-substance involves having a certain type of substance as a further underlying subject, but not conversely. Abstracting from the context of Z1, the ontological primacy of substance could perhaps be cashed out in existential terms by following a similar strategy, namely by leveraging on the asymmetrical aspect of the subjecthood relation: the existence of a certain type of non-substance depends on the existence of a certain type of substance, but not conversely; indeed, for a certain type of non-substance to exist involves having a certain type

of substance as an underlying subject, but not conversely.[203] The resulting picture of existential priority is remarkably weaker than, and arguably avoids the various pitfalls, of its modal-existential counterpart. Whether it is plausible, and how it compares to its predicative-essentialist counterpart, are more difficult questions, the answers to which hinge on a series of considerations which, at the present stage of my discussion, I can at best allude to. For example, one may wonder how different the weaker existential and my preferred essentialist conception of ontological primacy really are from each other. For all we have done has been to replace the notion of something's *being what it is* with the notion of something's *existing*, while keeping everything else equal. For example: (1) we assume that for *pallor* to be a certain type of colour involves belonging to some or other type of corporeal substance, but not conversely; (2) we replace the notion of *pallor*'s being what it is with the notion of *pallor*'s existing; (3) we conclude that for *pallor* to exist involves belonging to some or other type of corporeal substance, but not conversely. Our main challenge is to account for step 2 without treading on the distinction between something's *being what it is* and something's *existing*: indeed, as we saw in §I.1.1.2, Aristotle quite plausibly distinguishes these notions from one another. One possible strategy would be to assume that for something *to be what it is* is somehow more basic than for it *to exist*: if so, one would presume that the way in which something *exists* is somehow accounted for by the way in which it *is what it is*; specifically, one may venture to suggest that substances are *existentially* prior to non-substances on account of the fact that the former are *essentially* prior to the latter. This may be in line with the picture of scientific discovery which emerges from *A.Po.* B1–B2: there, Aristotle quite plausibly suggests that a thing's existence is prior in the order of discovery to what that thing is; however, what is prior in the order of discovery need not be prior in the order of nature; in fact, the converse seems to be the case

[203] A stricter version of this conception of ontological priority seems to be put forward by Witt (1989: 51-53, on *Met.* Z1), Code (2010, on *Cat*. 5 and *Met.* Z1), and Judson (2019: 46, on *Cat*. 5): for a non-substance to exist involves having something else (i.e. a substance and, ultimately, a particular substance) as a subject; by contrast, for a particular substance to exist does not involve having anything else (i.e. a non-substance or another substance) as a subject. On this reading, though, substance types undeniably fail to qualify as ontological primaries.

[Z4, 1029b1-12]. However that might be, the weaker conception of the existential primacy of substance is undoubtedly more attractive than its modal-existential counterpart. Should it succeed, one may venture to suggest that Aristotle could have endorsed a certain existential version of Focal OM: substances are said to 'exist' primarily in relation to non-substances; indeed, saying what it is for non-substances to exist involves saying that substances underlie them as subjects, but not conversely. For example: saying what it is for *pallor* to exist involves saying that it belongs to some or other type of corporeal substance, but not conversely. As I see it, Aristotle does not explicitly endorse this version of Focal OM across the aforementioned four chapters of the *Metaphysics*. Moreover, I see no need to assume that he does so implicitly. Whether he endorses this version in some other portions of the *Metaphysics* (whether implicitly or explicitly) is an additional question which requires further scrutiny.

2. Global OM

There are five paramount mentions of Global OM throughout the *Metaphysics*, namely Δ7 as a whole, E2 [1026a33-b2], Z1 [1028a10-20], Θ1 [1045b27-1046a1], and Θ10 [1051a34-b6]. The first looks very much like Aristotle's most extensive, comprehensive, and fundamental statement of this distinction. The second looks very much like a highly compressed statement of the first. Each of the remaining three mentions looks very much like a targeted attempt to bring into focus a determinate facet of the version of Global OM which we encounter in Δ7, namely the distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* being (Z1), between potentiality and actuality (Θ1), and between truth and falsehood (Θ10).

One of my main exegetical claims has been that the distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* 'being' which is drawn in Δ7 [1017a7-30] is a more abstract version of the distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* 'being' which is drawn in Z1 [1028a10-31] and in Z4 [1017a17-b13]: in Δ7, Aristotle claims that substances are *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of any old type of predication, including *per se*$_1$ as well as *per accidens*$_1$ predication;

in Z, he claims that substances are *per se*$_3$ whereas non-substances are *per accidens*$_3$ subjects of a certain type of predication, namely *per se*$_1$ predication. In Z, Aristotle conveys this insight by observing that substances are said to 'be' (sc. to 'be what they are') primarily and non-substances derivatively, namely by endorsing Focal OM. Thus, the distinction between the *per se* and the *per accidens* use of 'to be' which we encounter in Δ7 looks very much like a comparatively abstract formulation of Focal OM.

Over the course of this thesis, I have deliberately refrained from commenting on the versions of Global OM which we encounter in E2, Θ1, or Θ10. In the next paragraphs, I will also refrain from commenting on Θ1 and Θ10: as I see it, Θ1 does not undercut my proposal but may even be helpful for corroborating or further refining it; on the other hand, Θ10 is the object of an ongoing controversy which it would be far too complex for me to engage with at this stage. Instead, I will comment on two possible points of controversy surrounding the relationship between Δ7 and E2, which do not seem to have been explored in much detail.

First, Global OM is introduced in somewhat richer terms in E2 than it is in Δ7: Δ7 states that 'being' is used in many ways (Τὸ ὂν λέγεται πολλαχῶς, καθάπερ διειλόμεθα πρότερον ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς, Z1, 1028a10-11); E2 indicates that 'being', when used *simpliciter*, is used in many ways (τὸ ὂν <u>τὸ ἁπλῶς λεγόμενον</u> λέγεται πολλαχῶς). How can or should we make sense of this additional clause? A possible though not wholly persuasive answer to this question may be reached by drawing on some of my earlier remarks in §I.1.1.2. As we saw, Aristotle distinguishes something's 'being' *simpliciter* from something's 'being F': moreover, the Aristotelian notion of something's being *simpliciter* is most intuitively assimilated to that of existence; thus, on a possible reading, E2 introduces a distinction between four overall uses of the 'is' of existence (Kirwan, 1993: 189-190). However, this is not obviously the correct way to understand this expression in the context of E2. For example, in E1 [1025b3-18], Aristotle may be using the expression 'being *simpliciter* (ἁπλῶς)' interchangeably with the expression 'being *qua* being (ᾗ ὄν)'. However, 'being *qua* being' does not obviously mean the same as

'existing'. These are admittedly complex exegetical matters, which on my view call for further discussion. Whatever their solution may be, I take it that it does not affect the plausibility of my foregoing argument. First: to my knowledge, E2 [1026a33-b2] is the only passage of the *Metaphysics* (and, in fact, of the whole *corpus*) wherein OM explicitly involves an absolute use of 'to be'; moreover, Δ7 far surpasses E2's cursory discussion of Global OM in terms of length and depth. Hence, should our interpretations of Δ7 and E2 come into conflict with each other, it would be undesirable for us to jettison the former for the sake of salvaging the latter.

The second issue which I wish to call attention to concerns Aristotle's discussion of *per accidens* 'being' across the two chapters. In Δ7, this discussion proceeds at a more recognisably 'logical' level: it extensively relies on predicational principles, while steering clear of the distinction between matter and form, of the distinction between potentiality and actuality, and of the notion of principle or cause. In E2, it proceeds at a more recognizably 'metaphysical' level, for it extensively relies on considerations about causality or explanation: indeed, it is strongly reminiscent of *Phys.* II 4–6, where Aristotle attempts to classify chance as a *per accidens* kind of cause; on which point, see in particular 1027a16-17. Specifically, and unlike Δ7, E2 defines that which is *per accidens* as that which is neither always nor for the most part [1026b27-33]. This definition is illustrated by means of several examples, two of which are particularly noteworthy: 'the human is pale' [1026b35-36]; 'the pale thing is cultivated' [1027a11-12]. The former is a *per se*$_3$ or genuine whereas the latter is a *per accidens*$_3$ or non-genuine predication: the former qualifies as an example of *per se* and the latter as an example of *per accidens* 'being', by Δ7 standards; however, both qualify as examples of *per accidens* 'being', by E2 ones. How are we to account for such differences? To answer this question, it may be useful to situate E2 within the overall context of E: much of what Aristotle says in E1 revolves around the relationship between physics, which studies changing beings, and theology, which studies unchanging ones; in E3, he grapples with the question of whether the principles of changing things are themselves changing. Since E2's discussion of *per accidens* being clearly

takes place within a dedicated discussion of change, it is not inappropriate for it to rely on 'physical' or properly 'metaphysical' notions, such as what is neither always nor for the most part. Clearly, this is not true of the discussion of *per accidens* 'being' which we encounter in Δ7: unlike E2, Δ7 is a fairly self-contained essay, which does not presuppose familiarity with such notions.

As I hope to have shown, the two versions of Global OM which we encounter in Δ7 and E2 present certain meaningful differences which deserve further discussion. If we do acknowledge such differences, one of the main challenges which confront us is to establish what, if anything, may hold these two versions of Global OM together. A possible suggestion might be that they involve different attitudes toward one and the same notion, i.e. change. The version of Global OM which we encounter in Δ7 involves a distinction between a *per se* and a *per accidens* use of 'to be': it also involves a further distinction between various *per se* uses of 'to be', two of which are intimately connected with the notion of change; to wit, a substance may be said to 'be F' in virtue of acting or of being affected in a certain way; these two kinds of way for something to be F look very much like two kinds of way for something to undergo a change [*Phys.* III.3]; perhaps, then, this version of Global OM is helpful for introducing the notion that substances are subjects of change. The version of Global OM which we encounter in E2 also involves a distinction between a *per se* and a *per accidens* use of 'to be': here, *per accidens* being is defined as what is neither always nor for the most part, in the context of a dedicated discussion of change; perhaps, then, this version of Global OM is helpful for introducing the notion that certain irregular processes are due to chance and in that sense accidental, as we also learn from *Phys.* II.4–6. To sum up, the two aforementioned versions of Global OM may be helpful for introducing different aspects of Aristotle's account of change, one of which is more recognizably 'logical', since it is more intimately tied to the notion of subjecthood, and one of

which is more recognizably 'metaphysical', since it is more intimately tied to the notion of cause or explanation.[204]

3. Final thoughts

One of the main motivations behind this study has been my interest in the potential significance which Aristotle's commitment to OM may have for the overall argument of the *Metaphysics*. By way of conclusion, I will isolate some of the more pressing questions regarding this topic which on my view arise from Aristotle's endorsement of OM across Γ2, Δ7, Z1, and Z4.

1. How is Aristotle's commitment to Focal OM meant to lend support to his commitment to the unity of first philosophy, in Γ2? Is the former meant to be necessary, sufficient, or both, for establishing the latter? And how does Focal OM contribute to the demarcation of the subject-matter of first philosophy?

2. The version of Global OM which we encounter in Δ7 calls our attention to the distinction between substance and non-substance, between potentiality and actuality, and between truth and falsehood. Each of these distinctions receives a dedicated treatment across the central books of the *Metaphysics*, namely in ZH, Θ1–9, and Θ10. Do these discussions constitute completely independent projects or interconnected parts of the same project? In the latter case: how does this project relate to Γ1's programme for first philosophy?

3. At the end of Z1, Aristotle sets out to investigate *what* substance is. This sort of inquiry does not obviously correspond to the ones which he alludes to in other parts of the *Metaphysics*, such as Γ2 [1003b16-19], H1 [1042a4-6], and Λ1 [1069a18-19]. Indeed, the latter are expressly presented as inquiries into the *principles* and *causes* of substances, whereas the same is not true of the former. In what way, if any, do these sorts of inquiry

[204] Interestingly, Aristotle presents his discussion of agency and patiency as 'logical' in *Phys.* III.3 [202a21-22].

into substance relate to one another? In what way, if any, are they each meant to contribute to the overall programme of first philosophy?

4. How does the more recognisably 'logical' sort of inquiry into essence and definition, which is undertaken in Z4 and Z5, relate to the more recognisably 'metaphysical' inquiry into matter and form, which is undertaken in other portions of Z? Are these competing or rather complementary pictures of Aristotle's envisaged inquiry into substance? In the latter case: what holds these two sorts of inquiry together?

For the sake of greater exegetical accuracy, I have heretofore bracketed these questions. Taking stock of our findings, we are perhaps better positioned to address them.

Bibliography

List of abbreviations

Categoriae = Cat.

De Interpretatione = De Int.

Analytica Priora = A.Pr.

Analytica Posteriora = A.Po.

Topica = Top.

Sophistici Elenchi = Soph. El.

Physica = Phys.

De Generatione et Corruptione = GC

De Anima = DA

Metaphysica = Met.

Ethica Nicomachea = NE

Ethica Eudemia = EE

Ars Rhetorica = Rhet.

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