

## The Aim and the Argument of Aristotle's Metaphysics

### Part II: The false path

#### IIα: The plan of Z and the questions of Z1-3

α1: Z and the project of the Metaphysics

α2: The questions of Z: what οὐσίαι there are and the οὐσία of a thing (Z1-3)

α3: Different ways of seeking the οὐσία of a thing and the plan of Z3-16

α1: Z and the project of the Metaphysics

Everything about Metaphysics Z is controversial: the aim of the book, its strategy of argument for achieving that aim, and its place within the larger argument of the Metaphysics. While these questions are all closely connected, perhaps the best entry-point is the question of how Z relates to the project developed in Metaphysics A-E.

Metaphysics E, after describing first philosophy as a science of separate unchanging things and as a science of the causes of being, recalls Δ7's distinction of four senses of being, namely being per accidens, being as truth, being as said of the categories, and being as actuality and potentiality. E2-4 argue that the desired science is not a knowledge of the causes either of being per accidens or of being as truth, and so E4 concludes that these two senses should be set aside, and that we should instead "investigate the causes and ἀρχαί of being itself qua being" (E4 1028a3-4)--that is, the causes of the two remaining senses of being, being as said of the categories and being as actuality and potentiality. We turn the page, and immediately Metaphysics Z begins, with a discussion of how being is said of things in different categories.<sup>1</sup> So the obvious conclusion is that Z is taking up one branch of the project announced in E, namely the investigation of the causes of being as said of the categories (and so, primarily, of being as οὐσία). This is confirmed by Metaphysics Θ1, which refers back to ZH as giving an account of being as οὐσία (and adds that being is said of the other categories only by relation to οὐσία), and then says that since being is said both with respect to the categories and with respect to potentiality and actuality, we should now examine potentiality and actuality. Θ1 thus implies that ZH have taken up one branch of the project of E, being as said of the categories, and that Θ itself will take up another branch, being as potentiality and actuality.<sup>2</sup> Since Γ and E propose the investigation of the causes of being as a means to discovering the ἀρχαί--where these ἀρχαί must be eternal and separately existing, and, if there is a first philosophy distinct from physics, must also be separate from matter--ZH would be investigating the causes of being as said of the categories, and Θ the causes of being as potentiality and actuality, to see whether these chains of causality lead to the desired ἀρχαί.

I think this view of ZHΘ as continuing the project of A-E is correct, but it is not without difficulties, and at present the majority opinion is against it. The case that A-E and ZHΘ do not belong to the same metaphysical project has been argued most forcefully by Jaeger. Jaeger thinks that ZHΘ were originally an independent treatise, which was not a contribution to the project of first philosophy described in Metaphysics ABΓ and E1, and was integrated into the Metaphysics only later, when Aristotle had come to a different conception of first philosophy. (Jaeger does

<sup>1</sup>need some discussion of the Kustode problem--perhaps refer back to treatment in Iγ.

<sup>2</sup>more precisely, Θ1-9 do this, and Θ10 takes up being as truth to the extent that it has not been sufficiently discussed in E4: cite the opening of Θ10 for this

not deny the appearance that E is an introduction to ZHΘ, but the introduction need not have been written before the main body, and Jaeger proposes that Aristotle wrote E2-4 (and revised E1) to serve as a bridge-passage when he inserted ZHΘ into the Metaphysics.) Jaeger takes the project of first philosophy presented in Metaphysics A-E to be governed by the series of problems given in B, and he takes these to be problems of Platonism, that is, problems raised by the objections to the Forms, asking whether the Forms do indeed exist, and, if not, what other immaterial substances could replace them as the objects of wisdom. And, as I have argued in Part I, this interpretation of Metaphysics A-E is close enough to being true. But Jaeger continues:

We naturally look for discussion of these problems in the main body of the work, which is contained, according to the prevailing view, in Books ZHΘ. The four introductory problems, which determine the conception, subject-matter, and extent, of metaphysics, are dealt with in the books immediately succeeding the list (Γ and E). We should expect Aristotle to follow it further, which would bring him to the question of supersensible reality in Book Z. We should also expect to find, conformably to Γ and E, some explicit reference to the fact that we are now approaching the central problem of metaphysics. Instead, however, of the question about the existence of the supersensible, Book Z unexpectedly confronts us with the theory of substance in general. From this point onwards, throughout the next three books, the list no longer has any significance at all. Not only does it cease to dictate the order of the exposition, but there is not even a single mention of it. This simultaneous disappearance both of the references to it and of the actual discussion of it is clear proof that either Aristotle abandoned in mid-composition the original plan as he had contemplated it in Book B--which, in a work that was one both in outline and in performance, would be strange to the point of inconceivability--or the books on substance (ZHΘ) are not the execution of the original plan at all, but something new and later which either replaced it or was inserted into it. (pp.196-7)

Jaeger is here making two distinct though connected points. First, he claims that Metaphysics ZHΘ do not refer back to the problems of B--by which Jaeger means, not just that Aristotle does not explicitly mention his earlier discussions in B, but that the arguments of ZHΘ do not in fact contribute to solving the problems B had raised. Second, Jaeger is claiming that ZHΘ are not a contribution to knowledge of supersensible substances. These points are connected because one of the problems of B, #5, asks whether there are substances apart from the sensibles, and, if so, which ones these are (Forms? mathematical?); and, since Γ has dealt with aporiai #2-4 (and, Jaeger says wrongly, also #1), we might now expect Z to take up #5. But the second point is the crucial one for Jaeger, since he thinks that first philosophy as conceived in Metaphysics A-E is essentially a study of supersensible substances, so that if Metaphysics ZHΘ are not a contribution to knowledge of supersensible substances, they do not belong to first philosophy so conceived, but (at most) to a later revised version of first philosophy. Now Z does say, in at least three places, that it is investigating sensible substances only as a means to knowledge of some higher kind of substances (Z3 1029a33-34, b3-12; Z11 1037a10-17; Z17 1041a6-9); but, Jaeger says, "Books ZH do not discuss substance in the way in which one would expect from these passages. They do not keep steadily in view their supposed purpose of leading up to the proof of the existence of supersensible reality. On the contrary, they give the impression of being written

simply in order to refute Plato's conception of being, according to which the highest being is the highest universal, and in order to confront this exaggerated immaterialism with a proof that matter and substratum have a positive significance for our conception of reality" (pp.199-200). So Jaeger concludes that the passages of Z3 and Z11 (and presumably Z17) that describe Z's study of sensible substance as a mere means to knowing immaterial substances are later insertions, added when Aristotle was trying to incorporate the originally independent ZHΘ into a larger treatise on first philosophy. These passages were inserted as references to texts that Aristotle included, or intended to include, later on in the Metaphysics. Perhaps the references are to the extant MN (not to Λ, since Jaeger thinks this was not part of the intended Metaphysics), perhaps to something lost or never written, but in any case there is no real connection between the books: Z was not written in order to be used in a study of immaterial substance, it is not in fact used in the extant MN, and we have no idea how it might have been used in some other work. So the forward references are useless for interpreting ZHΘ, which are a study of sensible substance for its own sake, independent of the rest of the Metaphysics.

More recent scholars have generally accepted Jaeger's claim that ZHΘ were originally an independent treatise and not part of the execution of the program announced in A-E, while rejecting his further claim that ZHΘ presuppose a different conception of first philosophy from other books of the Metaphysics. The Frede-Patzig commentary on Z gives the clearest expression of this view.<sup>3</sup> Frede and Patzig think that the Metaphysics consistently identifies first philosophy with ontology as well as with theology (against Jaeger's view that only the later strata of the Metaphysics describe first philosophy as ontology, and that this is inconsistent with the description of first philosophy as theology); Frede and Patzig also think that ZHΘ intend their study of the ways-of-being of material things to lead into a study of the way-of-being of immaterial things (against Jaeger's view that the references in Z to a study of immaterial substance were added later, in a forced attempt to make the inserted books fit their new context in the Metaphysics, and do not reflect the real intentions of ZHΘ). Thus A-E and ZHΘ would both be contributions to the same discipline of first philosophy. But Frede and Patzig agree with Jaeger that ZHΘ are an independent contribution to this discipline (or rather two independent contributions, ZH and Θ), rather than being conceived from the beginning as part of the larger project of the Metaphysics. So they think that ZHΘ are not really carrying out a program announced in A-E, and also that Z's promise of a later treatment of immaterial substance does not refer ahead to ΛMN, and is not fulfilled in any extant work.

This negative conclusion is a necessary consequence of Frede and Patzig's solution for reconciling the ontological descriptions of first philosophy, and the ontological practice of ZHΘ, with the more numerous theological descriptions of first philosophy. To recall (from Iα1 above) the main lines of their solution: the aim of first philosophy is to understand the nature of being as such, and (since being is said in many ways) it can achieve this aim only by discovering something that paradigmatically is, so that the ways-of-being of all other things can be understood through their relation to this primary instance of being. To be in this primary way is to be an οὐσία; but, in order for a thing to be an οὐσία, there are different, and prima facie

<sup>3</sup>once again, the views of Joseph Owens are similar, and many other recent scholars agree at least in large part with the views I am citing from Frede and Patzig; to simplify, I discuss only Frede-Patzig. add here some references to other writers. Ross wants to keep more unity than Jaeger, but his views aren't sharply expressed. Owens, esp. pp.324-5, seems to stick close to Jaeger: Z relies on Δ, not on the main body of A-E; it was composed before Γ and E1; it is later integrated into the main series by the bridge-passage E2-4. look at Jaeger's Entstehungsgeschichte, claim that ZHΘ aren't metaphysics even by their own account. also add, here or elsewhere, from Iγ1 + handwritten notes, the point about Z1 referring back to Δ7 rather than to E

incompatible, criteria that it should meet.<sup>4</sup> This explains why the same science is both a science of being and a science of οὐσία, and it will also explain why the same science is also a science of immaterial things, if it is only immaterial things that can satisfy all the different criteria for οὐσία. The aim of Z would be to look, in the first instance among the familiar sensible things, for something that is in the paradigmatic sense, and to test various candidates (matter, form, the composite, perhaps the universal) against the different criteria for οὐσία. Frede-Patzig think that the main conclusion of Z is that it is form that has the best claim to be an οὐσία, but that the form of a sensible thing cannot be οὐσία in the fullest sense, because it is not separable in the fullest sense (it cannot exist without its matter), but only in some restricted sense. Z thus shows that οὐσία in the fullest sense does not occur among sensible things, and so it directs us to look among immaterial things, forms existing wholly separated from matter (if there are any such forms), for something that would be in the primary way, and would therefore allow us to understand the ways-of-being of material things as well. This would explain not only why Z belongs to first philosophy, but also why it would naturally lead (as it claims) to an investigation of immaterial things.

However, this solution necessarily breaks both the forward and the backward connections between Z and other parts of the Metaphysics. The forward references to a study of the paradigmatic way-of-being of immaterial forms cannot be to MN, since these books are purely negative, but neither can they be to Λ, since, while Λ does discuss immaterial things (though it does not call them "forms"), it says nothing about a special sense of being or of οὐσία that would apply only to these immaterial things (let alone about how other things' ways-of-being might be understood as derived from this primary sense). So Frede and Patzig (and likewise Owens) are forced to take Z as referring ahead to a theo-ontology with a content entirely different from any Aristotelian theology of which we have any knowledge. A bit less obviously, they are also forced to say that, despite the appearances presented by the transmitted text of the Metaphysics, Z is neither pursuing the aporiai of B, nor carrying out E's program of examining the causes of (four senses of) being. B says nothing at all about examining the ways-of-being of sensible things (or of immaterial things either); rather, as Jaeger says, the question from B that we would expect Z to take up is B#5, asking whether there are or are not οὐσίαι separate from the sensibles (Plato's separate Forms or separate mathematical, or perhaps an Aristotelian replacement for these rejected candidates). Aristotle does indeed allude to this dispute in Z2, and when at the end of Z3 (and again in Z11 and Z17) he says that the present study of the οὐσίαι of sensible things is for the sake of knowledge of non-sensible οὐσίαι, this seems (as Jaeger says) to be intended to show that what he is doing in Z is contributing to answering B#5. But Jaeger does not believe that Z is in fact contributing to answering B#5, and neither do Frede and Patzig: while Z's investigations of the ways-of-being of sensible things might somehow contribute to understanding the way-of-being of non-sensible things, they do nothing toward proving the existence of the first unmoved mover of Λ6-10, or of any other οὐσία beyond the sensibles. So Frede and Patzig, like Jaeger, conclude that Z is really pursuing a question different from any raised in B, namely (for Frede and Patzig) "which among sensible things best meets the criteria for οὐσία?". And if this is what Z is doing, it is also not carrying out E's program of examining the causes of being. Indeed, the inquiry that Frede and Patzig describe is not a causal inquiry at all: strikingly, their commentary

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<sup>4</sup>there is no agreement on exactly what list of criteria that Aristotle is supposed to be applying, but these might include being an ultimate subject of predication, having an essence, being identical with its essence, being separate, being τὸδε τι, and being in some relevant sense unified. the details do not matter for the present purpose, and in any case I think all versions of this view are equally false

never mentions either the last sentence of E, "whence let these [being per accidens and being as truth] be set aside, and let us investigate the causes and ἀρχαί of being itself qua being" (E4 1028a2-4), nor the first substantive sentence of H, "it has been said that we are investigating the causes and ἀρχαί and στοιχεῖα of οὐσίαι" (H1 1042a4-6), neither of which could apply to Z as they read it.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike Jaeger and Frede-Patzig, I think Z is not only a contribution to first philosophy but a part of the treatise on first philosophy begun in A-E; and I will try to show that Z is doing what it and its context in the transmitted text of the Metaphysics say it is doing, and what we would expect Aristotle to do after setting the goals of B and giving the causal program for achieving them in Γ and E. Jaeger's arguments against the assumption that Z is carrying out the program of A-E do point to real difficulties, and are stimulating for a closer reading of Z, but they do not prove his conclusion. If we read Z more carefully than Jaeger did, we can see that Z is pursuing one branch of the project of E, the investigation of the causes of being as said of the categories (and primarily of being as οὐσία), to see whether this kind of cause leads to the ἀρχαί we are seeking--i.e. to things which are first, and prior to the familiar sensible things, and which, if there turns out to be a wisdom prior to physics, must also exist separately from matter. This investigation will begin from sensible οὐσίαι, in order to discover whether a causal path leads up from them to some other kind of οὐσία. So it is carrying out a causal program for resolving the fifth aporia of B, beginning from the things best known to us and pursuing their causes in order to answer the question "whether there are only the sensible οὐσίαι, or also others beside [παρά] these" (B#5 997a34-5). Indeed, as we will see, Z takes up not only B#5, but the whole connected series of aporiai B#5-9: Jaeger is mistaken when he says that Z no longer refers to the aporiai of B, and that "the list [of aporiai] ceases to dictate the order of exposition." It is true that Aristotle does not in Z use phrases like "as we said in our collection of aporiai," but he almost never does so in other books of the Metaphysics either, and has in fact done so only once in the books prior to Z, when he refers back to B#4 as "one of the [things said] in the ἀπορήματα" (Γ2 1004a33-4).<sup>6</sup> he does not have this kind of explicit reference in Γ to B#2 or #3, which Γ is also certainly responding to, nor indeed to B#4 until he is more than halfway through his discussion of that problem. This means that it may take a careful reading, both of B and of Z (or any other book), to see how Aristotle is responding to the different questions and difficulties raised in B. But the reference to B#5 in Z2 is quite hard to miss, and a careful reading of the rest of Z will show that Aristotle is following fairly closely the more specific agenda set out in B#6-9 and discussed in Iβ3 above.

I am not sure why Jaeger missed the connections between Z and B. But clearly his main reason for doubting that Z is part of the continuous project of the Metaphysics is that, reading Z as a whole, he finds it impossible to believe that Z is really doing what the official story of the

<sup>5</sup>while Frede-Patzig say very little about E, I suppose they must think, like Jaeger, that E2-4 were written to link ZHΘ up with the earlier books of the Metaphysics, and that these chapters suggest more continuity between the different parts of the Metaphysics--in particular, as parts of a single causal investigation--then there really is. but they ought to find the H1 text particularly difficult, since they think that ZH were written as a single continuous treatise: H should therefore to know what Z was about. the Londinenses offer the suggestion that H1's summary of Z is by Andronicus, but it has been a while since anyone had the nerve to say this sort of thing in print

<sup>6</sup>note Jaeger's textual question here. the other comparably explicit references are to #5 at M2 1076a37-b3 and 1076b39-1077a9, to #11 at Iota 2 1053b9-16, and to #15 at M10 1086b14ff (though there is something a bit odd about this last, and though the references to #5 in M2 are not to the main posing of the question, but to rather particular points in the part of the question about the mathematical). refer to appendices for issues about the linkages between Iota and M and earlier books

Metaphysics claims it is doing, namely investigating sensible οὐσίαι as a means to answering the question of the existence of immaterial οὐσίαι. And since Jaeger thinks that all the "substantive" aporiai of B (from #5 on) are primarily questions about the existence of immaterial οὐσίαι, it seems likely that even if he were shown textual connections between B and Z, he would say that these are decorative additions to Z to harmonize it with the larger project, and that what Z is really doing is different from the "theological" project set out in B. So the only satisfactory way to answer Jaeger is to bring out the project that Z is really carrying out, and to show what it has to do with the question that Z, in the context of the Metaphysics, claims that it is helping to answer: as Jaeger puts it, the question of immaterial οὐσίαι, or, as I would put it more carefully, the question of ἀρχαί existing prior to the manifest things, where Aristotle himself believes (but where it is not automatically built into the question) that these ἀρχαί will be immaterial οὐσίαι.

I think Jaeger's fundamental mistake in reading Z, which inevitably led him to conclude that it was not really addressing the question it was supposed to be addressing, was his assumption that Z had to be arguing for a positive answer to the question of immaterial οὐσίαι. So Jaeger says that ZH "do not keep steadily in view their supposed purpose of leading up to the proof of the existence of supersensible reality." And indeed they do not, but this is not their purpose, and nothing Aristotle has said in B or in E should lead us to believe that it is. For consider again the program of E. To examine scientifically the question of the ἀρχαί, we have to learn whether ἀρχαί can be discovered as causes of things better known to us; the ἀρχαί will have to be first or highest causes, and these will be the causes of the most widely extended effects, and the most widely extended effects are being and its per se attributes such as unity. So we want to start from this effect, being (and in Iota also unity and so on), and examine the causes of being, to see whether any causal chain leads up from this effect to the desired ἀρχαί. Since there are several different senses of being of which we might seek the causes--being per accidens, being as truth, being as said of the categories, being as potentiality and actuality--there are several different causal chains we could pursue, and rather than jumbling them together E proposes to pursue each of them separately, to see whether it leads to the ἀρχαί. But there is no presumption that in any given case the answer is positive. In the cases of being per accidens, examined in E2-3, and being as truth, examined in E4, the answer is clearly negative, which is why Aristotle quickly dismisses these cases to turn to being as said of the categories (in ZH) and being as actuality and potentiality (in Θ). These latter two senses of being are certainly more promising, and respectable philosophers before Aristotle have claimed that their ἀρχαί are causes of being in each of these senses. These claims deserve investigation, but there is no guarantee that they are right. Rather than trying to read ZHΘ as part of a "proof of the existence of supersensible reality" (which, as Jaeger saw, they are not), we should read ZH as a critical examination of whether the causes of being-as-said-of-the-categories to sensible things (especially, causes of being as οὐσία to sensible οὐσίαι) lead up to the ἀρχαί, and Θ as a critical examination of whether the causes of being as potentiality and actuality to sensible things lead up to the ἀρχαί. As we will see, the conclusions of ZH are negative, like the conclusions of E2-3 and E4, whereas the conclusions of Θ include a crucial positive result. To put it in terms of B: B#5 asks whether there are οὐσίαι beyond the sensibles, and Z takes up this question, and Aristotle does indeed believe that there are οὐσίαι beyond the sensibles, namely the νοῦς of Λ7ff and the subordinate movers of Λ8. But B#5 itself does not mention νοῦς or any other non-sensible οὐσία that Aristotle believes in: the only examples it gives are Platonic forms and intermediate mathematical. And to answer B#5, Aristotle needs to show not only that νοῦς does exist separately from the sensibles, but also that

forms and mathematical do not; or rather, he needs to show not only that a causal chain does lead up from the sensibles to νοῦς, but also that the causal chains that might be thought to lead to separate forms and mathematical do not in fact succeed.

In truth, more of the Metaphysics is taken up with proofs of failure than with proofs of success, and Aristotle's preferred strategy is to start by showing the failure of all his predecessors' projects, in order to whet the hearer's or reader's appetite for his own. And this is not merely a rhetorical strategy, but reflects Aristotle's view of how intellectual progress is made. "If there had been no Timotheus, we would not have much lyric poetry; but if there had been no Phrynus, there would have been no Timotheus" (Metaphysics α1 993b15-16). Our predecessors have conceived the noble aim of a knowledge περὶ ἀρχῶν, and what they have said about the ἀρχαί includes some truth, but imprecise and mixed with falsehood; only by carefully reviewing the difficulties, and criticizing our predecessors' mistakes, can we purify their results and achieve something more precise and scientific.<sup>7</sup> Metaphysics Z (and not Z alone) is taken up with this kind of review and criticism, examining causal chains which might be thought to lead to the ἀρχαί but which in fact do not. The fact that these causal chains do not lead to the ἀρχαί, or to any οὐσίαι beyond the sensibles, does not mean that Z belongs to "physics and second philosophy" rather than to first philosophy.<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, Z belongs to first philosophy because it is examining arguments which, if they were sound, would belong to first philosophy. "It is not appropriate [for the practitioner of the science of X] to resolve all [false arguments about X], but rather those where someone goes wrong in arguing from the principles [of the science], and not the others, as it belongs to the geometer to resolve the squaring [of the circle] by means of segments, but not Antiphon's squaring" (Physics I,2 185a14-17). To cite Aristotle's example in a parallel passage, it does not belong to the doctor to resolve the argument that it is not healthy to take a walk after dinner because (as Zeno has shown) motion is impossible: this argument, even if it were sound, would not be an argument appropriate to medicine (cf. SE 11 172a8-9).<sup>9</sup> But the arguments περὶ ἀρχῶν that Aristotle is examining in Metaphysics Z are not of this kind, and it does belong to the first philosopher to examine them.

This view of the function of Z in the argument of the Metaphysics--as a critical investigation περὶ ἀρχῶν, with negative conclusions--is very different from Jaeger's, and again very different from Frede and Patzig's view that the aim of Z is to examine the claims of different candidates within the sensible realm to be οὐσίαι. These views of the σκοπός of Z are likely to lead to different interpretations of the argument-structure of Z, and of many particular arguments within Z. In what follows, while I will mainly be concerned to explain and argue for my own reading of the book, I will also try to point out significant points of divergence with other interpretations of Z, and to show how these more particular divergences emerge from the basic disagreement about the σκοπός of Z and its place (or lack of a place) in the argument of the Metaphysics. Unfortunately Jaeger never published a detailed interpretation of Z, but Frede and Patzig in their commentary do address many of the interpretive questions I will be raising, and I will frequently set out my own views in comparison with theirs, since their work is the most thoroughgoing attempt to interpret the details of Z along the lines of the currently dominant interpretation of the

<sup>7</sup>as we will see in Part III, even Aristotle's "positive" account of the ἀρχαί in Λ spends what might be considered an unseemly amount of energy on saying how not to think of the ἀρχαί and on showing that his opponents' accounts of the ἀρχαί cannot overcome various difficulties

<sup>8</sup>as Jaeger thought in the Entstehungsgeschichte although no longer in the Aristoteles

<sup>9</sup>some comments; and cite Mueller, "Aristotle and the Quadrature of the Circle," in Kretzmann, ed., Infinity and Continuity in Ancient and Medieval Thought.

σκοπός of the book.<sup>10</sup>

While the Frede-Patzig commentary is a work of considerable ingenuity, with useful and correct observations on many particular passages, taken as a whole it is something close to a reductio ad absurdum of the view that the aim of Z is to examine the claims of different sensible things to be οὐσίαι. As already noted, Frede-Patzig, like Jaeger, simply give up on making sense of the place of Z within the argument of the Metaphysics, even though like Jaeger they believe that Aristotle himself designed the transmitted overall structure of the Metaphysics (minus αΔΚΛ) and inserted Z within it.<sup>11</sup> But even setting aside any hope of making sense of the argument of the Metaphysics, Frede-Patzig are also unable to make sense of the internal argument of Z. Since Aristotle certainly never says that what he will do in Z is to examine (against potentially conflicting criteria) the claims of different sensible things to be οὐσίαι, presumably Frede-Patzig's support for this view would be that it can make the most coherent overall sense of what Aristotle actually does in Z. But by their own account--given in the section of their introduction entitled "Der Gedankengang von Z" (FP I,31-5)--Z is incoherent. In this section they dismember the rather short text of Z into at least seven essays that Aristotle wrote separately and then strung together without making them a coherent whole.<sup>12</sup> Two of these essays, Z7-9 and Z12, they take to be pieces (originally written separately) that Aristotle decided to incorporate into Z after he had already put the rest of Z together, and they think these should be removed to make the original plan of Z more perceptible. But even with these late additions removed, Frede-Patzig conclude that Z cannot have been written as a whole; rather, Aristotle took four originally independent essays on οὐσία, Z4-6, Z10-11, Z13-16 and Z17, and strung them together with the help of the common introduction Z1-3, which raises some general questions about οὐσία and then (in the central part of Z3) argues that matter cannot be the primary kind of οὐσία. But there is discontinuity between the argument of Z3, which breaks off halfway through discussing the ὑποκείμενον, and Z4-6, which turn immediately to a discussion of essence. There is also discontinuity later, since Z13 ignores Z10-11 (as well as ignoring the "later insertions" Z7-9 and Z12), and seems to be more closely connected to Z4-6; Z10-11 present themselves as "an excursus on the problem of the relation of whole to parts," and are thus a digression from the investigation of οὐσία, although their study of whole and parts supports the conclusion that the οὐσία of a thing is its form. Worse yet, Frede-Patzig find themselves forced to conclude that the different individual essays incorporated into Z, notably Z13-16, are not always internally coherent: "Z16 does not connect immediately with Z15, but rather reaches back to some of the candidates for the role of ousia in Z2 .... one would hardly see Z16 as standing in a closer connection with Z13-15, if there did not stand at the end of Z16 a summary of the two main results of Z13-16," and Z16 itself consists of three logically unconnected sections, followed by this summary.

Frede-Patzig's conclusions about the structure (or lack of structure) of Z could conceivably be

<sup>10</sup>perhaps list some other works that I will refer to on occasion

<sup>11</sup>Frede-Patzig say ZH and Θ were originally independent treatises on first philosophy, subsequently integrated into the Metaphysics; I didn't find anything on the integrating role of E. they think Z11 contradicts E1 on whether matter should be mentioned in the definition. note, from above, their failure to mention the end of E or the beginning of H, which contradict their interpretation of Z (even though they think Aristotle wrote ZH as a unit!)

<sup>12</sup>so too Bostock, p.ix: "The two books [Z and H] go closely together, and between them they contain Aristotle's main treatment of the topic of perceptible substance. But one should think of them as being, in effect, a collection of papers on this topic, probably of different dates, and perhaps for that reason not entirely consistent with one another. There are plenty of signs that Aristotle intended there to be one continuous discussion of perceptible substance that would evolve from these papers, but there are also some quite clear signs that the evolution is not completed."

right, and I am not trying to make fun of them.<sup>13</sup> But they are obviously the kind of conclusions that we should try to avoid if possible. The fact that Frede and Patzig reach them anyway is evidence that it is very difficult to read *Z* as a systematic investigation of the claims of different sensible things to be οὐσίαι, or in particular as a coherent argument that, among sensible things, it is forms that have the best claim to be οὐσίαι. Perhaps the fault is Aristotle's. Perhaps he was trying to construct such an argument, and produced various appropriate materials for it, but failed to pull them together because he ran out of time or got distracted or was simply defeated by the difficulty of the subject. But this should not be our first assumption. We should, instead, consider other possibilities for what Aristotle may have been trying to do, and see how well he may have done them. *Z* is a difficult text, and all interpretations will face some embarrassments. The question is whether we can do better than Frede-Patzig and the other available interpretations.

α2: The questions of *Z*: what οὐσίαι there are and the οὐσία of a thing (*Z*1-3)

Frede and Patzig are surely right that *Z*1-3 (minus *Z*3's discussion of the ὑποκείμενον and of matter as the ultimate ὑποκείμενον) are an introduction to *Z* as a whole, setting out basic questions about οὐσία that will motivate the subsequent discussion. So, in trying to understand the argumentative structure of *Z*, it is reasonable to start by examining what questions about οὐσία these introductory chapters are asking, and how the rest of *Z* might be designed to answer them.

It is agreed on all sides that *Metaphysics* *ZH* are a περὶ οὐσίας; Aristotle himself refers back to these books as οἱ περὶ οὐσίας λόγοι at Θ8 1049b27-8, and as οἱ περὶ οὐσίας καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος λόγοι at Iota 2 1053b17-18.<sup>14</sup> The difficulty is to say in what way they are concerned with οὐσία, what kinds of questions about οὐσία they are trying to answer. Most fundamentally, in interpreting these books we have to say how far they are inquiring about 1-place οὐσία (about what things are οὐσίαι, or what οὐσίαι there are) and how far about 2-place οὐσία (about the οὐσία of a given thing): questions both about 1-place and about 2-place οὐσία clearly do play structural roles in *ZH*, and basic interpretive issues may turn on deciding how the questions about 1-place and 2-place οὐσία relate. These questions arise in the first instance in *Z*1-3, and *Z*3-16 investigate different possible ways of answering them.

*Z* is looking for ἀρχαί, and it is looking for the ἀρχαί as one particular kind of cause, namely as a cause of being in one particular sense. Aristotle thinks that, in this branch of the inquiry of the *Metaphysics*, we can restrict ourselves to studying only οὐσίαι. We can bring out three different aspects of this restriction to οὐσίαι: first, the causes we are seeking are causes as the οὐσίαι of their effects; second, the primary effects whose causes we are seeking are οὐσίαι rather than accidents or privations or accidental compounds; third, the causes that we are seeking must themselves be οὐσίαι. While these points are all closely interconnected, we can consider them roughly in sequence.

α2a: The ἀρχαί as οὐσίαι of their effects

To begin with, then, the kinds of causes we are seeking in *Z* are causes as the οὐσίαι of their effects. As we have seen, Aristotle speaks as if equivalently of the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of *X* or of

<sup>13</sup>except that what they say about *Z*12 (following Jaeger) is just plain funny, and should perhaps be quoted

<sup>14</sup>note (here if not before) against the sloppy and dangerously misleading practice of lumping *ZHΘ* together as "die Substanzbücher"; Θ1 is clear about marking the transition

the οὐσία of X as itself one cause of X: "the οὐσία of X" in the phrase "Y is the οὐσία of X" means what X is (as opposed to what X is like), whereas "the οὐσία of X" in the phrase "Y is the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of X" means the existence of X, the fact that X is. So the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of X would be the cause, to X, of the fact that it is, in the second of the four senses of "being" distinguished in Δ7, being as said of the categories.<sup>15</sup> As Aristotle argues in Posterior Analytics II, the οὐσία of X, the answer to the question "what is X?", is also the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of X, the reason why there is an X: "extinction of fire in the clouds" is both the answer to "what is thunder?" and the reason why there is thunder. So in ZH, pursuing the branch of the project of E that examines the causes of categorical being, we are seeking the ἀρχαί as the οὐσίαι of things, whereas in Θ, pursuing the branch that examines the causes of being as actuality and potentiality, we will seek the ἀρχαί as actual or potential efficient causes of things.<sup>16</sup>

Most of Aristotle's predecessors in the inquiry περὶ ἀρχῶν have taken the route of ZH rather than of Θ, seeking the ἀρχαί as the οὐσίαι of the manifest things. The ἀρχαί must certainly be οὐσίαι, so they must be the answers to a τί ἐστὶ question asked of something,<sup>17</sup> and the most obvious approach is to look for them as the οὐσίαι of the manifest things, as the underlying natures of things that we already know superficially, rather than as something altogether different and unknown. So we would begin with the manifest things and ask τί ἐστὶ of them, and keep repeating the τί ἐστὶ question until we reach a final stopping-place: and this would be an ἀρχή. As we saw in Iβ3 above, Aristotle attributes this procedure both to the physicists and to Platonic dialectic. In Physics II,1 Aristotle attributes to Antiphon in particular, but also apparently to the physicists in general, the view that "the φύσις and the οὐσία of the things that are by nature" is "the πρῶτον ἐνύπαρχον of each thing, which is in itself not worked up, as the nature of a bed is wood, and the nature of a statue is bronze" (193a9-13). So when we point to the bed and ask τί ἐστὶ, the physicist answers that it is wood: this is something prior to the bed, since it exists before the wood is shaped into a bed, and if we keep asking τί ἐστὶ, the ultimate answer will be an ἀρχή that has existed from eternity.<sup>18</sup> And since the wood is a cause to the bed, not merely of some accidental attribute, but of the fact that it exists in the first place, the physicist can also say that the wood is the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of the bed. A Platonic form, too, is put forward as an answer to τί ἐστὶ question asked of some manifest thing (as the form of the bed, ἡ ἐν τῇ φύσει οὐσα [κλίνη] [Republic X 597b5-6], answers the question "what is a bed?"), and Aristotle makes clear that Plato claimed not only that forms were separate eternal οὐσίαι, but also that they were the οὐσίαι of ordinary sensible οὐσίαι (Metaphysics A9 992a26-9, cp. 991b1-3). A Platonic form of X, like a pre-Socratic substratum of X, is something prior to the given sensible X, existing from eternity before manifesting itself in this particular X: it is thus an ἀρχή of this X. Plato also insists, against the physicists, that the form of X is the true αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας to a given sensible X: in the Phaedo, introducing his account of the forms in competition with the

<sup>15</sup>note esp. De Anima II,4 415b12-14; there will (eventually) be a full discussion in Iγ1 above. need there full discussion of why the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of X (in the relevant sense) is the cause to X of being as said of the categories (roughly, for X to be in this sense is for something to be X [or X-paronym], and the causes of X's being in this sense are the causes to something which is X of its being X, which can be discovered by spelling out a scientific definition of X, as in the thunder case). I will abbreviate "being as said of the categories" to "categorical being"

<sup>16</sup>summarizing from Iγ1; see also Morrison comments

<sup>17</sup>cross-references (even for Aristotle: τί ἐστὶ ὃ κινεῖ τὸν οὐρανόν?)

<sup>18</sup>cross-references above. perhaps note the further points Aristotle makes here: that Antiphon is supposing that being-a-bed is an accident, and that the οὐσία is what persists underlying the change. this connects with the eternity of the ultimate substratum, a point that Aristotle goes on to draw. the receptacle of the Timaeus is of course also an ἀρχή in this way, and is also put forward by Plato as an answer to a τί ἐστὶ question

causal accounts of the physicists, Plato says that the issue is to know "the causes of each thing, διὰ τί each thing comes-to-be and διὰ τί it perishes and διὰ τί it is" (96a8-9), and as Aristotle puts it, correctly summarizing the ensuing discussion, "in the Phaedo it is said that the forms are causes both of being and of coming-to-be" (Metaphysics A9 991b3-4).<sup>19</sup>

Aristotle himself, of course, rejects both the claims of the physicists that the material substratum is the οὐσία or αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of the manifest things, and Plato's claim that a separate form is the οὐσία or αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας of the manifest things. More generally, he rejects the claim that we can get to the desired (separate, eternal) ἀρχαί as the οὐσίαι of the manifest things, that is, by beginning with some sensible object and asking τί ἐστὶ until we reach an ultimate answer. Aristotle thinks that the οὐσία of a sensible object is its form, but he insists against Plato that the form of a thing does not exist before the thing itself does (so, explicitly and emphatically, Λ3 1070a21-30), and so it does not give a causal route back to eternal ἀρχαί; Aristotle concedes that a conspecific form of X must exist (in another individual) before this X comes-to-be, and if we like we can say that the species-form is eternal, but the species-form does not exist separately from its instances, and so cannot be among the desired ἀρχαί. Aristotle, unlike most of his predecessors, thinks that the ἀρχαί--the several separate eternal οὐσίαι, and the single absolutely first ἀρχή which Aristotle calls νοῦς in Λ7 and Λ9, and identifies with the good-itself in Λ10--are not the οὐσίαι of the manifest things, but are entirely different οὐσίαι, and are causes of the manifest things only as causes of motion and actuality. But Aristotle is not arguing for his positive view of the ἀρχαί in Z; he will argue for it in Λ on the basis of the investigation of the causes of being as actuality and potentiality in Θ. In Z he is examining the causes of being-as-οὐσία (and categorical being in general) to sensible things, to see whether, as Plato and the physicists claim, these causes lead up to the ἀρχαί; Aristotle's conclusion is that they do not.

Recall (from IIα1 above) Jaeger's complaint that ZH "do not keep steadily in view their supposed purpose of leading up to the proof of the existence of supersensible reality," but on the contrary "give the impression of being written simply in order to refute Plato's conception of being." This oversimplifies, but it is not too far from the truth. But "Plato's conception of being" holds that the οὐσία of a manifest thing is a separate eternal intelligible form, and it belongs to the first philosopher to examine and refute that claim; and this is Z's function in the investigation of "supersensible reality." However, there is an oversimplification here which it is important to avoid. The prime concern of wisdom is not with immaterial things as such, but with the ἀρχαί, and while Aristotle himself believes that the ἀρχαί are immaterial, he will address the arguments of all his predecessors in the inquiry περὶ ἀρχῶν, both those who posited immaterial ἀρχαί and those who did not. In Z, in particular, while Plato is certainly the chief opponent, there are also others, including the physicists, who think that the οὐσία of X exists prior to X and is thus an ἀρχή or a step on the road to the ἀρχαί, and Aristotle considers and refutes these people together with Plato, although he does not regard them as serious threats and gives them much less detailed attention. As we will see, Z is in this respect following the presentation of B, which treats physics and dialectic (and mathematics) as parallel claimants to wisdom and to the ἀρχαί, even while it takes the Academic disciplines as much more serious rivals to Aristotle's own project. If

<sup>19</sup>Aristotle is here not citing anything in particular from the Phaedo, but 101c, which cite, makes the point pretty well. Aristotle here in A9 says αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι, in A6 also αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας to describe how Plato thinks the forms are causes (987b24-5); elsewhere he just says that Plato thinks the forms are causes of things by being their οὐσίαι (so in A7 and again in A9), but this is scarcely different, since Aristotle scarcely draws a distinction between saying that Y is the οὐσία of X and saying that Y is the αἴτιον τῆς οὐσίας to X

the physicists are right and the ἀρχαί are the material substrata of things, then first philosophy will be physics, and it will be a study of the οὐσίαι (as matter) of natural things; if Plato is right and the ἀρχαί are the ultimate formal causes of things, then first philosophy will not be physics but dialectic, but it will again be a study of the οὐσίαι (as forms) of natural things. Aristotle's own view, however, is that first philosophy is not physics, and that it belongs to physics, not to first philosophy, to study the οὐσίαι of natural things--not just to study the οὐσία as matter, but also to study the οὐσία as the form present in the matter (which is the thing's οὐσία in a stronger sense): as Aristotle argues, matter and form are correlates and the same science must know them both, as against the Platonic view that physics knows the matter and dialectic knows the form. So while the first philosopher must take up the investigation of the οὐσίαι of natural things, he has finished this investigation once he shows that they do not lead to the ἀρχαί, and that the οὐσίαι-as-forms of natural things are inseparable from matter and are the domain of the physicist.

α2b: The effects are οὐσίαι

So Z investigates causes-as-οὐσίαι of the manifest things. A second point is that the things whose causes it investigates are themselves οὐσίαι. At the end of E, our immediate task is to investigate the causes of categorical being. On the face of it, this means investigating causes of being not just of οὐσίαι, but of everything that has being καθ' αὐτό in the sense of Δ7, including qualities and quantities and relations and so on, although excluding negations and privations and beings per accidens such as musical Coriscus. But Z1 immediately says that, although being is said in different ways of things in the different categories, we need only consider οὐσίαι, which exist in the strongest sense; and indeed the subsequent argument of Z concentrates all-but-exclusively on οὐσίαι, mentioning beings in other categories mostly to note their irrelevance. As we have seen, Θ8 refers back to ZH as οἱ περὶ οὐσίας λόγοι (1049b27-8), and Iota 2 refers to the same books as οἱ περὶ οὐσίας καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος λόγοι (1053b17-18); and Θ1, marking the transition from ZH's discussion of categorical being to Θ's discussion of being as actuality and potentiality, says "we have spoken [in ZH] about that which is in the primary sense, and to which all the other predications/categories [κατηγορίαι] of being are referred, about οὐσία: for the other beings, the quantified and the qualified and the others that are said in this way, are said according to the λόγος of οὐσία, as we have said in the first λόγοι [i.e. in Z1]" (1045b27-32). One natural way to take this is as saying that, in discussing the causes of categorical being, we need only consider the causes of being to οὐσίαι, since these have being primarily, and things in the other categories have being only derivatively from οὐσίαι. This interpretation is supported by H1, which says, in summarizing the argument of Z, "it has been said that we are seeking the causes and ἀρχαί and στοιχεῖα of οὐσίαι" (1042a4-6). Λ1 says explicitly that the reason why "the study is about οὐσία, for we are seeking the ἀρχαί and causes of οὐσίαι" (1069a18-19) is that οὐσίαι are the first of beings, and that beings in other categories are not beings simpliciter (but, presumably, exist πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν, by being attributes of οὐσίαι), and Λ5 spells out the point that "the causes of οὐσίαι are the causes of all things, since [all things] are taken away when [οὐσίαι] are taken away" (1071a34-5, cp. a1-2). So in looking for the ἀρχαί as causes of beings, we need only examine the causes of οὐσίαι. Indeed, this was the program laid out already in Γ1-2. And Aristotle seems to be carrying it out in Z. Thus in Z3, where Aristotle is looking for the ἀρχαί as the οὐσίαι-as-subjects of all other things, he restricts himself to looking for the subjects of composite οὐσίαι rather than of accidents, since these composite οὐσίαι are themselves the subjects of the accidents, and the subjects of these composite οὐσίαι will be the

ultimate subjects of all things. So too in Z4-6, where Aristotle is looking for the ἀρχαί as οὐσίαι-as-essences, he gives arguments in Z4-5 that it is only οὐσίαι that have essences (or only οὐσίαι that have essences in the primary sense), so that, if the ἀρχαί can be found as the essences of things, they will be found as the essences of οὐσίαι, and it is only these that we need examine.

It is worth noting, though, that while it seems obvious that the causes of being to the οὐσίαι are the causes of being to all things (since nothing else can exist if the οὐσίαι do not), and while it sounds plausible to infer that the causes of categorical being to οὐσίαι are the causes of categorical being to all things, this does not really follow, at least if by "cause of categorical being" we mean the essence rather than the subject. Plato was at least as interested in forms of the virtues as in forms of the kinds of animals, and it is not obviously absurd that the ἀρχαί should include things like the form of justice, which is a cause of being to qualities rather than to οὐσίαι (although the form of justice could not succeed in giving being to anything unless there were also οὐσίαι to be subjects of the quality). Aristotle does think he can restrict the inquiry into ἀρχαί-as-essences to essences of οὐσίαι, but he needs some argument to do this. One way to do this is through the rather complicated arguments of Z4-5, which we will examine in IIγ below. A simpler argument, though, is the one Aristotle uses in A9 against the Platonic thesis that "there are forms not only of οὐσίαι but of many other things" (990b23-4): "the forms are οὐσίαι; but the same [names] signify οὐσίαι here [among the sensibles] as there [among the forms]: or what will it be to say that there is something παρά these things, the one over the many?" (990b34-991a2). In other words: since the forms (like any possible ἀρχαί) must be οὐσίαι, and yet must fall under the same λόγος as the things they are said to be forms of, they can only be forms of οὐσίαι. For if the form of justice is an οὐσίαι, but Aristides' justice is a quality, how can they both univocally be called justice? And if they are not both univocally called justice, how can the form of justice really be the cause-as-essence of justice in Aristides? For this and kindred reasons, if we are going to look for the ἀρχαί as causes-as-οὐσίαι of the manifest things, it will suffice to look for them as the causes-as-οὐσίαι of the manifest οὐσίαι, and we can ignore the manifest accidents as effects. And Aristotle does for the most part ignore them.

α2c: The causes are themselves οὐσίαι

So the effects will be οὐσίαι. However, in Z1, where Aristotle is arguing that οὐσίαι are primary and that therefore we need only study οὐσίαι, his immediate point seems to be not that the effects we start from are οὐσίαι, but that the causes we are seeking must be οὐσίαι. This is certainly true, since what we are seeking are the ἀρχαί. Most of Z1 is a connected argument to show that οὐσίαι--answers to τί ἐστι questions--are in several ways prior to things in other categories (answers to ποῖόν ἐστι questions and the like); and to say that οὐσίαι are prior to other things is to say that the ἀρχαί (the first of all things) must be οὐσίαι.

Since we have already seen Aristotle's reasons for thinking that the ἀρχαί must be οὐσίαι, and since this view was not controversial among the philosophers, there is no need to dwell on the details of Z1. But an overview of the argument-structure of Z1, and some comments on some details, will help to show how Aristotle frames the questions of the inquiry περὶ οὐσίας of Z.

Z1 divides naturally as follows:

(1) An introductory sentence surveying the ways that being is said of things in different

categories (1028a10-13);

(2) An argument that it is only οὐσία that are beings in the primary sense, as opposed both to concreta in accidental categories (like ὁ δίκαιος or ὁ βαδίζων) and to abstracta in accidental categories (like ἡ δικαιοσύνη or τὸ βαδίζειν) (1028a13-31);

(3) An argument that οὐσία are prior to things in other categories in each of three ways, in λόγος and in knowledge and in time (1028a31-b2);

(4) A concluding sentence describing the disputes of earlier philosophers about "what is οὐσία?" and announcing that we too must investigate this question (1028b2-7); this leads into Z2, where Aristotle reviews the different οὐσία his predecessors have believed in, and so sets out the disputes that he must resolve.

The first comment to make on this argument is that Aristotle starts from the notion of οὐσία as the answer to a τί ἐστι question, that is, from a 2-place notion of οὐσία. The difference between οὐσία and things in other categories is a difference in the questions they answer. Thus in the first sentence of the chapter, τὸ ὄν is said to "signify, on the one hand, the τί ἐστι and τόδε τι, and on the other hand the ποιόν or ποσόν or each of the other things that are predicated in this way" (1028a11-13). What exists in the first way answers a question τί ἐστι X; what exists in the second way answers a question ποιόν ἐστι X or ποσόν ἐστὶ X (or the like), and so it is predicated of X not in the τί ἐστι but as an accident. Aristotle goes on to argue that only what exists in the first way exists in the primary sense, and again the argument rests on the difference in the types of predication: "although being is said in so many ways, it is clear that what is primarily being is the τί ἐστι, which signifies οὐσία (for when we say what this is like [ποιόν τι τόδε], we say that it is good or bad, not that it is three cubits or a man, but when we say what it is [τί ἐστι], we say not that it is white or hot or three cubits, but that it is a man or a god), but the others are said to be beings through being qualities, or quantities, or affections, or something similar, of what exists in this way" (1028a13-20). Thus the difference in the senses of existence is founded on a difference in the types of predication: for Y to exist is for something to be Y, and Y exists in the strongest sense if X is Y in the τί ἐστι (so that Y is a τόδε), whereas Y exists in a weaker sense if X is Y in the ποιόν ἐστι (so that Y is a ποιόνδε). The obvious problem with this way of dividing the senses of existence is that, while it excludes concreta in accidental categories (like the white or the just) from being οὐσία and existing in the strongest sense, it does not seem to exclude abstracta in accidental categories (like whiteness or justice). As the Topics insists, we can ask τί ἐστι about a white color just as we can about an animal, and the answer "white[ness]" or "color" will be in the τί ἐστι (Topics I,9 103b29-33); we can say that ἡ δικαιοσύνη is ὅπερ τόδε τι, whereas ὁ δίκαιος is not (Topics III,1 116a23-4).<sup>20</sup> Apparently in response to this possible objection, Z1 argues that accidental abstracta are not said to exist καθ' αὐτά but only parasitically on the existence of the corresponding concreta; and, since accidental concreta in turn are said to exist only because they are predicated of οὐσία, it is οὐσία-in-the-strict-sense that are the source of the diminished kinds of being both of accidental concreta and of accidental abstracta (1028a20-31). So when Aristotle insists that the only beings we need to study in Z are οὐσία, he means, in the first instance, that they will be answers to τί ἐστι questions, but also that they will be the answers to the primary kind of τί ἐστι questions, rather than the derivative kind of τί ἐστι questions formed by abstraction.

Aristotle's point about οὐσία so described is not just that the predicate "ὄν" applies primarily to them, but that these things are prior to all other things: therefore, since every non-οὐσία has

<sup>20</sup>some explanation and argument. λευκόν here must be abstract, cp. the example of μέγεθος.

some οὐσία prior to it, every non-οὐσία is a non-ἀρχή, and the present inquiry, the inquiry "what are the ἀρχαί?", can restrict itself to examining οὐσίαι. Aristotle does not bother to lay out detailed arguments for this conclusion, since it was entirely uncontroversial: as he rightly notes a few lines further down, his predecessors and contemporaries, in asking "what is there?" (and, more specifically, "what is there beyond the manifest things?" and "what is there that might be an ἀρχή?"), took it for granted that they were asking only about what exists in the sense of οὐσία (cp. 1028b2-7). However, without developing his arguments in detail, Aristotle does give at least a reminder of some different senses in which οὐσίαι are prior to non-οὐσίαι: "οὐσία is first ... in λόγος and in knowledge and in time" (1028a32-3). Of these, the crucial point for Aristotle's argument is what he here calls priority in time. Aristotle's argument that οὐσία is prior in this sense is simply that "none of the other predicates is separate, but only this" (1028a33-4); and the argument helps reveal what Aristotle means here by priority in time. The ἀρχαί must be prior in existence to all other things, and a fair first approximation to what this means is that the ἀρχαί must be temporally the oldest of all things: certainly the ἀρχαί must be temporally at least as old as anything else, and then we can use more subtle tests to decide whether one of two coeval things is prior in existence to the other. If Y is a non-οὐσία and therefore exists inseparably, say existing only as an attribute of X (or only as an attribute of some one of X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub> ... X<sub>n</sub>), then Y is posterior in existence to X (or to the X<sub>i</sub> collectively): in particular, Y cannot be temporally prior to X (or to the X<sub>i</sub>), since whenever Y exists, what it is predicated of must also exist. Aristotle's point here in Z1 is that every non-οὐσία must be in this sense posterior, and therefore cannot be an ἀρχή: the thought is the same that he spells out at greater length in Metaphysics N1, that "if the ἀρχή of all things cannot have anything prior to it, it would be impossible for the ἀρχή, being something else, to be an ἀρχή; for instance, if someone said that white, not qua something else but qua white, is an ἀρχή, but that nonetheless it is said of some underlying thing, and, being something else, is white: for that [other underlying thing] will be prior" (1087a31-6; see discussion in Iβ4 above).

Aristotle adds the other two kinds of priority, priority in λόγος and in knowledge, in order to show that the knowledge of οὐσίαι, besides being knowledge of the things that are first in existence, also satisfies another expectation of wisdom discussed in Metaphysics A1-2, of being first qua knowledge, because it is knowledge of what is most knowable (and, therefore, has to the highest degree the value that all knowledge has qua knowledge). Usually Aristotle does not distinguish between priority in λόγος and priority in knowledge. When he speaks of priority in λόγος, it is often to contrast this with separation or with priority in existence or in time, which often goes in a contrary direction: here he brings the two often contrary notions together to assert emphatically that οὐσίαι are prior to accidents both in time (or by being separate and thus prior in existence) and in λόγος.<sup>21</sup> X is prior to Y in λόγος if X (or X's λόγος) must be mentioned in the λόγος of Y. Aristotle says here that "in the λόγος of each thing the λόγος of the οὐσία is necessarily present" (1028a35-6), that is, that the λόγος of what a thing is like must contain the λόγος of what the thing itself is, but he does not argue for this here, and it is not obvious. In Metaphysics Δ11 he had said, reasonably enough, that "in λόγος the accident is prior to the

<sup>21</sup>Frede-Patzig deny that Aristotle's three claims (of priority in λόγος, knowledge and time) correspond 1-1 with his three arguments (the argument from separation and the arguments for priority in λόγος and in knowledge). they think that separation is the fundamental notion, and the three specified kinds of priority are corollaries, with the proof of priority in time unfortunately missing. this is hopeless: the Δ11 example of musical man (cited below), and many similar examples (e.g. of individual and universal or species and genus; note esp. M2 1077b1ff, discussed in Iβ4), show that separation-priority and knowledge- or λόγος-priority often go in opposite directions

whole [i.e. to the οὐσία-accident compound], e.g. the musical [τὸ μουσικόν] to the musical man, for the whole λόγος [sc. of musical man] cannot exist without the part [sc. the λόγος of musical], even though the musical cannot exist unless someone who is musical [μουσικός τις] exists" (1018b34-7). His assertion in Z1 seems to contradict this, since if the οὐσία man belongs in the λόγος of the accident musical, the λόγος of musical will not be properly prior to the λόγος of musical man--the two λόγοι will be mutually entailing or identical. But presumably Aristotle's point is that any accident is a per se accident of some circumscribed genus of οὐσία, can belong only to them, and can be defined only by reference to them: so in defining odd, we must refer to number, and say what it is for a number to be odd, and in defining male, we must refer to animal, and say what it is for an animal to be male. So while male is prior in λόγος to male human, it is simultaneous in λόγος with male animal, and posterior in λόγος to animal.<sup>22</sup>

If X is prior to Y in λόγος, so that the λόγος of X is contained in the λόγος of Y, then in an obvious sense X is also prior to Y in knowledge, since scientific knowledge of Y will depend on first having a scientific account of X. Usually Aristotle simply identifies priority in λόγος with priority in knowledge, or with priority in knowledge simpliciter as opposed to priority in knowledge for us.<sup>23</sup> When Aristotle here makes the special claim that οὐσία are first in knowledge, as something beyond the claim that they are first in λόγος, he is calling attention specifically to the claim that knowledge of οὐσία is knowledge of what is most knowable, or, equivalently, that knowledge of οὐσία is most knowledge. His argument turns, once again, on the two-place concept of οὐσία: knowledge of what X is is more knowledge than knowledge of what X is like. Aristotle says, "we say that we know each thing most of all when we know what man or fire is [τί ἐστὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ... ἢ τὸ πῦρ], rather than what they are like or how much they are or where they are [τὸ ποιὸν ἢ τὸ ποσὸν ἢ τὸ πού], since each of these things, too [the ποιόν, ποσόν, etc.], we know when we know what the ποσόν or the ποιόν is" (1028a36-b2). There seem to be two possible interpretations of the supporting argument in the last clause. Perhaps: it is absurd to say that we know this thing better when we know what he is like (it is white) than when we know what it is (it is Callias), since even to know whiteness is to know what whiteness is rather than to know merely what it is like (it is pleasant to behold). Or perhaps: it is absurd to say that we know this thing better when we know what it is like (it is something white) than when we know what it is (it is Callias), since we would not rest content with knowing that it is something white, but would think that we know the white thing only when we know what the white thing is (it is Callias).<sup>24</sup> But in either case, the main argument is meant to be the same as the argument of B#1 that wisdom is knowledge of the οὐσία of things, building on A2's argument that wisdom, as the knowledge most choiceworthy in itself, is knowledge of the most knowable: "inasmuch as [wisdom] was determined to be [the science] of the first causes and of the most knowable, the [science] of οὐσία would be of this kind: for when the same thing can be known in many ways, we say that the person who knows the thing through its being something knows it more than the person who knows it through its not being something; and among these [people who know the thing positively rather than negatively], that one knows it

<sup>22</sup>see the discussion of Z5 in IIγ below (Ross' note here is right)

<sup>23</sup>Θ8 distinguishes priority in οὐσία, in time, and in λόγος, and parenthetically identifies this last with priority in knowledge, 1049b16-17; Δ11 1018b30-37 identifies priority in λόγος with priority in knowledge, or with priority in knowledge simpliciter as opposed to priority in knowledge for us (here priority according to sensation)

<sup>24</sup>so in the first case, what-is-the-white means its essence, in the second case its subject. both of these are, on Aristotle's account, legitimate senses of the τί ἐστὶ question applied to a ποιόν. the argument of B#1 996b18-22, supporting the B#1 parallel (cited below) to the main argument here, may force the first interpretation: certainly the example of τετραγωνίζειν goes this way. {Frede-Patzig try out a weird third interpretation}

more than another, and most of all the person who knows what it is rather than how much it is or what it is apt to do or to suffer" (996b13-18).<sup>25</sup> This argument shows that wisdom is knowledge of some οὐσία, that is, knowledge of the answer to a τί ἐστὶ question asked of something; perhaps this argument, at least in combination with the other arguments of Z1, also shows that this must be the primary kind of τί ἐστὶ question, whose answer is an οὐσία simpliciter, rather than the derivative kind of τί ἐστὶ question formed by abstraction. But it does not show what οὐσία wisdom will be knowledge of: wisdom will be knowledge of some kind of cause of the manifest things, and wisdom will be knowledge of the οὐσία of something (where the οὐσία is a kind of cause), but it does not follow, and Aristotle does not believe, that wisdom is knowledge of the οὐσία of the manifest things. But most of Aristotle's predecessors did believe this.

α2d: What οὐσία are there?

If the ἀρχαί, as what is prior to everything else, must be οὐσία, then what οὐσία are they? What οὐσία are there for the ἀρχαί to be? Aristotle says, in the last sentence of Z1,

the question that is always asked and always disputed [ἀπορούμενον], both in former times and nowadays, 'what is being?' [τί τὸ ὄν], is the question 'what is οὐσία?' [τίς ἢ οὐσία]<sup>26</sup>--for this [i.e. οὐσία] is what some people say is one, others more than one, some finitely many, others infinitely many--so that we too should examine first and most of all and almost exclusively about this kind of being, what it is [περὶ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος θεωρητέον τί ἐστίν]. (1028b2-7)

This sentence immediately leads into Z2's survey of the οὐσία that different philosophers have believed in, both the οὐσία that they have all agreed on and the disputed οὐσία posited by different individual philosophers: there is of course no Aristotelian authority for the conventional division between Z1 and Z2. In speaking of the question τί τὸ ὄν that his predecessors have disputed, some saying that it is one, others that it is finitely many, others that it is infinitely many, Aristotle is unmistakably referring to the doxographical tradition that Jaap Mansfeld has traced back to Hippias: the texts of this tradition set out the divergent answers of different philosophers to a series of questions, including the question τί τὸ ὄν, where to answer this question is to say how many things there are and what they are like.<sup>27</sup> Thus Isocrates, calling on this tradition, complains about "the ancient sophists, of whom one said that the multiplicity of things that are is infinite, while Empedocles said that there are four, plus strife and love among them, but Ion that there are no more than three, Alcmeon that there are only two, Parmenides and Melissus that there is one, and Gorgias that there is nothing at all" (Antidosis 268). Aristotle, in the last sentence of Z1, is making the perfectly correct point that when these people argued about τὸ ὄν, they meant τὸ ὄν in the sense of οὐσία: when they said how many things there are, they

<sup>25</sup> cite A2 982a30-b4 (Christ's emendation seems necessary at a31). recall the B#1 context: is wisdom the knowledge of the οὐσία of things or rather of their efficient or their formal cause?

<sup>26</sup> note on translation. literally it isn't the question that's the subject of the sentence, but rather the thing that is sought--namely, what there is. there may not be much difference in meaning between ζητούμενον and ἀπορούμενον

<sup>27</sup> Mansfeld, "Aristotle, Plato, and the Preplatonic Doxography and Chronography," now in his Studies in the Historiography of Greek Philosophy. Mansfeld cites many parallel texts, including several elsewhere in Aristotle. Mansfeld does not try to give a Dielsian stemma of these texts, and it is not certain that they go back to an archetype in Hippias, but it is certain that they represent a widespread form of describing and classifying earlier thinkers that goes back at least to circa 400 BC

meant to be counting the οὐσίαι, rather than the οὐσίαι plus the qualities plus the relations and so on. Beyond this general reference to the doxographical tradition on τί τὸ ὄν, Aristotle seems to be referring to one particular text of this tradition, the review in Plato's Sophist, first of "those who have spoken precisely about being" (245e6-7)--i.e. who have given a numerical count πόσα καὶ ποῖα τὰ ὄντα (242c5-6)--and then of those who, without giving a count, have either identified what is with body and said that all beings are in motion, or have identified what is with "certain intelligible and incorporeal forms" (246b7-8) and said that all beings are at rest. The Sophist, unlike Isocrates and kindred texts, explicitly says that the question is about οὐσία (there is a γιγαντομαχία διὰ τὴν ἀμφισβήτησιν περὶ τῆς οὐσίας [246a4-5], the one party ταῦτὸν σῶμα καὶ οὐσίαν ὀριζόμενοι [246b1] and the other party νοητὰ ἄττα καὶ ἀσώματα εἶδη βιαζόμενοι τὴν ἀληθινὴν οὐσίαν εἶναι and calling bodies γένεσιν ἀντ' οὐσίαν [246b7-c2]); and, for the Sophist, the live issue is not the archaic dispute between one and two and three, but whether the οὐσίαι are bodies or incorporeals or both.<sup>28</sup> And this is also the central issue in the dispute τίς ἡ οὐσία as Aristotle presents it in Z2. "Οὐσία seems to belong most manifestly to bodies ... but whether these alone are οὐσίαι or also others, or some of these, or some of these and some others, or none of these but some others, we must investigate" (Z2 1028b8-15): where the possible incorporeal οὐσίαι that have been proposed are mathematical (and especially mathematical boundaries of bodies) or Platonic forms or both (so Z2 1028b16-27).

Z2 thus refers back, not just to the doxographical tradition and to the Sophist, but most immediately to the fifth aporia of B, which asked "whether we should say that there are only the sensible οὐσίαι, or also others besides these, and whether [these others] are all of the same kind or are several genera of οὐσίαι, [as claimed by] those who say that there are the forms and also the intermediates, which they say the mathematical sciences are about" (B2 997a34-b3).<sup>29</sup> In B#5 Aristotle asks only about οὐσίαι beyond the sensibles, apparently taking it as now uncontroversial that (as the Sophist had argued against the Friends of the Forms) there are indeed sensible οὐσίαι. And in Z2 it is still obviously the central question whether there exist any οὐσίαι beyond the sensibles. While he here treats it as formally open whether there are sensible οὐσίαι (and it is genuinely open whether all alleged sensible οὐσίαι have the same status), he still says that "οὐσία seems to belong most manifestly to bodies," and all of the views he cites (including Plato's, 1028b19-21) do concede that there are sensible οὐσίαι, even if perhaps these are not οὐσίαι in as high a degree as the eternal things. As H1 puts it in summarizing Z2, "some οὐσίαι are agreed on [ὁμολογούμεναι] by all [philosophers], while some [philosophers] have made individual [i.e. disputed] assertions about others: the agreed-on ones are the natural ones ... while some say individually that the forms and the mathematical are οὐσίαι" (1042a6-12). So, in approaching the disputed question what οὐσίαι there are, sound method dictates that we begin with the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι--natural bodies--and use these as a starting-point of inferences to determine whether there are also other οὐσίαι. As Aristotle puts it at the end of Z3, "some of the sensibles are agreed to be οὐσίαι, so that we should start the investigation with these. For it is helpful to proceed to what is more knowable: for learning takes place for everyone in this way, going through what is less knowable by nature [sc. but more knowable for us] to what is more

<sup>28</sup>I think this is what Aristotle is getting at with the distinction between πάλαι and νῦν (Z1 1028b3)--compare

Isocrates' πάλαι σοφισταί. note also A1 on οἱ πάλαι and οἱ νῦν. also note the Sophist on aporia about τί τὸ ὄν  
<sup>29</sup>Aristotle obviously refers back to this passage at Z2 1028b18-20, ἔτι παρὰ τὰ αἰσθητὰ οἱ μὲν οὐκ οἴονται εἶναι οὐδεν τοιοῦτον, οἱ δὲ πλείω καὶ μᾶλλον ὄντα αἰδία, ὥσπερ Πλάτων τά τε εἶδη καὶ τὰ μαθηματικά δύο οὐσίας. so too 1028b13-14, πότερον αὐταί μόναι οὐσίαι ἢ καὶ ἄλλαι. [translation note on 1028b18-20: "πλείω" = several genera (as in B#5); "τοιοῦτον" = "οὐσία"; "μᾶλλον" = "μᾶλλον τοιοῦτον"; "ὄντα αἰδία" is causal--FP recte]

knowable [sc. by nature, though less knowable for us]" (1029a33-4, 1029b3-5).<sup>30</sup> And Z does in fact carry out this project of beginning with the *ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι*, and seeing whether we can infer from them to the existence of other and prior *οὐσίαι*.

Aristotle's reasons for now taking up the fifth aporia of B correspond to the reasons why he had raised this aporia in the first place. The point is not simply that, having dealt with aporiai #2-4 in *Metaphysics* Γ, it is now high time for us to get to aporia #5: the point is rather that, in order to answer the question about *ἀρχαί*, we have to answer the question about *οὐσίαι*. The reason why B had raised the question about *οὐσίαι* is that the *ἀρχαί* must be *οὐσίαι*, so that wisdom as knowledge *περὶ ἀρχῶν* must be knowledge of some kind of *οὐσία*. As we saw earlier, this comes out more clearly in the K parallel to B#5, which asks, not whether there are *οὐσίαι* besides the sensibles, but "whether the science we are now seeking is about the sensible *οὐσίαι*, or not, but about some others: if others, it would be either about the Forms or about the mathematical" (K1 1059a39-b2). There are reasons for being dissatisfied with the thesis that the sensibles are the only *οὐσίαι*, and therefore that the *ἀρχαί* are sensible things and wisdom is a science of sensibles: as K puts it, too quickly and crudely, "the science we are now seeking ... is not about sensible *οὐσίαι*, since they are corruptible" (1059b13-14), and *ἀρχαί* must be eternal.<sup>31</sup> "If there is no other *οὐσία* beyond the ones constituted by nature, then physics would be the first science" (E1 1026a27-29), and E does not rule out this possibility, but in pursuing wisdom, our most pressing task will be to decide whether to settle for physics as wisdom or whether there are other *οὐσίαι*, such as Forms or mathematical, which would be eternal and prior and closer to the *ἀρχαί*, so that dialectic or mathematics and not physics would be the first science. Now it is easy enough to specify non-sensible things--such as the genera, and especially the highest universals, being and unity--which are certainly eternal, and by Plato's test prior to the sensibles, and to this extent have a better claim than the sensibles to being *ἀρχαί*. The question, however, is whether these things exist separately, that is, whether they are *οὐσίαι*.<sup>32</sup> If not, they cannot be *ἀρχαί*: and so the pursuit of wisdom, and indeed the fundamental decision about which direction to pursue it in, depend on answering B#5, and deciding whether Forms and mathematical, and any other alleged *οὐσίαι* beyond the sensibles, do exist and are separate and *οὐσίαι*. And this is the main question that Z2ff take up, beginning with the sensible *οὐσίαι* and investigating what is beyond and prior to them: "we must investigate what has been said rightly or wrongly about these things, and what things are *οὐσίαι*, and whether there are or are not any [*οὐσίαι*] beyond the sensible ones, and how these [*οὐσίαι*] themselves are, and whether there is any separate *οὐσία*, and why and how, beyond the sensible ones, or whether there is none" (Z2 1028b27-31).<sup>33</sup>

The kind of investigation that Aristotle describes at the end of Z3, beginning from the sensibles which are more knowable to us but less knowable by nature (and may "contain little or nothing of being," 1029b9-10), and pursuing whatever may be prior to them and more knowable

<sup>30</sup>see IIa3 for a discussion of some of the difficulties of this passage

<sup>31</sup>as in Ia3, note the parallel in B#8 999b4-5--this isn't a peculiarity of K

<sup>32</sup>cross-refs esp. to earlier discussions of the K parallels to B#5 and B#11

<sup>33</sup>note February 2004: this is wrong. (i) it is clear that there must be a difference between the weaker condition *παρά* and the stronger condition *χωριστὸν παρά* (ii) *αὐταί* must be the *παρά* things, else there's wild oscillation of subject, *πῶς εἰσὶ* "how do they exist, e.g. separately or not", (iii) there's a probable back-reference to the "limits of bodies". FP are right on (ii) against Ross; on (iii) they suggest forms rather than limits. forms might be vaguely included, but the only thing actually mention for Aristotle to refer back to are the liimits. d rethink/correct what you say below about the progression from sensibles through limits to separately existing things, basically right but be careful about *παρά* (which should perhaps be translated "beside" rather than "beyond")

by nature, will obviously be a causal inquiry, beginning with manifest effects and seeking their non-manifest causes. But how is this supposed to help us decide whether these non-manifest things are οὐσίαι--especially things, like being and unity, that obviously exist and are obviously eternal, but are not obviously separate? The strategy that Z follows is to begin with the manifest things and search, not just for their causes or even for causes of being to them, but more specifically for their οὐσίαι. The philosophers that Aristotle is dealing with in Z claim not only that they have discovered οὐσίαι beyond the manifest and agreed-on οὐσίαι, but also that these further οὐσίαι are the οὐσίαι of the manifest οὐσίαι; and Z will investigate their claims that the οὐσίαι of the agreed-on οὐσίαι are something beyond and prior to these manifest things, and are therefore further οὐσίαι. This is not sufficient to give a full answer to B#5, since it does not decide whether there is some further οὐσία that is not the οὐσία of any sensible thing--an Academic might think that either mathematical numbers or something like Form-numbers are οὐσίαι and that their ἀρχαί are the first of all things, without maintaining that these are οὐσίαι of anything sensible, and of course Aristotle himself believes that the ἀρχή is a non-sensible οὐσία which is not the οὐσία of any sensible thing--but these issues are outside the scope of Z, and will be saved for AMN.

While Z2, and the rest of Z, are especially interested in Academic claims about incorporeal οὐσίαι, Aristotle tries to be evenhanded between the Academics and the physicists. It was, of course, not a novelty with Plato to seek non-manifest ἀρχαί as the οὐσίαι of the manifest things. Metaphysics B had described a number of different paths that philosophers had followed, beginning with manifest things and seeking the ἀρχαί as (total or partial) οὐσίαι of the manifest things. B#8 had described the paths from a sensible thing both to its material substrate and to its Platonic form, each of which has a claim to be the οὐσία of the thing and to exist prior to the thing. B#6 describes the rival λόγοι τῆς οὐσίης that a physicist and a dialectician would give, the physicist tracing the thing back to its material constituents and the dialectician to its genera and differentiae: both the physicist and the dialectician claim that their στοιχεῖα are parts of the οὐσία of the thing, partial answers to τί ἐστι X, which each exist prior to X, and come together to yield X. Finally, B#12 suggests that when we pursue the οὐσία of a sensible thing, going from qualities such as hot and cold to their substratum, we reach not fire or earth but beyond these "body," mathematically described as three-dimensional extension; and, B#12 suggests, the οὐσίαι of mathematical bodies are in turn constituted out of their bounding surfaces, these again out of lines, these again out of points, these again perhaps out of units and numbers. So on this (Academic and Pythagorizing) account, mathematical boundaries will be (partial) οὐσίαι of bodies and thus of sensible things, existing prior to the things and being more οὐσίαι than sensible things themselves.<sup>34</sup> All of these paths from the manifest things to their alleged οὐσίαι and ἀρχαί fall under the scope of the investigation of Z, although in practice Aristotle says little here about the mathematical path of B#12 and concentrates on the claims of the physicists and the dialecticians. So while Z is certainly taking up the fifth aporia of B, it does not stop at the fifth aporia: rather, in order to resolve the question about οὐσίαι beyond the manifest ones, it examines the whole series of aporiai from B#5 to B#9, with at least some discussion of further aporiai as well. As we will see, the references to B#6 and B#8 are particularly obvious, and will give us a guide in understanding the structure of the argument of Z.

Aristotle will thus be concerned, not only with the question of οὐσίαι beyond the sensible world, but also with οὐσίαι within the sensible world, not all of which are equally manifest, and some of which may be ἀρχαί of others. "Οὐσία seems to belong most manifestly to bodies" (Z2

<sup>34</sup>refer back to Iβ3 for detailed accounts of B#6, B#8, B#12

1028b8-9), and so Z2 starts by giving a list of bodies, but these do not all have the same status: they are "animals and plants and their parts ... and the natural bodies such as fire and water and earth and anything of this kind, and whatever things are parts of these or [composed] of some or all of these, like the heaven and its parts, stars and moon and sun" (1028b9-13).<sup>35</sup> But the physicists did not treat the different bodies as being all equally οὐσίαι. To begin with, Aristotle's list includes only natural bodies and not artifacts: as the H1 parallel says, the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι are αἱ φυσικαὶ [οὐσίαι] (1042a6-8), which excludes artifacts as much as incorporeals. As we have seen, Antiphon thinks that the οὐσία of an artificial thing (such as a bed) is the natural ὑποκείμενον (the wood) out of which it was made: indeed, on Aristotle's account, Antiphon denied that the bed was an οὐσία at all.<sup>36</sup> Aristotle himself is not consistent on whether to count artifacts as οὐσίαι,<sup>37</sup> but it does make much difference, since the aim is not to discover what things are οὐσίαι but to discover the ἀρχαί. Whether or not artifacts should be counted as οὐσίαι, all the physicists agree that artificial things are always posterior to the natural οὐσίαι out of which they are made (where these natural οὐσίαι are each part of the οὐσία, and collectively the whole οὐσία, of the artificial thing): so no artificial thing can be an ἀρχή, and, in searching for the ἀρχαί, it is sufficient to begin with natural bodies and see what is prior to them.

But not even all natural bodies have the same status. The most manifest οὐσίαι are animals and plants; but the physicists claim that these are not ἀρχαί, and that there are other οὐσίαι prior to these, which we can discover as (partial or total) οὐσίαι of the animals and plants. Aristotle himself will dispute this, arguing that the physicists' ἀρχαί are less οὐσίαι than animals and plants, and that the physicists have the order of priority reversed; but he agrees that the animals and plants are our starting point, and that we must investigate, among natural bodies as well as among things that are not bodies, to see if there is something else that is a (partial or total) οὐσία of, and therefore prior to, these most manifest things. One obvious possibility would be the parts of animals (and parts of plants), which Aristotle mentions immediately after the animals and plants themselves in the enumeration of Z2. Parts here might be either anhomeomerous parts, like head and foot, or homeomerous parts, like blood and flesh; sometimes, as with bone or liver, it may not be clear when they are being conceived as homeomerous or as anhomeomerous parts. A physicist might think either that such parts of animals are ἀρχαί absolutely, or that, while not the first of all things, they are still prior to the animals, and are one step closer to the ἀρχαί than the animals themselves are. Anaxagoras, notoriously, thought "that the homeomerous things are στοιχεῖα (I mean, e.g., flesh and bone and each thing of this kind), and that air and fire are mixtures of these and of all the other seeds: for both of these are assembled out of invisible [portions of] all the homeomerous things, so that all things come-to-be out of these" (Aristotle De Caelo III,3 302a28-b4).<sup>38</sup> So flesh and bone and blood would be ἀρχαί, existing in the mixture before the ordered world came to be: they are thus prior to man and horse, which arise only within the ordered world, out of assemblages of the preexisting flesh and bone and blood, and an account that gave the οὐσία of man or horse would give them in terms of these

<sup>35</sup>notes on text and translation. FP are wrong on every possible point. the heaven is a simple body, and stars etc. are its parts, analogous to the totality of earth and its parts. also note the H1 parallel

<sup>36</sup>cite Physics II,1 193a14-17 to this effect. Antiphon's view seems to be that the bed exists only by convention (like the chariot in the Questions of King Milinda)

<sup>37</sup>collect texts

<sup>38</sup>note doubts about whether this is really Anaxagoras' view. Aristotle elsewhere suggests that air etc. were just as primitive as flesh ec. for Anaxagoras (in the De Caelo III passage he is forcing him into a schematic contrast with Empedocles, and may thus be overdoing it); perhaps also note Furley's suggestion on seeds (of horse etc.). none of this would do much damage to the point I want to make here

homeomerous στοιχειῖα.<sup>39</sup>

Aristotle contrasts Empedocles with Anaxagoras, because while Anaxagoras took the homeomerous parts of animals as primitive, Empedocles tried to explain them as mixtures of earth, water, air and fire: Aristotle says that he made bone exist through its λόγος, that is, through the ratio of one part earth and one part water to two parts fire (Metaphysics A10 993a17-18, see Ross ad loc. and Empedocles Fr. 96). But this is certainly compatible with thinking that the parts of animals, although not ἀρχαί absolutely, exist prior to the animals; and Empedocles did indeed think this, not just about parts like bone but also about clearly anhomeomerous parts. The pseudo-Plutarchan Placita report that "Empedocles [thought] that the first generations of animals and plants were not complete, but disjointed into members [μόρια] not growing together" (A72 Diels-Kranz), the present kinds of animals and plants arising only in the third stage, after a second stage of failed combinations of parts (man-faced ox-progeny and the like). Aristotle himself cites a verse of Empedocles saying that at this first stage "many heads without necks sprouted up" (De Caelo III,2 300b31, from Empedocles Fr. 57, which also includes arms without shoulders and eyes without foreheads). Thus heads are prior to animals, and specifically horse-heads to horses; and since horse-heads existed on their own, or on human torsos, before they became parts of horses, it cannot belong to the λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of this kind of head that it is the head of this kind of animal, but rather it belongs to the λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of horse that it is an animal composed of this previously existing kind of head, this previously existing kind of hoof, and so on. And presumably these heads and hooves can themselves be spelled out in terms of more primitive ἀρχαί.

It may seem improper to speak of homeomerous or anhomeomerous parts of animals, or of earth, air, water and fire, as non-manifest οὐσίαι whose existence can be inferred from the manifest οὐσίαι. These are all sensible things, and so are in some sense all manifest; and it is obvious to everyone, without investigation, that heads and flesh and water exist. But it is not manifest that heads or flesh or water are prior to animals: and this in two senses. First, of course, it is not obvious without investigation whether heads or flesh or water existed in a primeval state of the universe before the first animals were generated. But, second, it is also not obvious that these things are causally prior, that they are causes of animals in the ways that the physicists say they are. In particular, it is not obvious that various homeomerous parts of animals (e.g. blood, bile) and various not-necessarily-living simple bodies (e.g. air, fire) are material causes of animals in the ways that the physicists say they are, and so, while it is obvious that there is some blood and some air in the world, it is not always obvious that blood and air are present in all of the things where the physicists say they must be present. The author of the Hippocratic De natura

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<sup>39</sup>Something like this program of explaining the φύσις and οὐσία of animals in terms of their parts is carried out in the Hippocratic Περὶ σαρκῶν, which, while not taking the homeomerous parts of animals as absolute ἀρχαί, does give its account of "man and the other animals, how they arose [ἔφθ, with present-tense implication, how they are by nature] and came-to-be" (c1) by narrating the formation of the different parts of the animals, starting from the centrifuging action of the pre-cosmic vortex and the action of heat in the cosmos on different cold and moist materials. Bone, brain, heart, lung, kidney, spleen, each arise from different degrees of heat acting on different passive bodies: perhaps bone and brain and so on are not simply different homeomerous materials, for the author says a little about how their different shapes arose, but each is considered in itself as something prior to the whole animal, its origin (in the early days of the cosmos?) narrated without regard to the human or animal body of which it will be a part. Indeed, although the author had promised to narrate the origin of "man and the other animals," he stops when he has finished with the origins of the different parts: apparently he simply assumes that once the parts have been formed, if they happen to be next to each other in a certain order, you also have a human being (or, if they are arranged in a different order, a dog?--he never comes back to explain the differences between humans and other animals).

hominis says that he will not say, as most people who speak about the nature of man do, "that man is all air, or fire, or water, or earth, or anything else that is not manifestly present in man [ὅτι μὴ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐνεὸν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ]" (c1). Those who argue that man is air, or that man is fire, each "attach to their own doctrine evidences [μαρτύρια] and signs [τεκμήρια]" (ibid.): that is, since man is not manifest air (although manifestly every human body contains some air, e.g. inside the mouth and throat), their claim is that even not-manifestly-airy parts of the body are air in disguised form, or depend causally on air; and since this cannot be directly perceived to be true, they argue for it by sign-inferences from things that can be directly perceived. The same point holds, not just for nonliving simple bodies like air, but also for homeomerous parts of animals. Blood is a sensible body, and occasionally some of it becomes manifest, but usually we do not see very much of it, certainly not enough to perceive that the human body is largely made up of it or is kept alive by it; but some medical writers infer from signs (e.g. from what the body excretes in diseased conditions) that the whole body is composed of blood, phlegm, and black and yellow bile. Ὅψις τῶν ἀδήλων τὰ φαινόμενα (Anaxagoras Fr. 21a), and Anaxagoras similarly infers from the relatively manifest hair and bone and so on in an animal to their causes, the non-manifest hair and bone in the animal's food. Similarly, if a physical account maintains (as the Timaeus does) that water is the substratum of metals, it is inferring from manifest metal to non-manifest water, even if water existing elsewhere in the universe is manifest--and perhaps water as an ἀρχή is never strictly manifest, if water never occurs unmixed, so that we must always infer by reasoning, even from what appears to the senses as water, to its primitive constituent pure water. So in all of these cases the physicists are inferring from a manifest ὁμολογουμένη οὐσία to some less manifest οὐσία as the (partial or total) οὐσία of the given οὐσία, even if the inferred ἀρχή is itself a sensible thing. And a fortiori the physicists are inferring from manifest οὐσίαι to non-manifest οὐσίαι, without inferring to something beyond the sensible world, when they infer that the οὐσίαι of the manifest things are atoms and the void, or the invisible receptacle of the Timaeus.

All of which is to say: when Aristotle speaks of beginning with the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι and investigating what other οὐσίαι there may be (with a view to discovering what the ἀρχαί might be), he is not thinking exclusively of Academic procedures of beginning with sensible things and inferring to οὐσίαι beyond the sensible world. Aristotle himself agrees with Plato and other Academics, both that there are in fact οὐσίαι beyond the sensible world, and that, if there are οὐσίαι beyond the sensible world, the ἀρχαί must be among such οὐσίαι rather than within sensible things. But Z will examine the οὐσίαι that the physicists have proposed, as partial or total οὐσίαι of the manifest οὐσίαι and as existing prior to the manifest οὐσίαι, as well as examining οὐσίαι that Plato and other Academics have proposed as partial or total οὐσίαι of the manifest οὐσίαι and as existing prior to the manifest οὐσίαι. Certainly the emphasis will be on the critical examination of the Academic claims, but often it is important to Aristotle's purpose to show the parallels between the procedures of the Academics and of the physicists, and often to show that they both rest on shared mistakes.

Z2, after listing animals and plants and their parts, and earth, water, air, fire and their parts and compounds, as things that are said to be οὐσίαι, goes on to list non-bodily things that some philosophers have claimed to be οὐσίαι. First, he says, "it seems to some people that the limits of bodies, like surfaces and lines and points and units, are οὐσίαι, and more so than the body and the solid" (1028b16-18): this refers back to the procedure of the mathematicians described in B#12 (discussed above).<sup>40</sup> He then says, "again, beyond the sensibles, some people think that

<sup>40</sup>notes against FP's perverse claims that "point and unit" is epexegetic and that "body and solid" is not epexegetic

there is nothing of this type [sc. οὐσία], while other think that there are several [kinds of οὐσία beyond the sensibles], and that they are more so [i.e. are οὐσία to a higher degree than the sensibles], since they are eternal, like Plato, who [thinks that] the forms and the mathematical are two [kinds of] οὐσία, and the third is the οὐσία [consisting] of sensible bodies ... [Aristotle goes on to describe the accounts of Speusippus and Xenocrates]" (1028b18-21).<sup>41</sup> Here Aristotle is following a definite progression: first sensible bodies, then things within the sensibles that are not themselves sensible, namely the mathematical boundaries of bodies, and then finally things beyond the sensibles, including Platonic forms, and also including intermediate mathematical, if these exist separately from the sensibles rather than immanently in the same three-dimensional space as the sensible world. The different kinds of sensible bodies, the Platonic forms, and the immanent and separate mathematical, have all been brought forward by some philosopher as οὐσία, and almost all of them except animals and plants have been brought forward as existing prior to the manifest things; and not only earth, water, air, fire and the homeomerous and anhomeomerous parts of animals, but also immanent mathematical boundaries and Platonic forms have been brought forward as οὐσία of the manifest things. Of the possible non-manifest οὐσία that Aristotle mentions here, only separate mathematical have not been posited as οὐσία of the manifest things, although Aristotle thinks someone could believe in Platonic forms as οὐσία without believing that they were οὐσία of the sensibles. But Aristotle investigates separate mathematical, and Platonic forms apart from their relation to the sensibles, only in Metaphysics MN (and he investigates νοῦς, which is also not the οὐσία of any sensible things, only in Λ): in Z he is concerned only with οὐσία that a philosopher might posit because he thinks that they are the οὐσία of the sensibles.

Aristotle says in the last sentence of Z2 that we must investigate the truth of these disputed claims about οὐσία, but only "after we have first outlined what οὐσία is [ἡμῖν] ὑποτυπωσαμένοις τὴν οὐσίαν τί ἐστίν]" (1028b31-2). "Outline" (ὑποτύπωσις, elsewhere equivalently τύπος or περιγραφή) is presumably originally a metaphor from painting, where a painter might first draw outlines of his figures in charcoal, and then go back to paint them in.<sup>42</sup> Both Plato and Aristotle speak in a number of passages of describing something ἐν τύπῳ rather than ἀκριβῶς, sometimes implying that they will then go on to give the more precise description; and, as we have seen, Aristotle makes it a point of method, in pursuing a knowledge of X, to start with a description of X that is "true but not clear" and use that as a guide for discovering a clearer account of what X is. Thus Aristotle says explicitly that the account of soul as the ἐντελέχεια of an organic natural body in De Anima II,1, and the account of the human good as the exercise of the best virtue in a complete life in NE I,7, are just τύποι or ὑποτυπώσεις to be filled in later (περιγεγράφθω μὲν οὖν τὰγαθὸν ταύτη· δεῖ γὰρ ἴσως ὑποτυπῶσαι πρῶτον, εἶθ' ὕστερον ἀναγράψαι, NE 1098a20-22; τύπῳ μὲν οὖν ταύτη διωρίσθω καὶ ὑπογεγράφθω περὶ ψυχῆς, but since ἐκ τῶν ἀσαφῶν μὲν αὐτῶν φανερωτέρων δὲ γίνεται τὸ σαφές καὶ κατὰ τὸν λόγον γνωριμώτερον, we must go on from here to give an account that expresses the cause, DA 413a9-12 with 13-20).

When Aristotle asks us at the end of Z2 to ὑποτυποῦν what οὐσία is, he is saying that we

<sup>41</sup>translation point about μάλλον, ὄντα αἰδία and about τοιοῦτον, and note on the parallel with B#5 (esp. on πλείω)-this overlaps with a note above, d delete one of them

<sup>42</sup>give some useful quotes from LSJ, including the one from Adamantius (whoever he is): "ταῦτα ὅσα εἴρηται καθάπερ ἐν γραφαῖς ἀχρόις γραμμῇ μόνῃ τύποι ἀνδρῶν εἰκασμένοι εἰσί". also SVF II,229 (Galen, citing apparently Stoic authorities) distinguishing ὑποτυπώσεις from ὅροι proper. some Plato and Aristotle texts (not complete): Rep 414a (ἐν τύπῳ vs. ἀκριβῶς), Laws 876e (τύπος = περιγραφή), NE 1094b20 & 1104a1 & 1107b14-16

should not try to resolve the disputed questions of the chapter directly. While some οὐσίαι are agreed on by all, some philosophers claim that genera or surfaces or the homeomerous parts of animals are also οὐσίαι (and that they are οὐσίαι of the manifest οὐσίαι, and are οὐσίαι in a higher degree than the manifest οὐσίαι), and these claims are disputed. So, as Aristotle says in the last sentence of Z2, we must examine the question τίνας εἰσὶν οὐσίαι (1028b28)--that is: which, among the non-manifest things different philosophers have put forward as οὐσίαι, are really οὐσίαι--and especially the question "whether there is any separate οὐσία, and why and how, beyond the sensible ones, or whether there is none" (1028b30-31). Genera and surfaces and the parts of animals all certainly exist in some way, but it is disputed whether they are οὐσίαι; and we cannot resolve this dispute until we have a preliminary understanding of what οὐσία is. To have a full or clear understanding of what οὐσία is would be to have resolved the question τί τὸ ὄν (i.e., τίς ἡ οὐσία) that the ancients and moderns have disputed, that is, to have determined precisely τίνας εἰσὶν οὐσίαι. But before we can competently answer this question, we must first have a true-but-not-clear description of what οὐσία is; just as, in trying to determine what wisdom is, we must start from a true-but-not-clear description of wisdom ("the kind of knowledge intrinsically most worth having" or more clearly "knowledge of the things that are prior to all other things"), and then use this to evaluate the claims of the different disciplines to be wisdom.

So Aristotle, in the immediately following lines (the first few lines of Z3), gives the required ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία. He says, "οὐσία is said, if not in more ways, at least in four principal ways: for the essence [τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι] and the universal and the genus are thought to be [δοκεῖ εἶναι] the οὐσία of each thing, and fourthly the ὑποκείμενον" (1028b33-6);<sup>43</sup> he then gives a further explanation and subdivision of the ὑποκείμενον (1028b36-1029a7); he then says, "it has now been said ἐν τύπῳ what οὐσία is, that it is what is not [said] of a ὑποκείμενον but of which the other things [are said]; but we must not leave it at this; for this [description] is not sufficient; for, on the one hand, this [description] itself is unclear [ἄδηλον], and, furthermore, matter becomes οὐσία [i.e. on this account, matter would turn out to be οὐσία]" (1029a7-10). I will discuss the four-fold division of οὐσία in the next section, and Aristotle's treatment of the ὑποκείμενον in the next chapter; here I will just note some structural features of the argument.

First, the phrase "it has now been said ἐν τύπῳ what οὐσία is" at 1029a7-8 marks the end of the ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία, which must therefore have extended from the beginning of Z3 at 1028b33 to 1029a7. Or, since the ὑποτύπωσις has begun by distinguishing four main kinds of things that have been called οὐσίαι, and has added more detail about only one of these, the ὑποκείμενον (on the ground that "the first ὑποκείμενον is thought most of all to be οὐσία", 1029a1-2), it is more accurate to say that 1029a7-8 marks the end of the ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία as ὑποκείμενον, and that Aristotle may come back later to finish the ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία in other senses. In any case, Aristotle objects at 1029a9-10 that this ὑποτύπωσις is insufficient, and this for two reasons. First, it is ἄδηλον (1029a10): that is, it is only a ὑποτύπωσις, characterizing what οὐσία must be like without saying clearly what it is that satisfies that characterization. (And the implied comparison to all other things in the description of οὐσία, that it is "what is not [said] of a ὑποκείμενον but of which the other things [are said]," makes this description especially ἄδηλον, like the description of Coriscus as the darkest man in the marketplace; see discussion in Ia2 above.) So this first objection says only that we must not rest content with a ὑποτύπωσις, but must use it to seek a clearer account. The more serious objection, however, is that "matter becomes οὐσία" (1029a10): that is, if we did use this ὑποτύπωσις to seek a clearer

<sup>43</sup>note question on the grammar of τέταρτον τούτων τὸ ὑποκείμενον.

account of what οὐσία is, we would reach the account that οὐσία is matter; and Aristotle goes on to argue that this "clearer" account of οὐσία must be wrong. We should distinguish, then, between two kinds of accounts that a philosopher might give of οὐσία, a ὑποτύπωσις like "οὐσία is the ὑποκείμενον" or a "clearer" account like "οὐσία is matter" or "οὐσία is air." The philosophers Aristotle is discussing have each made claims like "οὐσία is air" or "ἡ μάλιστα οὐσία is immaterial forms," but in order to support these claims they must rely explicitly or implicitly on some ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία. A philosopher who thinks that οὐσία is air is presumably relying on a ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία as the ὑποκείμενον, and his account might fail either because air is not in fact the ὑποκείμενον, or because, even though air is (most of all) ὑποκείμενον, it is still not (most of all) οὐσία. Aristotle is mostly interested in Z in showing what is wrong with the philosopher's different general strategies for finding non-manifest οὐσία (as these might be developed out of different ὑποτυπώσεις of οὐσία), rather than with the particular results they claim for these strategies (air or water? unity or being?). But he also thinks it fair to argue, as here in Z3, that a given strategy for finding οὐσία cannot be right, because it would lead to a result that can be shown to be wrong.

The second structural point to note about Aristotle's argument here is that Aristotle's ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία is in the first instance a ὑποτύπωσις of 2-place οὐσία, that is, an outline of what it is for Y to be the οὐσία of X. Y might be the essence of X, the universal under which X falls, the genus of X, or the ὑποκείμενον of X: all are described as ways for something to be οὐσία ἐκάστου, the οὐσία of a given thing.<sup>44</sup> And yet Aristotle clearly thinks that he is here giving the ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία that he had demanded at the end of Z2 as a way of determining whether the different disputed οὐσία of Z2 are really οὐσία. But Aristotle sees no problem in this transition. For something to be an οὐσία is for it to be the answer to a τί ἐστὶ question (this was how the notion of οὐσία was first introduced in Z1), that is, for it to be the οὐσία of something; so to decide whether something is an οὐσία is to decide whether it is the οὐσία of anything. With most of the disputed οὐσία discussed in Z2, it is clear what they are claiming to be the οὐσία of: a Platonic form claims to be the οὐσία of its participants, the parts of animals claim to be (partial) οὐσία of the animals, the bounding surfaces of a body claim to be (partial) οὐσία of the body. We will decide the claims that these non-manifest things are οὐσία by deciding the claims that they are the οὐσία of these manifest things; and the first step is to see how the philosophers claim that these are the οὐσία of those, e.g., by being their ὑποκείμενα, or their essences, or their genera. The situation here is comparable to the situation of Metaphysics A. There, in describing and examining the claims of different philosophers about the ἀρχαί, Aristotle's first interest was in how the philosophers claim that their ἀρχαί are causes of manifest things (as material, formal, efficient, or final causes); each way that the ἀρχαί might be causes of the manifest things suggests a strategy for seeking ἀρχαί (as first material causes, first efficient causes, etc.), and Aristotle is more interested in examining and criticizing these general strategies than in examining the particular results. So here, after the first sentence of Z3 indicates the different main ways that Y could be the οὐσία of X, and thus the different main strategies that past philosophers have followed for discovering non-manifest οὐσία as οὐσία of the manifest οὐσία, Aristotle devotes the main body of Z (Z3-16) to examining each of these strategies in turn, to asking whether it does indeed lead to οὐσία beyond and prior to the

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<sup>44</sup>this has been disputed, vainly, in the case of the ὑποκείμενον; refer to other discussions (FP are right about this). to be a ὑποκείμενον is to be the ὑποκείμενον of something, and the physicists (and the Timaeus) had posited their material ἀρχαί as being the οὐσία of the manifest things in this way, see discussion above

manifest οὐσίαι, and to arguing, in each case, that it does not.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>leftover issues: on using Δ8; on the last paragraph of Z3; on οὐσία τινός in the Categories; for an example of how to hypotype οὐσία/ὄν, cp. the Sophist on the power to act or be acted on [note the Topics on this as an ἴδιον, not a definition, of being]. note against FP on "ἄδηλον" at 1029a10. note we may get to things "other" than ordinary οὐσίαι, but not prior to them (Λ3 on form not prior; Z8 echoing B#8 on form not παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα)