

IIα: The plan of Z and the questions of Z1-3  
 α3: Different ways of seeking the οὐσία of a thing and the plan of Z3-16

The last sentence of Z2 says that, in order to decide whether the disputed entities are indeed οὐσία, we need a ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία. The first sentence of Z3 makes a start on this ὑποτύπωσις by spelling out four ways in which Y might be said to be the οὐσία of X: "οὐσία is said, if not in more ways, at least principally in four: 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>1</sup> If the alleged οὐσία posited by the different philosophers really are οὐσία, then they should be οὐσία of the manifest things in one of these ways. This offers a program for testing the philosophers' claims that there are οὐσία beyond the manifest things (and, specifically, that the ἀρχαί are οὐσία beyond the manifest things): we will begin with the manifest things, and then pursue these different ways of seeking their οὐσία, to see whether these procedures do indeed lead to οὐσία other than and prior to the manifest things, and thus (immediately or ultimately) to ἀρχαί. The program of *Metaphysics Z* thus divides into several subprograms, corresponding to the different ways in which Y can be said to be the οὐσία of X.

At least, this is what Z ought to do: it is less obvious whether it actually does so. A main challenge in interpreting Z is to make simultaneous sense both of Aristotle's announcements (especially in Z1-3) about what he is going to do, and of what he actually does in the body of the book. There are some clear correspondences between the program Aristotle seems to lay out in the first sentence of Z3 and what he does in the subsequent chapters, but there are also some puzzling discrepancies, and it is not obvious how we should describe the structure of the subsequent argument, or how we should correlate it with the program announced in Z1-3. This is not just a problem about the subsequent argument, but also a problem about the first sentence of Z3. The fourfold division of οὐσία that he gives here is not the most intuitively obvious way to divide up the ways in which Y might be said to be the οὐσία of X, nor does it obviously correspond to what he goes on to do in the rest of the book, nor does it obviously refer back to things he has said about οὐσία in earlier books: so we face a challenge in interpreting what Aristotle means by this division of οὐσία and explaining why he draws it here in this form. In this section I will sketch how I want to interpret both this sentence and the structure of the argument of the later chapters where Aristotle carries out his program. The details, of course, can be made good only through the close reading of the remainder of Z that I will offer in IIβ-ε below.

To note some of the correspondences, and some of the apparent discrepancies, between what Aristotle says here and what he does in the rest of the book. Aristotle seems to promise four separate investigations: these would be (rearranging his order) an investigation of the ὑποκείμενον of a given thing, of the essence of a given thing, of "the universal of" a given thing (as will become clear, this means the infima species under which the thing falls), and of the

<sup>1</sup>note on ἐν τέτταρσι and the parallel ἐν τρίσι at the beginning of EE I,8 {this parallel is perhaps not very good; but EE I,1 1214a30-32 seems very good; note FP ad locum complaining about λέγεσθαι ἐν, and their [wrong] suggested explanation). note against Irwin's interpretation of this sentence in *Aristotle's First Principles* (his suggestion is that these are a potential multiplicity of criteria for the same thing, and that Aristotle is not regarding οὐσία as a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον; apart from the difficulties of forcing the present passage that way, what about the parallel with Δ8?). note on the question, harder to decide, about the construction of τέταρτον τούτων τὸ ὑποκείμενον (Code-Laks-Most supporting the easier construal, everyone else the harder). even if we take ὑποκείμενον governing τούτων, it will still be the οὐσία of X that is what the essence of X (and so on) are predicated of

genus of a given thing. And there do seem to be parts of Metaphysics Z that correspond to three of these four promised investigations, namely the investigations of the ὑποκείμενον, the essence, and the universal. The main body of Z3 (1028b36-1029a30) deals with the ὑποκείμενον: it inquires especially about the ultimate ὑποκείμενον of the manifest things, and asks whether this is an οὐσία, and whether it is more οὐσία than the manifest things are, and whether it is prior to the manifest things.<sup>2</sup> So Z3 seems, as we would expect, to be examining an attempt to discover οὐσία beyond the manifest things, or specifically to discover ἀρχαί, by looking for the οὐσία-as-ὑποκείμενον of the manifest things. Next, the beginning of Z4, referring back to the division of οὐσία in the first sentence of Z3, announces a transition to an investigation of οὐσία-as-essence: "since in the beginning we distinguished in how many ways we define οὐσία, and one of these seems to be the essence, let us examine it" (1029b1-3). This suggests that some section of the text beginning with Z4 will give the investigation of essence promised in the first sentence of Z3. Next Z13, again referring back to the beginning of Z3, announces a transition to the third promised investigation, the investigation of the universal: "since the investigation is about οὐσία, let us go back again. Just as the ὑποκείμενον is said to be οὐσία, so too is the essence, and what is [composed] out of these, and the universal. Now we have already spoken about two of these, the essence and the ὑποκείμενον ... but some people think that the universal is most of all a cause, and that the universal is an ἀρχή: so let us go on to this too" (1038b1-8).<sup>3</sup> Following these signposts in the text, it would be plausible to say that Z3 investigates the claim of the οὐσία-as-ὑποκείμενον to be an ἀρχή (prior to the manifest things of which it is an οὐσία), that Z4-12 investigates the claim of the οὐσία-as-essence to be an ἀρχή (and thus prior), and that Z13 begins an investigation of the claim of the οὐσία-as-universal (this means, as Aristotle makes clear at 1038b9-15, the universal as the οὐσία of an individual that falls under it) to be an ἀρχή and thus prior to the thing of which it is an οὐσία. The investigation of the οὐσία-as-universal begun in Z13 seems to end at the end of Z16, which concludes, inter alia, that "none of the things that are said universally is an οὐσία" (1041a4); then Z17 seems to begin a new inquiry into οὐσία, starting from the premiss that the οὐσία of something is a certain kind of cause of that thing (1041a9-10).

Unfortunately, there are serious difficulties with this way of dividing the text of Z. To begin with, it is not obvious that Z4-12 is a single continuous investigation of the claims of the essence of a manifest thing to be an ἀρχή existing prior to the thing. While the beginning of Z4 announces an investigation of the essence, it is not obvious what questions about essences it is asking: I will argue in Iγ below that Aristotle's aim is to examine (and reject) the Platonist attempt to discover οὐσία beyond the manifest things as the οὐσία-as-essences of the manifest things, but this is controversial and needs detailed argument. It is also not obvious how far the investigation begun in Z4 is supposed to extend: everyone agrees that it includes at least Z4-6, but it is not obvious that Z4-12 give a single overall argument about essences. Perhaps a majority of scholars at present believe that Z7-9 and Z12 are later additions to the text of Z, and thus are not meant to be covered either by the general survey of the things said to be οὐσία at the beginning of Z3 or by the specific announcement of an investigation of essence at the beginning of Z4. But even if Z7-9 and Z12 are excluded, it remains disputed whether Z10-11 are part of the investigation of essence announced at the beginning of Z4, or are a separate discussion

<sup>2</sup>I don't mean to prejudge whether these are three clearly distinguished questions, three formulations of a single vague question, etc. ... perhaps note troubles about μάλλον and μάλιστα.

<sup>3</sup>I have some sympathy with FP's deletion of καὶ τὸ ἐκ τούτων.

independent of Z4-6.<sup>4</sup> So one difficulty in matching Z3's division of the things said to be οὐσία with the actual division of the subsequent argument is that, even if the main body of Z3 is an account of the ὑποκείμενον, and Z4 begins an account of the essence, and Z13 begins an account of the universal, there also seem to be other discussions in-between Z4 and Z13 that cannot be fitted into this framework. It is also hard to maintain that all of Z13-16 is an account of the universal, since the end of Z16 concludes not only that "none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία" (1041a4), but also in the same breath that "no οὐσία is [composed] out-of οὐσία" (1041a4-5): indeed, Z16 had begun by arguing that "most of the things that seem to be οὐσία ... [such as] the parts of animals ... and earth and fire and air" are not properly οὐσία but only δυνάμεις (1040b5-8), an issue that has nothing to do with universals.<sup>5</sup> It is also, of course, a difficulty in matching the first sentence of Z3 with the subsequent argument of Z that, if Z13-16 is the investigation of the universal, there seems to be nothing corresponding to the promised investigation of the genus. Ross and Frede-Patzig say that if no universal is an οὐσία it follows that no genus is an οὐσία, so that no separate investigation of the genus is needed;<sup>6</sup> but this does not explain why Aristotle should have called for an investigation of genera in the first place, and in fact Aristotle is much more inclined in Z to reduce questions about universals to questions about genera than vice versa. Finally, it is strange that, having given an apparently comprehensive survey of the things that might be οὐσία ἐκάστου at the start of Z3, and having investigated each of these in turn in Z3-16, Aristotle should then announce a fresh start in Z17, apparently independent of the whole previous discussion, as if the previous discussion had failed; this is all the stranger in that Z17 seems merely to return to the conclusion of Z4ff, that the οὐσία of a thing is its essence. If Aristotle thinks the discussion of Z3-16 is for some reason insufficient, why did he not announce at the beginning of Z3 that, after treating the ὑποκείμενον, the essence and the universal, he would also give a further treatment of the οὐσία as a cause of being?

To understand what Aristotle is proposing at the beginning of Z3, and what he actually does in subsequent chapters, we must see how the beginning of Z3 calls on what Aristotle has already done in the *Metaphysics*. We want to decide whether the disputed entities of Z2, alleged by some philosophers to be οὐσία παρὰ τὰς ὁμολογουμένας, are indeed οὐσία. To decide what things are οὐσία we first need a ὑποτύπωσις of οὐσία, that is (as the first sentence of Z3 makes clear) a sketch of how Y might be the οὐσία of X, so that we can decide whether anything that might exist beyond the manifest things--such as a Platonic form, a material substratum, or perhaps a mathematical boundary--will turn out to be the οὐσία of some manifest thing. The question is

<sup>4</sup>Schematically, some views of the scope of the investigation of essence begun in Z4: Z4-6 (FP), Z4-9 (me), Z4-11 (Bostock), Z4-12 (Owens; apparently also FP II,33, but I think this is speaking loosely), Z4-6 and Z10-11 but not Z7-9 (Burnyeat), and Z4-6 and Z10-12 but not Z7-9 (Ross).

<sup>5</sup>refer to earlier discussion of FP's dismemberment of Z and their difficulties with Z16 in particular

<sup>6</sup>this comes originally from Bonitz, whom cite. Ross says: "τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι is examined in chs. 4-6, 10-12; τὸ καθόλου in chs. 13, 14; τὸ ὑποκείμενον in ch. 3. τὸ γένος is nowhere separately examined in Z. At the beginning of ch. 13 Aristotle says that, as he has examined the essence and the substratum, it remains to examine the claims of the universal to be substance. From this it appears that the genus has dropped out of view. But in fact chs. 13, 14 serve as an examination of genus as well as of the universal. Every genus is a universal (though the converse is not true, differentiae and properties being also included among universals), and, if the universal cannot be substance, genus cannot be so" (AM II,164). Likewise FP II,33: "Der Hauptteil von Kapitel 3 ist dem Vorschlag gewidmet, bei der ousia handle es sich um das Zugrundeliegende. Aristoteles wird dann in den Kapiteln 4-12 auf den Vorschlag eingehen, bei der ousia handle es sich um das 'Was es heißt, dies zu sein,' in den Kapiteln 13-16 auf die Vorstellung, die ousia sei etwas Allgemeines, und damit zugleich, wenn auch nur implizit, auf die Vorstellung, die ousia sei die Gattung, um dann erst im 17. Kapitel einen neuen Anfang zu machen." ... further in the same vein FP II,35

complicated, because οὐσία is said in several ways (that is, there are several possible bases someone can have for saying, rightly or wrongly, that Y is the οὐσία of X). But this is what Metaphysics Δ is for: it gives a repository of the distinctions that Aristotle will need to call on at crucial later stages of the argument of the Metaphysics. Most importantly, τὸ ὄν is said in four ways, and Aristotle refers back to Δ7 for this distinction each time he begins a new branch of the investigation of being, at E2 and at E4 (and again Θ10) and at Z1 and Θ1. One branch of the investigation of being--that is, of the investigation of the causes, to the things that are, of the fact that they are--is the investigation of the οὐσία of things; this investigation in turn branches, and this is why Aristotle has provided Δ8, on οὐσία. The match between the Δ8 and Z3 divisions of οὐσία is not perfect, and the Δ8 discussion is too compressed, a promissory note for the fuller discussion in Z; still, Z presupposes Δ, and the Δ8 text will help in understanding both the division of οὐσία in Z3 and the discussions of οὐσία in subsequent chapters.

Δ8 says:

Οὐσία is said of [(1)] the simple bodies, like earth and fire and water and whatever is of this kind, and generally bodies and the animals and [celestial] divinities constituted out of these, and their parts: all these are said to be οὐσία because they are not said of a ὑποκείμενον, but rather the other things are said of these. In another way [οὐσία is said of] [(2)] whatever is a cause of being [αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι], present [ἐνυπάρχον] in such things as are not said of a ὑποκείμενον, as the soul [is the cause of being] to an animal. Again [οὐσία is said of] [(3)] whatever parts are present [ἐνυπάρχοντα] in such things [i.e. in things not said of a ὑποκείμενον], defining/delimiting them [ὀρίζοντα] and signifying a this, such that when they are destroyed the whole is destroyed [ἀναιρεῖται], as the body is destroyed when the surface is destroyed, as some people say, and the surface when the line is; and number in general seems to some people to be of this kind (for when it is destroyed nothing exists, and it defines/delimits all things). Again, [(4)] the essence, whose λόγος is a definition, is also said to be the οὐσία of each thing. So [(conclusion)] it results that οὐσία is said in two ways: the ultimate ὑποκείμενον, which is not said of anything else further; and what, being a this, is also separate: and the shape and form of each thing is of this kind. (1017b10-26; I have marked sections 1-4, as well as the concluding sentence, for ease of reference, not because they are four fully distinct senses of οὐσία)<sup>7</sup>

This short chapter poses many difficulties; to get clear about what Aristotle is saying, we need some observations about the structure of the chapter. To begin with, Aristotle is not concerned with a distinction between 1-place and 2-place senses of οὐσία, any more than he was concerned in Δ7 with a distinction between 1-place and 2-place senses of ὄν or εἶναι. Aristotle explicitly speaks of "the οὐσία of each thing" only in section (4), but in sections (2) and (3) it is also clear that the things that are being called οὐσίαί are so called because they are οὐσίαί of the things they are present in. If Aristotle were intending to draw a distinction between 1-place and 2-place οὐσία it would have to be that sense (1), summed up in the first half of the concluding sentence, is 1-place οὐσία, and senses (2)-(4), summed up in the second half of the concluding sentence, are 2-place οὐσία. But the concluding sentence shows that Aristotle has no such intention: the

<sup>7</sup>perhaps add the (a)/(b) division in the conclusion, as in the OSAP article, and update a number of details of the subsequent discussion to correspond to the OSAP article

(surprising but unmistakable) summary of senses (2)-(4) in the second half of the concluding sentence describes οὐσία in purely 1-place terms, as "what, being a this, is also separate."<sup>8</sup> So although sense (1) can be a sense of 1-place οὐσία, so can senses (2)-(4). And conversely, though Aristotle is not explicit about this here, sense (1) can also, like senses (2)-(4), be a sense of 2-place οὐσία.

Now it might be thought that sense (1) differs from the other senses in a way that would make it a purely 1-place sense of οὐσία: for the things that are οὐσία in sense (1) are the most manifest things, natural bodies, which immediately appear to us as οὐσία, and are not regarded as οὐσία because of their relation to something else, as οὐσία of some other more manifest thing. Indeed, Aristotle's list of things that are οὐσία in this sense is all-but-identical with his list of the ὁμολογούμενα οὐσία in Z2: so it might seem that sense (1) of οὐσία in Δ8 corresponds to the ὁμολογούμενα οὐσία of Z2, the starting-points of Z's investigation of οὐσία, which are given only as οὐσία and not as οὐσία ἐκάστου, while senses (2)-(4) in Δ8 correspond to the senses of οὐσία ἐκάστου explored in Z3-16, the different ways of starting from a given οὐσία and discovering prior non-manifest οὐσία. But this is not quite right. Certainly the examples that Aristotle gives at the beginning of Δ8 are manifest and uncontested οὐσία, like the examples he gives at the beginning of Z2; it is, obviously, the correct method to begin from such examples in trying to discover the sense (or the various senses) of the word "οὐσία". But Aristotle then tries to isolate the feature in virtue of which these things are said to be οὐσία: namely, "all these are said to be οὐσία because they are not said of a ὑποκείμενον, but rather the other things are said of these" (1017b13-14), or, as the concluding sentence puts it, what is said to be οὐσία in this way is "the ultimate ὑποκείμενον, which is not said of anything else further" (1017b23-4). But once Aristotle has isolated this feature, it may be that something else possesses this feature to a higher degree than the initial examples--say, the Platonic receptacle, or any other non-manifest first matter<sup>9</sup>--in which case the first sense of οὐσία will apply in a higher degree to this non-manifest οὐσία than to the manifest οὐσία we began with. Furthermore, the feature in virtue of which οὐσία-in-the-first-sense are called οὐσία is a relational feature, the feature of being the ὑποκείμενον of other things. This means that οὐσία-in-the-first-sense give us not only a list of manifest οὐσία to start investigating from, but also a way to proceed to further οὐσία: namely, we start from these manifest οὐσία and seek the οὐσία of these things as their ὑποκείμενον, and keep investigating in this way until we reach "the ultimate ὑποκείμενον, which is not said of anything else further." So although the examples Aristotle gives of sense (1) are the ὁμολογούμενα οὐσία of Z2, the sense of οὐσία they illustrate is one of the senses from Z3, namely οὐσία as ὑποκείμενον: this is just as much a

<sup>8</sup>note on the second half of the conclusion and senses (2)-(4). Aristotle goes on in the conclusion to say that the form of a thing--which would be both (2) and (4) on Aristotle's view--is of this kind (whereas Z3 takes it as obvious that matter is not a this and separate). sense (3) had specified "signifying a this," and so is surely meant to be included. "separate" in the conclusion has to refer back to Plato's test, cited in (3). Plato's test is also implied in (2), since if Y is the cause of being to X (i.e. the cause, to X, of its being what it is, namely X), then X cannot exist without Y. the essence of a thing, or more generally a constituent which is prior by Plato's test, signifies a this, because it signifies what the thing is; if it signified only τοῖόνδε, the thing could exist without it (note Alexander's gloss on (3), 373.25-7, says ὀρίζεται τε αὐτὰ καὶ τόδε τι εἶναι αὐτὰ σημαίνει: the second αὐτὰ must be accusative (otherwise εἶναι is unintelligible), thus "signifies them to be some this," i.e. signifies what they are and not merely what they are like). (there's a problem about species and genera, which Aristotle thinks signify τοῖόνδε rather than τόδε, but are still prior by Plato's test; but the line of thought given here is what Aristotle is assuming, and is initially plausible, as it is plausible that no τοῖόνδε is prior to a τόδε; and what Aristotle is giving here is not his own considered opinion about οὐσία but rather what it is prima facie plausible to call an οὐσία).

<sup>9</sup>note against Ross' confusion on ὑποκείμενον ἔσχατον (as in letter to Alan)

sense of οὐσία ἐκάστου as all the other senses from Z3, and like the other senses it gives a possible way of seeking οὐσίαι παρὰ τὰς ὁμολογουμένας.

What Aristotle means by sense (1) of οὐσία, and by his summary of it in the concluding sentence of Δ8, is thus tolerably clear. Perhaps more mysterious are the relations between senses (2)-(4), and the summary of these senses in the concluding sentence. There are several problems here. First, why does Aristotle first give sense (2), describing the οὐσία of a thing as the αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι to the thing and giving the soul of an animal as an example, and then later return under (4) to the essence of a thing? This is a problem, because these senses seem to coincide: the essence of a thing is its αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι, and the soul of an animal is its form, and therefore its essence. This connects with the second problem, about the summary in the second half of the concluding sentence of Δ8, "what, being a this, is also separate: the shape and form of each thing is of this kind" (1017b24-6). This is actually the first explicit mention of "form" in Δ8, but the summary is clearly intended to cover at least senses (2) and (4); and given that only sense (3) had explicitly mentioned "signifying a this" (1017b18), it seems impossible to deny that it is also intended to cover sense (3) (and "separate" in the summary more plausibly refers back to the citation of Plato's test in (3), at 1017b18-19, than to anything else Aristotle has said so far). But why does Aristotle, after having apparently distinguished three different senses of οὐσία other than sense (1), then come back to summarize all three under a single formula that does not clearly apply to them all, and does not even clearly exclude sense (1)?<sup>10</sup>

These difficulties are diminished when we recognize that senses (3) and (4) are not offered as independent senses of οὐσία alongside (1) and (2), but rather as different subcases of sense (2). Sense (2) of οὐσία was "whatever is a cause of being, present [ἐνυπάρχον] in such things as are not said of a ὑποκείμενον"; soul is given as an example, as earth and fire and animals were given as examples of sense (1), but, as before, we should guard against assuming that all the features of the example are necessary to the sense of οὐσία they illustrate.<sup>11</sup> I have often translated the word "ἐνυπάρχον" as "constituent": τὰ ἐνυπάρχοντα μέρη are the constituent parts of a thing, and often Aristotle expresses this without "μέρος", speaking in B#6 of the things ἐξ ὧν ἐνυπαρχόντων ἐστὶν ἕκαστον πρώτων (998a22-3, etc.) and in *Physics* II,1 of matter as τὸ πρῶτον ἐνυπάρχον ἐκάστω (193a10-11). So when Aristotle speaks here in Δ8 of a cause of being that is ἐνυπάρχον in a thing X, the reader might most immediately take this as meaning a kind of constituent part of X, namely a part that is a cause of X's existing: that is, presumably, the kind of part without which X could not exist, or could not be X. (Indeed, the reader might most immediately take Aristotle's example, the soul of an animal, as this kind of constituent part: Aristotle himself thinks that the soul is the essence of the animal, but not all philosophers do, and if the reader thinks the definition of animal is "composite of soul and body" [so *Topics* VI,14 151a20-21] then he will take soul as a constituent cause in this sense.) And this kind of ἐνυπάρχον cause of being is just what Aristotle goes on to spell out as sense (3) of οὐσία: "whatever parts are ἐνυπάρχοντα in such things [sc. in things not said of a ὑποκείμενον, as in

<sup>10</sup>Kirwan *ad locum*: "the summary omits the third sense and identifies the second with the fourth." the commentators are also embarrassed about the description of οὐσία in the non-sense-(1) sense as what is τόδε τι and χωριστόν. it is not hard to find passages where Aristotle describes the form as being (at least in some suitably qualified sense) τόδε τι and χωριστόν, but that doesn't solve the problem. it's not enough for Aristotle to think that the form is τόδε τι and χωριστόν, he has to think that he's already said so in Δ8; and, furthermore, that this distinguishes senses (2)-(4) from sense (1), even though Aristotle describes animals and the like as τόδε τι elsewhere

<sup>11</sup>a trap Ross falls into, when he glosses the second sense as "the form of a sensible thing" (whereas, he says, sense (4) is broader, "essence in general": there is no justification in the text for this distinction, but Ross is trying to avoid having the two senses collapse into one)

sense (2)], defining/delimiting them [ὀρίζοντα] and signifying a this, such that when they are destroyed the whole is destroyed [ἀναρπείται]" (1017b17-19). Aristotle adds that "some say" (b19) that a surface is the οὐσία of a body in this way, and a line of a surface, and numbers of all things, and his language here closely echoes the mathematicians' account, in B#12 1002a4-8, of why mathematical boundaries are more οὐσία than the things they bound;<sup>12</sup> but Aristotle is not himself endorsing the claim that boundaries are οὐσία, and here even more than before we must guard against assuming that all features of these mathematical examples are features of the third sense of οὐσία as such.

We can make sense of the different clauses in the definition of sense (3) of οὐσία if we see it as specifying sense (2) to a partial rather than complete οὐσία of a thing X. Since sense (2) already requires that Y must be ἐνυπάρχον in X in order to be the οὐσία of X, sense (3) requires that Y be a constituent part of X, and not something external to X. But not every constituent part of X can be called (even a partial) οὐσία of X: it must also, as sense (2) requires, be (at least a partial) αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι to X, that is, a cause, to its possessor, of being an X. So sense (3) requires that Y must be the kind of part that "ὀρίζει and signifies a this": that is, it must determine its possessor to be X and not something else, and therefore it must signify its possessor to be this (namely X) and not merely to be such, because it signifies what the thing is (namely X), and not merely what the thing is like.<sup>13</sup> Since Y is the cause, to X, of its being X, it follows that if Y is removed X also ceases to be. This distinguishes Y from other kinds of parts, call them "inessential parts," which cannot be called the οὐσία of X, because they are responsible only for what X is like (for its being such) and not for what X is (for its being this, namely X): if an inessential part is removed, X can continue to be this while ceasing to be such. An inessential part might be as-it-were an ornamental feature of the thing, but it might also be a part under an inessential description. For example, the three sides of a triangle, under the description "straight line," are essential parts of the triangle (they ὀρίζουν a triangle, they are the causes of its being a triangle, if any of them is removed it ceases to be a triangle), but under the description "brazen line" they are inessential, responsible only for the triangle's being brazen and not for its being a triangle, and they can be removed (and transmuted into golden lines) while the triangle continues to exist. Likewise, the letters α and β, under the descriptions "α" and "β", are essential parts of the syllable βα, but under a description like "red α" or "one-centimeter-high β" they are inessential to the syllable (cf. Z10 1035a14-17). Here α and β are not mathematical boundaries, but they have the same claim to being οὐσία of something in sense (3) that mathematical boundaries do.

Aristotle is here singling out the special kind of parts that elsewhere he calls "the parts in the λόγος" [τὰ μέρη τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ or just τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ] or "the parts of the form" or (once, oddly) "the matter of the form."<sup>14</sup> Among the clearest examples of parts in the λόγος of a thing are the two examples I have just given, the line as a part in the λόγος of the triangle and the letters as parts in the λόγος of the syllable, and Aristotle comes back to these in several places. In Posterior Analytics I,4, where Aristotle explains the ways in which Y can belong to X per se, the examples he gives of the strongest sense of per se belonging are (surprisingly) not genera but mathematical boundaries: "per se are whatever belongs [to something] in the τί ἐστι,<sup>15</sup> as line

<sup>12</sup>which cite

<sup>13</sup>cite Alexander's gloss, as in a note above

<sup>14</sup>note Alexander's comment 373.27-31 (plagiarized by Ross ad loc.) that although a surface isn't in the strict sense a "part" of the body, it is a part of its λόγος

<sup>15</sup>clarify: not "belongs in" = "is contained in," but "belongs, in this particular mode of belonging"

belongs to triangle and point to line: for the οὐσία of [the latter] is out-of [the former], and [the former] are present [ἐνυπάρχει] in the λόγος that says τί ἐστι" (73a34-7). Here in explaining essential belonging Aristotle uses the notion of one thing being out-of [ἐκ] another: the οὐσία of X is said to be ἐκ Y as a whole is ἐκ τῶν μέρων. Aristotle takes up these notions in Metaphysics Δ24, on ἐκ, and Δ25, on μέρος: in both chapters he is concerned to single out this special kind of part, or this special way that X can be ἐκ Y. In Δ25 Aristotle gives, among other senses of "part," that those things are parts "into which a whole is divided or out-of which it is composed, [where this whole is] either the form or what has the form: so that of the bronze sphere or bronze cube the bronze (and this is the matter in which the form is) is a part [sc. as something out-of which what has the form is composed], and the angle is also a part [sc. as something out-of which the form is composed]" (1023b19-22); Aristotle adds that "the things in the λόγος that declares each thing [τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ δηλοῦντι ἕκαστον], these too are parts of the whole; for which reason the genus is also said to be a part of the species/form [εἶδος], in a different sense than the species is a part of the genus" (b23-5). So both the angle of a cube (or side of a triangle) and the genus of a thing are τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ, being mentioned in different ways in the definition of the thing, and Aristotle calls them both "parts of the εἶδος". It seems more natural to translate "εἶδος" as "form" in the first case and as "species" in the second, but Δ24 shows that Aristotle means the genus and the angle to be "parts of the εἶδος" in the same sense. Some things are ἐκ others, he says there, "as the form is ἐκ the part, the way man is ἐκ biped and the syllable is ἐκ the στοιχεῖον: this is different from the way the statue is ἐκ bronze, for the composite οὐσία is ἐκ sensible matter, but the form is also ἐκ the matter of the form" (1023a35-b2). So the letters β and α are parts of the syllable βα (as the sides of a triangle are parts of the triangle), and the whole is ἐκ these parts, but they are a quite special kind of part, parts that must be mentioned in the λόγος of the thing because the thing is what it is on account of them: here Aristotle explains the difference by saying that they are parts of the thing's form and not merely of its matter (or that they are "matter of the form" and not merely sensible matter), and Z10 adds that "only the parts of the form are parts of the λόγος" (1035b34 etc.). Δ24 groups together the way that β is part of βα and the way that biped is part of man, as parts of the form, and Z10ff take up the examples, Z10 saying that the letters are parts of the λόγος of the syllable (1035a10-11 etc.) and Z13 describing animal and the other genera of man as τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ (1038b31, b34).

To group the genera of a thing with the letters of a syllable (or the sides of a triangle) is of course not a novelty of Δ. It goes back to B#6, where the physicists offered the material constituents, and the dialecticians the genera, as στοιχεῖα καὶ ἀρχαί of things, each side claiming that their στοιχεῖα must be mentioned in the λόγος of the thing: and the letters of the alphabet were the physicists' strongest example of constituents that must be mentioned in the λόγος. In Δ24-25 Aristotle gives both the physicists' (and the mathematicians') kind of examples and the dialecticians' kind of examples: he is not deciding here whether the physicists or the dialecticians are right, or both or neither, but his point is that both sides are putting forward their examples as examples of the same thing, namely, as parts of the λόγος, or as what he gives as the third sense of οὐσία in Δ8, "whatever parts are ἐνυπάρχοντα [in things not said of a ὑποκείμενον], defining/delimiting them and signifying a this, such that when they are destroyed the whole is destroyed" (1017b17-19).

The third sense of οὐσία thus specifies the second sense by restricting it to partial οὐσίαι of a thing, or to (things signified by) parts of the λόγος of the thing. Aristotle then gives the fourth sense of οὐσία--"the essence, whose λόγος is a definition, is also said to be the οὐσία of each thing" (1017b21-3)--to specify the second sense precisely to what the third sense excludes, the

total οὐσία of the thing, what is signified by the whole of its λόγος. Thus if the definition of man is "biped animal" and the definition of triangle is "plane figure bounded by three straight lines," what "animal" or "straight line" signifies is a partial οὐσία of the thing, but what the whole definitory formula signifies is the whole οὐσία of the thing, and this is just the essence or τί ἦν εἶναι. The second half of Aristotle's summary in Δ8--"what, being a this, is also separate: the shape and form of each thing is of this kind" (1017b24-6)--neither skips over sense (3) nor identifies sense (2) with sense (4). Rather, it picks up sense (2), including its two subcases (3) and (4). If Y is the οὐσία of X in any of these ways, then it is prior (or at least simultaneous) by Plato's test, and it signifies X to be this; of course, some of the examples Aristotle has given under sense (1), notably animals, can also be called a this and separate, but this feature of these examples need not hold of everything that is ὑποκείμενον ἔσχατον, and Z3 argues that it does not hold of what is ὑποκείμενον ἔσχατον in the strongest sense, prime matter. It is fair to say that, while sense (1) gives the οὐσία as the ὑποκείμενον of a thing, and thus as its material cause, sense (2) gives the οὐσία as "the shape and form of each thing," as its formal cause: indeed "αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι" (so sense (2), 1017b15) is a common way of describing the formal cause. But the formal cause includes not only sense (4), the (whole) essence of a thing, but also sense (3). Indeed, the official account in Metaphysics Δ2 describes the formal cause as "the form and the paradigm, that is, the λόγος of the essence and its genera ... and the parts in the λόγος [τὰ μέρη τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ]" (1013a27-9): the λόγος of the essence falls under sense (4), and the genera and (more generally) the parts in the λόγος fall under sense (3).

All the kinds of οὐσία that Aristotle has mentioned in Δ8, and will investigate in Z, come out of different ways of pursuing ἀρχαί that were raised in B. B#8, asking "whether there is something beyond the individuals," had argued that the fact of coming-to-be presupposes both an ungenerated material cause, "the thing that comes-to-be, i.e. that out-of-which it comes-to-be" (999b7), and an ungenerated formal cause, "the οὐσία, i.e. the thing that it is coming-to-be" (999b14), both existing prior to what comes-to-be. The first two senses of the οὐσία of a thing in Δ8 (more strictly, senses (1) and (4)) pick up these two ways of pursuing the ἀρχαί of a manifest thing: there are prima facie reasons to believe that the οὐσία of the thing in both of these senses, its ὑποκείμενον and its essence, will be further οὐσίαι existing prior to it, and indeed from eternity. So we might seek the ἀρχαί of things as their οὐσίαι in either of these senses, looking for an ultimate ὑποκείμενον with the physicists or for a separate formal cause with the dialecticians. Or, thirdly, we might look for the ἀρχαί as partial οὐσίαι of a thing, as both the physicists and the dialecticians do in B#6, seeking στοιχεῖα of the λόγος of a thing either in its material constituents or in its genera: these physical and dialectical parts, and also the mathematical boundary-components of B#12, would be a thing's οὐσία in sense (3) of Δ8.<sup>16</sup> Metaphysics Δ mentions these different senses of οὐσία, not just because "οὐσία" is an important equivocal term, but because they give different ways of pursuing the causes of being to a thing, which different philosophers have claimed to lead to the ἀρχαί, and which it will be the task of Metaphysics Z to examine.

So the beginning of Z3, in reviewing the ways that Y can be said to be the οὐσία of X, ought to call on the classification of Δ8. This suggests that the first sentence of Z3 ought to have said "something can be said to be οὐσία ἐκάστου in three ways, as the ὑποκείμενον or the essence or a part in the λόγος", instead of what it actually says, namely "οὐσία is said, if not in more ways, at least principally in four: for the essence and the universal and the genus are thought to

<sup>16</sup> cite B#12 1002a4-8 if not discussed adequately before, w/ Alexander on Δ8. cross-ref discussion of B and IIα2 above (p.11?)

be the οὐσία of each thing, and fourthly the ὑποκείμενον" (1028b33-6).<sup>17</sup>

My problem here is formally similar to the problem that this text poses for Bonitz and Ross and Frede-Patzig. Both on my interpretation and on theirs, Aristotle really ought to have given a tripartition of οὐσία here, instead of the quadripartition he in fact gives. They think he should have said "ὑποκείμενον, essence, and universal," and so they have to explain why he adds "genus"; I think he should have said "ὑποκείμενον, essence, and part in the λόγος", and so I have to explain why he says "genus" instead of "part in the λόγος", and why he adds "universal."

But, to begin with, it is hardly surprising that Aristotle says "genus" instead of the broader "part in the λόγος". Aristotle very often speaks as if all the parts in the λόγος of a thing were genera (or, when he is more careful, genera and differentiae): that is, he speaks as if all definitions were genus-differentia definitions, ignoring the roles of β and α in the definition of βα, and of the three sides in the definition of triangle. In Metaphysics Z, when he examines the parts of λόγοι as possible ἀρχαί, he will naturally concentrate on the genera rather than on physical or mathematical constituents, because he takes the dialecticians as a much more serious threat. The first sentence of Z3 says that οὐσία is principally--not exclusively--said in these four senses, and as comparison with Δ8 shows, what Z3 is leaving out are the physical (or mathematical) parts of the λόγος. But although Aristotle's main thrust in Z3-16 is against the Platonic dialecticians, he does also criticize the physicists' accounts of the ἀρχαί, and, in particular, the claim of the physical parts of the λόγος to be ἀρχαί. As we have seen, it is difficult to parcel out the argument of Z3-16 into a discussion of the ὑποκείμενον, a discussion of the essence, and a discussion of universals including the genus. But if we allow Aristotle, after discussing the ὑποκείμενον and the essence, to discuss the claims of all parts of the λόγος, not restricted to genera or universals, then much of the difficulty can be resolved. For let us recall some of the difficulties that standard accounts of Z have both with Z13-16 and with Z10-12.

On the standard division of Z, Z13-16 ought to be the discussion of universals including the genus; even Frede-Patzig, when they decompose Z into seven separate essays on οὐσία (Z1-3, Z4-6, Z7-9, Z10-11, Z12, Z13-16, Z17), leave Z13-16 as a single connected discussion of the claim that universals are οὐσία. But, as Frede-Patzig remark, this rubric does not seem to cover all of Z16. The conclusion of Z16 says, in a single breath, "so it is clear that none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία, nor is any οὐσία [composed] out-of οὐσία" (1041a3-5). No doubt, in denying that an οὐσία can be composed out of οὐσία, one thing Aristotle means to deny is that a species-οὐσία can be composed of a genus-οὐσία and a differentia-οὐσία, but these are not the only kinds of constituent-οὐσία he means to deny: he certainly also means to cover his argument at the beginning of the chapter that "most of the things that seem to be οὐσία ... [such as] the parts of animals ... and earth and fire and air"--that is, the material constituents of natural οὐσία--are not themselves οὐσία (1040b5-8). Frede-Patzig try to deal with this difficulty by suggesting that Z16 is a series of afterthoughts on οὐσία, drawing on the whole of Z and loosely appended to Z13-15, and so need not be exclusively about universals.<sup>18</sup> But this does not help, since the conclusion that no οὐσία is composed out-of οὐσία is not an

<sup>17</sup>I am, of course, leaning on "if not in more ways"; on which St. Thomas says correctly (#1270) that these four ways are not exhaustive "ut patet de dicentibus terminus corporis esse substantiam, qui modus hic praetermittitur" (I am not sure whether he is thinking of Δ8, where the way that the limits of a body would be the οὐσία of a body illustrates a more general way of being the οὐσία of something, or whether he is simply thinking of a different view on what οὐσία there are). note Irwin's reading of the phrase: whatever is οὐσία non-equivocally, i.e., in the primary sense, must meet all four of these criteria at once. this is linguistically possible as a way of taking πλεοναχῶς (as "in more ways than one"), but in content is absurd

<sup>18</sup>ref, cp. citation in IIα1

afterthought of Z16, but was argued already in Z13 (1039a3-23): already in Z13 Aristotle is arguing, not simply about universals, but about a broader class of alleged constituent οὐσίαι that includes universals, Democritean atoms (1039a7-11), and units as constituent οὐσίαι of numbers (a11-14). If Z13-16 is a discussion of universals, then this is an embarrassment to be swept under the rug.<sup>19</sup> On my interpretation, however, there is no difficulty: Z13-16 discuss the claim of the parts in the λόγος of X to be partial οὐσίαι of X and thus to be ἀρχαί existing prior to X, and Aristotle is arguing that this is impossible, whether the parts are dialectical, physical, or mathematical.<sup>20</sup>

However, Aristotle's discussion of the parts in the λόγος begins well before Z13; and, once we see that the parts in the λόγος need not be restricted to dialectical parts or to genera or universals, we can also resolve the difficulties that the standard accounts of Z have had with Z10-12. On the standard accounts, the discussion of universals and genera begins with Z13 (which does indeed refer back to the first sentence of Z3 and announce a discussion of the universal, 1038b1-8); so Z10-12 ought to be part of the discussion of the essence that began in Z4. But these chapters cannot be read this way without violence. It is all-too-obvious that Z12 is a discussion of genera and differentiae as parts in the dialectical λόγος of a thing: on standard accounts of Z, this discussion ought to go somewhere after Z13, and this is a main reason why the majority of scholars (including Jaeger, Frede-Patzig, and sometimes Ross) denounce Z12 as an interpolation in its present position, and so excuse themselves from interpreting this chapter as part of the discussion of essence announced in Z3. But really Z10-11 are in the same case as Z12, and Frede-Patzig conclude that these chapters too are a separate essay on οὐσία and not a continuation of Z4-6.

It is not illegitimate to say that Z10-11 are about the essence of a thing, but the questions they are asking about the essence--in contrast to the questions asked in Z4-9--are questions about the parts of the essence. Z10 begins by announcing an inquiry, not into the essence (the chapter does not use the phrase "τί ἦν εἶναι" until a full Bekker page later), but into the parts of the λόγος: "since the definition is a λόγος, and every λόγος has parts, and the part of the λόγος stands to the part of the thing as the λόγος stands to the thing, the ἀπορία already arises [ἀπορεῖται ἤδη] whether the λόγος of the parts ought to be present [ἐνυπάρχειν] in the λόγος of the thing or not" (1034b20-24; Aristotle goes on to give reasons on both sides). "Λόγος" here is not restricted to dialectical definitions, but means any kind of signifying complex made out of signifying parts: indeed, the examples that Aristotle gives here of parts of λόγοι are not genera or differentiae, but physical constituents (like the letters, which must be mentioned in the λόγος of the syllable) and also parts of mathematical λόγοι (like right angle, which must be mentioned in the λόγος of acute angle, but is not its genus or differentia). As Z10 soon makes clear, Aristotle's aim in asking whether Y is part of the λόγος of X is to discover whether Y is prior to X, that is, whether Y is an ἀρχή of X. It is obvious that Aristotle is here taking up B#6, which asks whether it is the physical constituents of a thing, or rather its genera, that enter into the thing's λόγος and are its ἀρχαὶ καὶ στοιχεῖα.<sup>21</sup> Or rather: here in Z10-11 Aristotle is taking up the physical half of B#6,

<sup>19</sup>as done, apparently, by Frede-Patzig; not easy to pin down what they think is going on here

<sup>20</sup>note the end of Z13 and why there is a difficulty about giving a λόγος of any οὐσία: not just the problem about universals, but the problem about composition, thus creating difficulties for physical as well as dialectical λόγοι. note earlier in Z13 on an οὐσία ἐνυπάρχουσα in an οὐσία.

<sup>21</sup>amazingly (despite the word ἀπορεῖται) none of the commentators has mentioned B#6 in explaining Z10 (not Bonitz, not Ross, not Owens, not the Londinenses, not FP, not Bostock); people who write on B (and a small group they are) are aware that the answer to B#6 is to be found in Z10ff, but since Jaeger there has been extreme reluctance to read Z as carrying out the program of B, and even e.g. Ross in commenting on B#6 says not that Z10ff

leaving the genera and differentiae alone, and examining the physical constituents of X to discover whether they go in the λόγος of X and whether they are prior to X by Plato's test--that is, to discover whether they are ἀρχαί of X by being οὐσίαι of X in Δ8's third sense of οὐσία, "whatever parts are present in [in things not said of a ὑποκείμενον], defining/delimiting them and signifying a this, such that when they are destroyed the whole is destroyed" (1017b17-19).

This means that, having finished the discussion of οὐσία-as-ὑποκείμενον in Z3, and having finished the discussion of οὐσία-as-essence by the end of Z9, Aristotle is going on in Z10 to discuss the third sense of οὐσία, οὐσία-as-the-parts-in-the-λόγος, to examine the claims of (things alleged to be) οὐσίαι in this sense to be ἀρχαί. So it is wrong to say that the third major division of Z is the discussion of universals in Z13-16; rather, the third major division of Z is the discussion of the parts in the λόγος (not restricted to genera or universals), taking up all of Z10-16. This is a single continuous discussion, with several signs of connection between Z10-11 and the chapters that follow. Aristotle speaks of τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ not only in Z10-11, to refer e.g. to the letters in the syllable, but also in Z13, to refer to the genera: "it follows, if man, and whatever is said in this way, is οὐσία, that none of the things in the λόγος is the οὐσία of anything or exists separate from them or in something else: I mean, for instance, that there is no animal apart from the particular [animals], nor any other of the things in the λόγοι" (1038b30-34).<sup>22</sup> This conclusion in Z13 is clearly part of an examination of the claim of things in the λόγος of X, including the genera of X, to be (partial) οὐσίαι of X and to be prior to X (which would require that they are separable from X); Aristotle is arguing that all these claims fail. So Z13, like Z10-11, is a part of the investigation of Δ8's third sense of οὐσία. This is also made clear by an earlier passage in Z13, where Aristotle discusses universals like man, and asks in what way they might be the οὐσία of the individuals that fall under them. After arguing quickly that the universal man cannot be the οὐσία-as-essence of an individual man such as Socrates or Coriscus (because then the universal man would have to be the οὐσία both of Socrates and of Coriscus--why one rather than the other?--and "things whose οὐσία and essence are one are themselves one," 1038b14-15), he then suggests, as an alternative for more careful examination, "perhaps it is impossible [sc. for the universal to be οὐσία] as the essence, but it ἐνυπάρχει in the essence, as animal does in man and horse" (1038b16-18): on this suggestion too, as Aristotle goes on to make clear, the universal would still be οὐσία, but in a different way.<sup>23</sup> As Frede-Patzig have seen, Aristotle is here referring back to Δ8's list of the ways that Y might be οὐσία of X, and saying that, even if the universal is not the οὐσία of its individuals in Δ8's fourth sense of οὐσία (the essence), it might still be their οὐσία in Δ8's third sense (a part in the λόγος). Now, as we saw above, Z10-11 pursue only the physical half of B#6, asking whether the physical (and mathematical) parts of X might be οὐσίαι-as-parts-in-the-λόγος of X, and might be ἀρχαί existing prior to X; Z11 (1037a18) explicitly defers the dialectical half of B#6, the examination of the parts of the dialectical definition of X. Z13 (or the part of Z13 dealing with universals, since other kinds of constituent-οὐσίαι are also discussed at Z13 1039a3-23) is pursuing this dialectical half of B#6; but so, already, is Z12. Indeed, once we understand Z10-16 as being about all kinds of parts of the λόγος--instead of forcing Z13-16 to be exclusively about universals, and forcing Z10-11 to be part of the Z4-9 discussion of essence--then there is no longer any reason to regard Z12 as a

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explicitly address the problem, but that the answer to it can be inferred from these chapters

<sup>22</sup>quote the parallel Δ18 1022a27-9

<sup>23</sup>note against Bostock's misinterpretation of this sentence, p.185 and pp.193-6 (taken back p.198?). the point is that the universal man might be part of the essence of Socrates and also part of the essence of Coriscus (the essence of Socrates also containing an individual differentia); this was taken up by many medieval philosophers. note that ἐστι in b20 is copulative rather than existential (FP recte, contra Ross)

digression or interpolation.

Z12 makes it clear from the beginning that it is examining the parts of definitions, or more specifically of dialectical definitions, "the definitions according to divisions" as Aristotle puts it at the end of the chapter (1038a34-5). The implied contrast is with physical definitions, as a later passage makes clear: "it seems that the λόγος through the differentiae is [the λόγος] of the form and the actuality, while the λόγος out of the ἐνοπάρχοντα is rather [or: more] [the λόγος] of the matter" (H2 1043a19-21).<sup>24</sup> So, having examined the parts of physical λόγοι in Z10-11, Aristotle in Z12 is examining the parts of dialectical λόγοι, that is, the genera and differentiae. As in Z10-11, his main concern will be with the claim of these parts of the λόγος of X to be the οὐσία of X in such a way that they would be prior to X and would thus be ἀρχαί of X. Admittedly, Aristotle does not announce this concern at the beginning of Z12. Instead, he motivates the discussion by raising an aporia which, he promises without explanation, "will be helpful for the discussions about οὐσία": namely, "why is that thing one whose λόγος we call a definition, as [the λόγος, or the definition] of man is biped animal: for let this be his λόγος. So why is this thing [sc. man] one and not many, [i.e.] animal and biped?" (1037b10-14). This is, of course, a question about the parts of the λόγος, asking how the many parts can be a single substantial whole: as we saw in discussing Z10 above, what is crucial to a λόγος is that it is a signifying complex made out of signifying parts. Aristotle's reason for raising this aporia here is to argue that Platonist theories of definition cannot solve it (the same motivation, more clearly, at H3 1043b10-14 and 1044a2-6 and H6 1045a14-25), and are therefore false. More specifically, Aristotle uses the aporia to refute the Platonist claim that the genera of a thing are prior to the thing and ἀρχαί of it, so that the genus by itself is prior to the genus-differentia composite, and so that the most universal of things, the highest genera, will be the first ἀρχαί of all things. We will examine the details of Aristotle's argument later (in IIδ): what matters for now is that it is all directed to showing that the genera--the higher universals, as opposed to the differentiae--cannot be ἀρχαί, one reason being that they cannot exist separately from the differentiae and the species. Aristotle says (in the protasis of a conditional, but with full endorsement) that "either the genus simply does not exist παρά the species of the genus, or it exists but exists as matter [for the differentiae]" (1038a5-6); and he concludes that, even though the higher genera are prior in λόγος, it is the lowest differentia that are prior in οὐσία. Indeed, he pushes the argument to the conclusion that "the ultimate differentia is the οὐσία and definition of the thing" (1038a19-20). This could be seen as a positive solution to the search for the οὐσία-as-essence of X. But Aristotle's aims are negative: not simply to refute the Platonist claim that the genera are ἀρχαί, but to show that the search for ἀρχαί as parts of the οὐσία (signified by parts of the definition) is hopeless, since "the οὐσία and definition of the thing" is a single irreducible differentia; and this differentia is not an ἀρχή or prior to the thing defined, but simultaneous and coextensive and substantially identical with it.

So Z12 deals with the "dialectical" answer to the dilemma of B#6--the thesis that the parts of the dialectical λόγος are ἀρχαί of the thing--by reducing it to absurdity; and it does this by distinguishing the case of the genera from the case of the differentiae, and reducing to absurdity the claim that any of the genera exist prior to, or separate from, the thing defined. Here Aristotle is only following the plan of argument that he had laid out in B#7 and #9, aporiai that raise dilemmas for the Platonist answer to the dilemma of #6. Z12 especially calls on the dilemma of B#7, which asks whether (as the Platonists think) the higher genera are prior, or rather, the lower universals, the differentiae and the infimae species. Aristotle argues in B#7 the first answer leads to absurdities, but that, if we give the second answer, we will have no ground for thinking that

<sup>24</sup>so, rightly, Ross (following Bonitz as usual, see FP ref.) ad 1037b29; cp. FP. weirder readings have been given.

these lower universals exist separately from individuals, so that these lower universals will not be ἀρχαί either, and the whole project of looking for ἀρχαί as parts of dialectical λόγοι will collapse. Aristotle is taking up these dilemmas from B to refute the Platonists in Z12, and he develops them further, still arguing against the Platonists, in Z13-15 (these chapters, as we will see, make heavy use of B#9). Most scholars see Z13 as the beginning of the third main part of Z (supposedly the account of universals), and Z13 is indeed the first chapter in Z to raise explicitly the question whether a universal can be an ἀρχή or an οὐσία. This too is parallel to B, where it is B#8 that first asks whether any universals are οὐσία, after B#6-7 have discussed the parts of λόγοι including the genera and differentiae: but both in B#8 and in Z13-16, the main arguments against universals as ἀρχαί and οὐσία are arguments against parts of λόγοι as ἀρχαί and οὐσία. As we have seen, Z13-16 culminate in the double conclusion that "none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία, nor is any οὐσία [composed] out-of οὐσία" (1041a4-5), where a universal seems to be just one case of a part in the λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of a thing.

But then why, in Z3, did Aristotle announce four separate inquiries, into the οὐσία as ὑποκείμενον, as essence, as universal and as genus; and why, in Z13, does he refer back to Z3 to take up the third investigation, of the universal? The usual interpretations of Z also find the quadripartition embarrassing, and prefer to subsume the account of the genus under the account of the universal. I have argued that the real plan of Z3-16 is a tripartition, three investigations, all with negative results, of the claims of the ὑποκείμενον, the essence, and the parts in the λόγος to be ἀρχαί. So I must take the mention of the genus in Z3 to be a shorthand for all parts in the λόγος, where the genus is the part of the λόγος whose claim Aristotle is most interested in examining and refuting (and Aristotle does say that οὐσία is thought to consist "most of all," not "exclusively," in the four candidates he mentions). But then why should Aristotle also list the universal, and not just the genus, since the universal is always a part in the λόγος, and since Aristotle is quite capable (when he speaks loosely) of describing every universal as a genus? And why should he offer a special investigation of the universal in Z13, apart from the investigation of genera as parts in the λόγος, when the main arguments against infimae species as οὐσία and ἀρχαί are the same as the arguments against genera as οὐσία and ἀρχαί?

The answer is straightforward. It is true that, in fact, no universal could be the οὐσία of an individual X except as a part of the essence of X; nonetheless, a philosopher might well think that the infima species of X is the whole essence of X, and Aristotle has to give a special refutation of this claim, apart from his discussion of the parts of the λόγος. Indeed, although Z4-6 discuss the Platonist thesis that the essence of X is prior to (and other than) this manifest X without any reference to the question of universals, surely one main Platonist reason for thinking that the form or essence of X must be other than this manifest X is that it is the same form or essence for each of the many individual X's; and Aristotle deals with this argument only in Z13. Z13 is thus picking up a question from B#8. B#8 in general had been asking "whether there is something beyond the individuals [παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα]," on the assumption that "the individuals" are corruptible matter-form composites, and that eternal ἀρχαί can be found only as the universals predicated of these things; the positive arguments for universals παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα, both as principles of knowing the individuals and as causes of coming-to-be to the individuals, turn on assuming that a universal is the οὐσία of the individuals that fall under it ("the οὐσία, i.e. the thing that [the γινόμενον] is coming-to-be," 999b14). But, as Aristotle objects in B#8, "will there be one οὐσία of them all, e.g. of all men? But this is absurd: for things whose οὐσία is one are one. Or many different οὐσία? But this too is unreasonable" (999b20-23). Aristotle is simply recalling this argument from B#8 when he objects in Z13

against the thesis that the universal is the οὐσία of the individual: "which will it be the οὐσία of? Either of them all or of none of them, but it cannot be of all of them; [for] if it is the οὐσία of any of them, then the others will be this same thing, for things whose οὐσία and essence are one are themselves one" (1038b12-15)<sup>25</sup>. And indeed this is a sufficient refutation of the Platonist thesis that something universal, the infima species, is the whole essence of its individuals. The Platonist still has the option of saying that, instead of a numerically single eternal ἀρχή, man, which is the pre-existing essence of Socrates and also of Xanthippe and Alcibiades, there are many conspecific eternal ἀρχαί, the essence of Socrates and the essence of Xanthippe and so on; but such an infinity of not-yet-instantiated essences is, as B#8 says, unreasonable, having none of the attractions of a single universal essence. The Platonist is much more likely to turn to the option of saying that the universal essence, man, is not the whole essence of Socrates or of Xanthippe, but is merely the common component of Socrates and Xanthippe, as animal is the common component of man and horse. This is the claim that Aristotle is interested in refuting in the greater part of Z13, which thus returns to the discussion of the parts of the essence: except that now the question is not simply of finding ἀρχαί as parts of the essence of X, but of finding ἀρχαί as common parts shared by the essence of X and the essence of Y. But here too Aristotle follows the same strategy that he followed against the thesis that the whole essence of X and of Y is the same: if one part of the essence of Socrates is man and one part of the essence of Xanthippe is man, or if one part of the essence of man is animal and one part of the essence of horse is animal, then Aristotle asks whether it is numerically the same part in both cases, or two numerically differing parts of the same type. Here Aristotle is recalling the dilemma he had raised in B#9: are the στοιχεῖα of things (that is, on the Platonic account, the genera) each numerically one, so that all beings would arise as-it-were from a single α, a single β, and a single γ; or are there many different στοιχεῖα of each type, so that there would be many numerically differing animal-itselfs, prior to the different species of animals, or even to the different individual animals? In Z13-14, following the arguments sketched in B#9, Aristotle argues that the first option is absurd, and that the second has no attractions, just as it is absurd to say that a numerically single ἀρχή is the whole essence of every human being, and unattractive to say that there is a numerically differing essence prior to each human being. From this dilemma, Aristotle concludes that we should give up on seeking the ἀρχαί by discovering something universal as either a total or a partial οὐσία of the manifest things.

Metaphysics Z3-16 are thus a connected argument against every attempt to discover ἀρχαί as total or partial οὐσίαι of the manifest things: either as the ὑποκείμενον of the manifest things (Z3), or as essences of the manifest things (Z4-9), or as parts in the λόγος of the manifest things (Z10-16), either as parts of a physical (or mathematical) λόγος or as parts of a dialectical λόγος, that is, universals. In the process, Aristotle also refutes the thesis that a universal can be the whole essence of its individuals, but his aim in treating universals is to show that they cannot be any kind of ἀρχαί of their individuals, and the more seriously defensible thesis is that they are ἀρχαί as partial οὐσίαι of their individuals. Z3-16 should be read as a kind of internal dialogue between an interlocutor who is always seeing paths to the ἀρχαί and his critical δαίμων, who keeps pointing out why each such path fails. And after each failure, the interlocutor tries out a new path that seems to avoid the latest roadblock, only to encounter some new difficulty.

Z3 is interesting here for its comments on method. Having started by listing four ways in which Y could be said to be the οὐσία of X, Aristotle decides to explore the ὑποκείμενον first,

<sup>25</sup>there is something funny about the second δ' in 1038b13. read γ' ?or delete πάντων δ' οὐχ οἶόν τε as a gloss?

since "the first ὑποκείμενον<sup>26</sup> seems most of all [μάλιστα δοκεῖ, sc. to the naive beginner] to be οὐσία" (1029a1-2). The main burden of Z3 is to show that this path does not in fact lead to any ἀρχή existing prior to the manifest οὐσίαι. For while the matter, the form, and the composite can all be called ὑποκείμενα,<sup>27</sup> the path of inquiry that goes from X to the ὑποκείμενον of X will eventually reach the first ὑποκείμενον of X, namely its matter; and Aristotle argues that matter cannot be an οὐσία, since it is not separate or a this.<sup>28</sup> It follows that matter cannot be an ἀρχή. Indeed, while Z3 frames the question by asking whether matter is οὐσία, or whether it is the οὐσία of a given thing--and it frames it this way because the interlocutor hopes to find the ἀρχαί as the ultimate ὑποκείμενα and thus the ultimate οὐσίαι of the manifest things, and because the way to show that the ultimate ὑποκείμενον is not an ἀρχή is to show that it is not an οὐσία--Aristotle's real concern is whether the path to the ὑποκείμενον leads to an ἀρχή, that is, to something prior to the manifest things. This is clear from how Aristotle proceeds after dismissing the matter. Since an οὐσία must be separate and a this, Aristotle says, "the form and the composite would seem to be οὐσία more than the matter."<sup>29</sup> But [τοίνυν] let the composite of the matter and the form be dismissed, for it is posterior and manifest [ὑστέρα καὶ δήλη]; and the matter too is in a way manifest [φανερὰ πως]; but about the third [sc. the form] let us investigate, for it is the most controversial [ἀπορωτάτη]" (1029a29-33). "Τοίνυν" marks the beginning of a new section of discourse, with a renewed appeal to the hearer's attention or assent; often, as here, it accompanies an exhortation (ἀφετέον, "let it be dismissed"), and it sets the speaker's agenda for what is to be discussed, often overturning the hearer's expectations.<sup>30</sup> Since we have been told that the matter and the form and the composite are all ὑποκείμενα, and since we have just learned that the matter is not οὐσία in as strong a sense as the form and the composite are, we might expect that we will now get a discussion of the form and the composite. Instead, Aristotle says, let us dismiss the composite: not because it is not οὐσία, but because it is "posterior and manifest." Aristotle is not here "searching for οὐσίαι", and he does not think there is any shortage of manifest οὐσίαι. Rather, he is dismissing the "posterior and manifest" things, and looking for non-manifest things that are prior to the manifest things: that is, he is looking for ἀρχαί. Because the matter cannot be an οὐσία (except in a derivative sense), it cannot be prior to the manifest composite οὐσία, despite its being the ὑποκείμενον of the composite οὐσία. But this does not mean we are going to get a systematic discussion of all the οὐσίαι there are; it means that we will have to try some other path from manifest composite οὐσίαι to other οὐσίαι that might exist prior to them.

Now the form, as Aristotle says, is ἀπορώτατον. There is some non-manifest reality here, or, at least, there might be: the philosophers are in ἀπορία about it. As Aristotle reminded us in Z2, some philosophers say there are εἶδη παρὰ τὰ αἰσθητά (1028b18-20), but these forms are disputed: as H1 puts it, they are not among the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι but among those "which

<sup>26</sup>τὸ ὑποκείμενον πρῶτον = more correctly, "what primarily underlies," "what underlies [X] first," i.e. what is there temporally or logically beforehand, of which X comes to be predicated, or the very first such substratum when all predicates have been stripped, cp. "that out of which first and into which last"

<sup>27</sup>perhaps give examples to show that nothing mysterious is intended. the soul is the subject of grammar (so already the Categories, although the Categories may not think the soul is the form of the body); the triangle, and not merely the bronze triangle, is the subject of isosceles

<sup>28</sup>for the argument, see IIβ below

<sup>29</sup>translation problems: μάλλον could be either "more" or "rather," and if "more" it could modify either δοκεῖν or εἶναι. does μάλιστα at a28 help? cp. the issue about μάλλον at Z2 1028b19. also: while Aristotle has an argument, he is certainly not making it clear what it is. for discussion see IIβ.

<sup>30</sup>see the discussion in Sicking and van Ophuijsen, Two Studies in Attic Particle Usage. Denniston's discussion of τοίνυν is misleading (he pushes it much too much in the direction of "therefore")

particular [schools] have maintained" (1042a6-7, cp. a11-12). So now we must investigate, and try to settle whether there are such forms, παρά and prior to the manifest things, or not. When Aristotle says that form is ἀπορώτατον, this is the contrary of ὁμολογούμενον. The dispute or the difficulty about forms is the dispute between Plato, who says that forms exist separately from sensible things, and most other philosophers, who say they do not. To resolve this dispute, we will have to begin from the manifest things, and investigate whether there is a path leading up from them to forms existing prior to them; and this could only be the path from a thing to its essence, which is what Aristotle pursues beginning in Z4. As he says here at the end of Z3, announcing the shift in direction, "about the third [sc. the form] let us investigate, for it is ἀπορώτατη. Now some of the sensibles are agreed [ὁμολογοῦνται] to be οὐσίαι, so that we should start the investigation with these [ἐν ταύταις ζητητέον πρῶτον]" (1029a32-4).<sup>31</sup> He then adds, to justify beginning with sensible ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι, the familiar passage:

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 to what is more knowable. Just this is the task; as in ethics [ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι] the task is, [starting] from what is good for each person, to make what is good-in-general good for each person, so here the task is [starting] from what is more knowable to him, to make what is knowable-by-nature knowable to him. For what is knowable and first for an individual is often scarcely knowable, and contains little or

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<sup>31</sup>note, here or elsewhere (or bring up into the text) on several disputes about this sentence (for some of this see FP and references therein, also Burnyeat), for the relatively simple-looking phrase ὁμολογοῦνται δ' οὐσίαι εἶναι τῶν αἰσθητῶν τινές, at least four translations have been proposed: (i) most obviously, "some of the sensible things are agreed to be οὐσίαι"; the difficulty is that then we would expect τινά rather than τινές (and in the next phrase, for ἐν ταύταις we would expect ἐν τούτοις), so we would have to say that the subject τῶν αἰσθητῶν τινά has been attracted into the gender of the predicate οὐσίαι (FP mention this as a possibility); (ii) to avoid this, "some οὐσίαι are agreed to be among sensible things," but "εἶναι τῶν X" is strange for a predicate (I have heard this in conversation but do not think I have seen it in print), and the postponement of τινές is also strange; (iii) alternatively, "there are agreed to be some οὐσίαι of sensible things" (Bonitz' translation--also his commentary?), perhaps not as impossible as FP suggest, but it is not obvious that the οὐσίαι of sensible things are agreed-on and better-known-to-us (since the οὐσίαι of sensible things might include the Receptacle or the Forms), and the position of τινές remains unexplained; (iv) FP suggest as a possibility, and Burnyeat endorses, taking "τῶν αἰσθητῶν τινές" as short for "τῶν αἰσθητῶν οὐσιῶν τινές", in which case there would be no problem about the gender (here or with ἐν ταύταις in the next phrase). but what people are agreeing cannot be simply that some sensible οὐσίαι are οὐσίαι, since it is tautologous that they all are; FP suggest rather that some sensible οὐσίαι are agreed to be οὐσίαι, whereas other sensible οὐσίαι are disputed (because some genuine sensible οὐσίαι are rejected by some people? there seems little evidence of that; FP suggest rather that some sensible οὐσίαι are agreed to be οὐσίαι, whereas other alleged sensible οὐσίαι, such as the parts of animals, are disputed by Aristotle himself); then Aristotle would be saying that we must begin with the agreed-on sensible οὐσίαι (animals) rather than the disputed ones (parts of animals and the four simple bodies); but in fact nothing he says for at least the next six chapters suggests that he is beginning any more from animals than from any other kind of bodies, and the point must be rather that he is beginning from sensible οὐσίαι rather than from non-sensible ones and especially from the controversial case of forms. I conclude that reading (i) is correct. there is also a problem in the next phrase about what it means that we must investigate ἐν ταύταις; this is particularly problematic since only three lines before Aristotle has said that matter-form composite substances should be "dismissed." I take Aristotle to be saying, not that we should investigate the agreed-on matter-form composite substances, but that we should investigate within them, or using them as evidence for non-sensible οὐσίαι. note this connects with the issue of whether Aristotle is first investigating form in the case of sensible things and then investigating form in the case of non-sensible things, as FP think; see below. I take it that the talk about going from X to Y means going from composites to forms, in the hope of finding more real non-sensible οὐσίαι; there is nothing to support the idea that we will first investigate forms of sensible οὐσίαι and then later forms of non-sensible οὐσίαι.

nothing of being. But [starting] from things that are known poorly, but known to him, he must try to know things that are known-in-general [i.e. things that are more knowable by nature], proceeding, as has been said, through these [things originally known to himself] (1029b3-12).<sup>32</sup>

The point of this passage, clearly, is that in order to gain the knowledge we desire about the ἀπορούμεναι οὐσίαι, we should begin by studying the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι, because, although these are less knowable, and less real, in themselves, they are what is accessible to us. Our goal is not to add yet another opinion to the disputes about non-manifest οὐσίαι, but to resolve the disputes; and we can do this only if we begin with the οὐσίαι we already know, and investigate whether they entail the existence of other prior οὐσίαι or not.<sup>33</sup> Now Aristotle has

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<sup>32</sup>I have turned several plurals into singulars for ease of translation. note on transposition-question, cite Bonitz [who cites Spengel]. the transposition is better described as moving two lines than as moving ten; there is no justification for Jaeger's claim that the ten-line section is a loose tag, inserted later and in not quite the right place. note van Armin's alternative. Irwin and now Code-Most-Laks seem to want to keep the manuscript order, which I think is simply impossible, because of the need for an antecedent for αὐτοῦ in 1029b13 (the particle καί in this line would also be wrong; it would have to be δέ or the like, see Sickling and van Ophuijsen for the difference). not that the consequences of going back to the manuscript order would be as cosmic as some people seem to think; see note below

<sup>33</sup>The point of the ethical comparison is as follows. Aristotle is taking up a point which had originally been made in a medical or dietetic context and had been extended metaphorically to ethics or politics, and he is extending it further to epistemology. Someone who is sick or constitutionally weak should not be given the hard-to-digest foods, such as beef, that would be appropriate for a healthy person or especially for a person preparing for vigorous physical activity (like Polydamas the pancratiast, Republic I 338c; on dietetic warnings against over-strong foods cp. also the On Ancient Medicine). So to make this person healthy and vigorous, we should not give him what is good for a person in good condition, but rather what is good for this person; and we hope, beginning by giving him what is good for him, to bring him to a good condition, i.e. to a condition where he will be benefitted by what is good for a person in good condition. Now there is an apparent disagreement between what appears good to the healthy person and what appears good to the sick person. Protagoras, as represented in the Theaetetus, had used this as an argument for relativism: there is nothing that is good ἀπλῶς, there is only the good-for-this-person and the good-for-that-person; the doctor, in transforming the patient, is not giving him truer perceptions of what is good, but only better, i.e. more agreeable perceptions. This chimes with Protagoras' attitude toward legislation: there is no such thing as a good law ἀπλῶς, only a law that is good for this particular constitution, that is, a law that tends to preserve this particular constitution; the legislative advisor, who is analogous to the doctor, does not propose a law that more truly describes what things are right and wrong, but only a law that will have better results for this constitution, i.e. results that tend to preserve it and will be perceived as better by its rulers. Aristotle is aware of Protagoras' attitude in both the medical and the political cases, and rejects his relativism in both cases. What is good ἀπλῶς is not (against e.g. the Euthydemus) what always benefits, which is too much to expect, but just what benefits someone in good condition. Some laws are objectively just, and they are the ones that are beneficial to, i.e. tend to preserve, a good constitution rather than a perverted constitution. And we need not conclude (with the Euthydemus) that wealth is not good, because it is likely to harm someone who is in a bad moral condition and will therefore use the money badly; a virtuous person will use the money to carry out virtuous activities and thus will be benefitted by it, so wealth is good for a person in good condition and is therefore good ἀπλῶς. But obviously we should not give unlimited money to a child, and we should be wary of wishing unlimited money for ourselves in our present condition. In the passage of the Ethics (EE IV,1 = NE V,1 1129b1-6) which Ross rightly cites to explain the ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι comparison of Z3, Aristotle, drawing on a religious-moralizing commonplace (cp. Plato Laws III 687-8, VII 801), says that people do wrong in praying for the goods of fortune, when it may turn out badly for them if their prayers are answered: "these things are always ἀπλῶς good, but not always good for a particular person. People pray for these things and pursue them, but they should not; rather, they should pray that the things that are good ἀπλῶς should also be good for themselves, but choose the things that are good for themselves." So we should, for now, avoid excessive external goods, pursuing moderate external goods and cultivating our soul, hoping to become such virtuous people that we will deserve, and be able to make good use of, great external goods at some point. This is the idea that Aristotle is now extending to epistemology. Someone who is in good cognitive condition finds most knowable the things that

described the being that is in *aporia* as "the form," by contrast to matter-form composites, which are "manifest," and the matter, which is also "in a way manifest": he is now recommending that we investigate whether it is possible to pass by reasoning from the manifest composites to forms as their ἀρχαί, and this is exactly what he does in investigating the passage from manifest things to their essences in Z4ff.

However, most scholars have felt quite uncomfortable about this obvious interpretation of the passage. The problem is that this is not what Aristotle believes, or how he speaks elsewhere, about the relation of the form to the composite or the matter. It is not true that the composite, in comparison to the form, "contains little or nothing of being": the composite is χωριστὸν ἀπλῶς, and its form is only χωριστὸν λόγῳ (H1 1042a29-31). It is also not right to say that the form is by nature knowable independently of the matter, and that only our human weakness forces us to start from something involving the matter: the form and the matter are correlatives, and so neither can be known without the other. Indeed, while Bonitz insisted that what Aristotle meant here by "the things more knowable by nature" was simply the essence of a sensible thing ("τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι, sua quidem natura primum ac proximum, nobis remotissimum est et absconditum," Bonitz II,303), I cannot find a single twentieth-century scholar who has followed him on this. It is all-too-obvious that Aristotle is contrasting the sensible οὐσίαι with some non-sensible, intelligible, οὐσίαι, the kind which it is the task of first philosophy to seek; and when Aristotle divides οὐσίαι up in this way, the forms of sensible things fall on the side of the sensibles, not on the side of the intelligibles.<sup>34</sup> So the usual twentieth-century interpretation has been that the "things more knowable by nature" here are the νοῦς and the other separate immaterial substances of Λ. But this too is very seriously objectionable. To begin with, Aristotle has just said that we must investigate the form; but he never, anywhere, suggests that any separate immaterial substance he believes in is a form (it cannot be, since a form is a kind of cause and Aristotle does not believe that the formal cause of anything exists separately from that thing).<sup>35</sup> Furthermore,

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are most knowable φύσει, i.e. he knows the posterior things by knowing their causes and ἀρχαί, so that what is ontologically prior is also epistemically prior. However, we are in an unhealthy cognitive condition, so that we find more knowable what is objectively less knowable, and can know the ἀρχαί only through their effects, being unable to process the ἀρχαί if given to us directly: so *Metaphysics* α1, *Topics* VI,4. So we must be nursed back to cognitive health, similar to pursuing physical or moral health, starting from things digestible to us in our weakened condition, and gradually strengthening ourselves until we can grasp the ἀρχαί directly, and the effects through their causes. {References to previous discussion; and perhaps separate references on Protagoras, and to Aristotle's defense of τὰ ἀπλῶς ἀγαθά.}

<sup>34</sup>rightly Jaeger (1923), Ross, Owens, FP, Bostock. (possible objection: Aristotle says that "some" of the sensibles are agreed to be οὐσίαι, so that we should start with these; it could be that the controverted οὐσίαι are other sensibles. but this really does not go with the talk of "containing little or nothing of being." and H1 1042a24-5 simply identifies "the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι" with "the sensible οὐσίαι".) Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* c10 n31, denies that intelligible οὐσίαι are involved: keeping the manuscript order of the text, he takes "what is more knowable to us" to be the essence (!), and "what is less knowable to us" to be the form (!), and tries to break the connection between "what is more knowable to us" and the earlier mention of "the ὁμολογούμεναι οὐσίαι". Irwin, and also FP who favor the reordering, speak as if it is only the reordering that makes the text be about intelligible οὐσίαι. but on the manuscript reading too, "what is more knowable in itself" can only be intelligible substances, and so the phrase was correctly taken by the pseudo-Alexander p.465, by Asclepius p.383, and by St. Thomas #1300, with the manuscript order. the manuscript order does mislead them into thinking that "what is more knowable to us" is the essences or forms of sensible things, rather than the sensible things ἀπλῶς; but then again, Ross and FP, with the correct order, manage to misread the text in the same way

<sup>35</sup>blithely, Ross II,166: "this section is meant to justify the treatment of form as it exists in sensible things before passing to pure self-existent form". FP, apparently aware of the problem, speak of "die Formen im Fall der wahrnehmbaren ousiai" and of "nicht-wahrnehmbare ousiai" (II,53-4) while avoiding saying that the non-sensible οὐσίαι are (or have) forms. but if Aristotle says at 1029a32-3 that we must investigate form, and then at a33-4 says

Aristotle does in fact go on to investigate the forms and essences of sensible things, and his arguments do nothing at all to establish the existence of the separate immaterial substances of  $\Lambda$ , which he alludes to at most once (at Z11 1037a10-14) before the end of Z16. One response (Frede-Patzig's) has been to say that Aristotle's investigation of the way-of-being of the forms of sensible substances in Z will be useful in helping us to understand the prior way-of-being of purely immaterial substances, if we know by some other route that there are such purely immaterial substances. But this does not fit Aristotle's text, which is talking in his usual way about inferring from manifest effects to their non-manifest causes. In any case the Metaphysics never does use an analysis of the way-of-being of sensible οὐσίαι to discern a different way-of-being of non-sensible οὐσίαι; and even if, with Ross and Owens and Frede-Patzig, we imagine a lost or never-written ontotheology in place of  $\Lambda$ , no one has been able to explain how Z would help.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, as long as we stick to the view that the "things more knowable by nature" are the separate immaterial substances of  $\Lambda$ , it is hard to avoid Jaeger's conclusion (discussed in IIα1 above) that Aristotle is just piously pretending that the study of sensible substances in Z will be a means for discovering divine substances: Aristotle would be adding this passage in an attempt to make the ontological project of ZHΘ fit into a theological conception of metaphysics with which it is in fact incompatible.

The obvious and correct solution is that by the non-manifest and ἀπορούμενα forms existing prior to sensible things, Aristotle means Platonic forms. When Aristotle says at 1029a33 that the form is ἀπορωτάτη he is referring back to Plato's controversial introduction of forms as further οὐσίαι beyond the agreed-on sensibles (Z2 1028b18-20, cp. H1 1042a6-12), and beyond that to the aporiai about Platonic forms in Metaphysics B and A9. This was still obvious to the pseudo-Alexander, who rightly glosses *περὶ δὲ τῆς τρίτης σκεπτέον, αὕτη γὰρ ἀπορωτάτη* as *περὶ δὲ τῆς τρίτης, τούτεστι τοῦ εἶδους, σκεπτέον (αὕτη γὰρ ἀπορωτάτη) πότερόν ἐστιν αὐτὴ καθ' αὐτήν, ὡσπερ ὁ Πλάτων λέγει, ἢ οὐ* (465,14-16): so by an investigation of sensible things "it will become clear about those things too, whether they exist, as Plato said, or whether they do not exist" (465,21-2).<sup>37</sup> But all the modern commentators (who are in much aporia about why form is called ἀπορωτάτη) assume that Aristotle must be talking about some kind of form that he himself believes in, whether immanent forms (Bonitz) or the separate immaterial substances of  $\Lambda$  (Jaeger, Ross, Owens, Frede-Patzig). It is clear enough that Aristotle is here calling for an investigation of the form or formal cause of a sensible thing, and that this is what he actually provides in Z4ff: so Ross and Frede-Patzig say that Aristotle is calling for an investigation of "the form in the case of sensible οὐσίαι" as a help toward some future study of separate immaterial forms or οὐσίαι. But Plato thought that the forms or formal causes of sensible οὐσίαι were separate immaterial οὐσίαι, and this is the claim that Aristotle is investigating.

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that for methodological reasons we should start with the sensibles (as FP take it, with "die Formen im Fall der wahrnehmbare ousiai"), then the other kind of form must be "Formen im Fall der nicht-wahrnehmbare ousiai"; FP have no way out

<sup>36</sup>cp. Bostock p.85 and p.186

<sup>37</sup>it's slightly more complicated: cite ps.-Alexander 465.19-22 in full. because ps.-Alexander reads the passage on essence as coming in between the passage on form as ἀπορωτάτη and the passage about going from familiar things to prior things, he takes the latter as meaning that we should start (not from sensibles as such but) from material forms, and use these to come to know whether there can also be, as Plato says, forms "existing separate and καθ' αὐτά, separate from matter" or not. the ps.-Alexander assumes, as was standard in late antiquity, that Plato believed both in immanent and in transcendent forms. also cite Asclepius p.382, who glosses the "third οὐσία", the form in question here, as "the intelligible οὐσία" or as "the separate, i.e. intelligible, form." but he does this without mentioning Plato, and he assumes that Aristotle is talking about something that Aristotle himself believes in, because Asclepius thinks Aristotle believes in Platonic forms

Plato was right on the methodological point that we must begin from the posterior familiar things in order to infer upwards to their more intrinsically knowable ἀρχαί, and Aristotle is happy to underline his agreement with Plato on method. Aristotle does so especially because he thinks that Plato often disregarded his own rules of method, and made unjustifiable leaps to hypotheses about intelligible ἀρχαί; in order to resolve the resulting disputes, we must go over the argument slowly and carefully, and see what we can really infer about the ἀρχαί. As the modern reader knows, and as Aristotle's original readers and hearers could presumably have guessed, Aristotle's conclusion in Z will be that Plato's path to the ἀρχαί does not work, any more than the physicists' did. But Aristotle has not actually said yet in Z that there are no Platonic forms, and even if he had said it, he would not yet have argued for it. He has argued against Platonic forms in A9 and in B and, so far in the Metaphysics, only there; and those arguments were preliminary aporiai, not a final decision of the question. Metaphysics Z2 keeps a tone of neutrality about Platonic forms, as about the other disputed οὐσίαι: they are a question that remains to be settled, not a thesis that has already been dismissed. When the reader comes to the mention of the form that is called ἀπορωτάτη at the end of Z3, he has no reason to say to himself, "of course, he means only the innocuous Aristotelian immanent form." By this point the reader is unlikely to expect that Aristotle will endorse Plato's arguments to the Forms, but he has every reason to expect that Aristotle will investigate them. And this is what Aristotle in fact does.

What Aristotle begins in Z4 is thus much like what he has done in the main body of Z3: he starts by expressing, as if in propria persona, a plausible hope for finding the ἀρχαί, in Z3 as the ὑποκείμενα of sensible things, in Z4 as the essences of sensible things; and then he shows that these hopes cannot succeed. Indeed, all of Z3-16 is taken up with such a succession of hopes and disappointments. In Z4-9, Aristotle examines Platonist arguments that the essence of a manifest X is a further οὐσία existing prior to the manifest X, and he concludes that these arguments give us no reason to believe that the essence of the manifest X is anything other than this same manifest X. He then turns, in Z10-16, to what seems a better hope, that each part of the essence of X is an οὐσία prior to the whole X, and especially that the common part of the essences of the many individual X's is an οὐσία prior to the individuals; again Aristotle concludes negatively, that "none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία, nor is any οὐσία [composed] out-of οὐσίαι" (Z16 1041a4-5). But even within Z4-9 there is a sequence of naive hope, disappointment, more sophisticated hope, and again disappointment. All of Z4-9 is directed, not to showing that there are no Platonic forms, or even that such forms could not be essences of sensible things, but simply that the kinds of Platonist argument examined in Z4-9 are not sufficient to show that there are such forms. That is to say that Platonic forms are not needed as causes of the effects that these arguments cite them for. As Aristotle puts it, summarizing the (negative) conclusions of Z4-9, "the cause [which consists] of the forms, as some are accustomed to speak of forms, if they are things παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα, is of no use at least [as a cause of] comings-to-be and existings [πρὸς γε τὰς γενέσεις καὶ τὰς οὐσίας]: so that [such forms] would not, at least for these reasons, be οὐσίαι καθ' αὐτάς" (Z8 1033b26-9). In speaking here of "things παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα", Aristotle is recalling the question of B#8, whether "there is something παρὰ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα" (999a26). The beings in question in B#8 were Platonic forms, and the Platonist has two ways of arguing for them, since "it is said in the Phaedo that the Forms are causes both of εἶναι and of γίγνεσθαι" (Metaphysics A9 991b3-4); Aristotle is rejecting both these kinds of arguments in saying in Z8 that separate forms are of no use πρὸς γε τὰς γενέσεις καὶ τὰς οὐσίας. Z4-6 consider arguments from the being of sensible things, Z7-9 from their coming-to-be. The arguments from coming-to-be offer a better hope of proving that the

essence of the manifest X is other and prior to the manifest X, because they start from a stronger premiss about the manifest X, namely that it is not eternal.

The main Platonist argument that Aristotle considers in Z4-6 is an abstract "logical" argument that does not use any premiss about coming-to-be. Basically, the argument is that we cannot straightforwardly identify the thing that is X with the essence of X, since the same thing can have many attributes: the man and the white are (in some given case) the same thing, so that if we identified the X with the essence of X, it would follow, absurdly, that the essence of man and the essence of white (to-be-a-man and to-be-white) would be the same. Aristotle's answer, basically, is that while this argument shows that the X and the essence of X cannot always be the same, it does not show that they must always be different: thus it might be that this man (Socrates) is the essence of man, even though this white thing (Socrates) is not the essence of white. Indeed, Aristotle argues, the Platonist cannot always distinguish the X from the essence of X, since he cannot do so in the case where X is a Form, on pain of a third man regress. The Platonist will, of course, concede this point, since he has never dreamed of distinguishing the X from the essence of X in the case where X is a Form, but only where X is a sensible thing; but Aristotle's argument shows that, if the Platonist wants to prove that the essence of X is something other than this X, he needs some more precise argument, turning on some premiss about this X that will not apply when this X is a Form. The most obvious premiss to choose is that this X is not eternal, but has come-to-be; it might then be argued that the coming-to-be of this X presupposes an eternal essence of X, which must be other than and prior to the X that comes-to-be. This was the argument sketched in 999b4-16, and Aristotle argues in Z7-9 that this argument does not succeed, that forms do not exist prior to the things of which they are forms,<sup>38</sup> so that a Platonic form is no more needed as a cause of this X's coming-to-be than as a cause of its being. Another possible premiss would be that this X has matter, whereas the essence of X must be pure form without matter; Aristotle shows in Z11 that this argument does not succeed either. Another possible premiss would be that this X is a particular, whereas the essence of X must be a universal common to the many particular X's; Aristotle shows in Z13 that this argument does not succeed either. The argument-structure of Z3-16 is very complex, and many more features will emerge on closer examination in IIβγδ below; but the basic strategy is clear enough, namely, to consider all the different arguments, from the crudest to the most sophisticated, that some total or partial οὐσία of X is a further οὐσία existing prior to X, and to show that all these arguments equally fail. Any interpretation of Z3-16 is bound to go wrong if it loses sight of this overall negative purpose.

We can best see the relation between Aristotle's negative and positive intentions from the conclusion of Z16. I have already quoted the final sentence of Z16, "so it is clear that none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία, nor is any οὐσία [composed] out-of οὐσίαι" (1041a3-5). But it is worth looking at the larger context of this conclusion. Aristotle says:

It is clear that none of the universals exists separately beyond the individuals. But those who speak of Forms in one way speak rightly by separating them, if indeed these are οὐσίαι; but in another way not rightly, because they say that the one-over-many is a Form. And the reason is that they cannot tell what the οὐσίαι of this kind are, the incorruptible [οὐσίαι] beyond the individual and sensible ones:

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<sup>38</sup>this is how Λ3 puts it (which cite). more precisely put: the form of X, in any sense in which this form is τὸδε τι, does not exist prior to this X; in any sense in which the form exists prior to this X, the form is not τὸδε but τοιόνδε. details, naturally, in IIγ.

so they make these the same in species [or in form, τῶ εἴδει] with the corruptibles (for these we know), man-himself and horse-itself, adding to the sensibles the word "itself." But even if we had never seen the stars, nonetheless, I suppose, there would still be eternal οὐσίαι beyond those we knew; so also in the present case, even if we cannot tell what they are, it is still doubtless [ἴσως] necessary that there should be some. So it is clear that none of the things that are said universally is οὐσία, nor is any οὐσία [composed] out-of οὐσίαι [... and so into Z17].<sup>39</sup> (Z16 1040b26-1041a5)

Here the whole passage from "but those who speak of Forms ..." to "... necessary that there should be some" is strictly speaking a digression. Aristotle has finished arguing for his conclusion, that the Platonist search for οὐσίαι beyond the manifest ones as universals, and also the search for non-manifest οὐσίαι as dialectical or physical constituents of the manifest οὐσίαι, must fail; and he now wants to make a transition to a new way of inquiring (in Z17-H6) into the οὐσίαι of the manifest things. Aristotle has shown in Z3-16 that the οὐσία of a manifest οὐσία X is not any further οὐσία existing prior to X, and furthermore that the λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of X does not spell X out into several constituent οὐσίαι existing prior to X. But both the physicists and the dialecticians had taken it for granted that to λέγειν the οὐσία of X is indeed to spell it out into prior constituent οὐσίαι, and so Aristotle's argument creates a difficulty about whether it is possible to λέγειν the οὐσία of anything at all; so Aristotle resolves this difficulty in Z17-H6 by showing positively how we can give a λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of X without running afoul of the arguments of Z3-16.<sup>40</sup> Thus while Z17-H6 are a necessary completion of the argument of Z, and while (unlike Z3-16) they give a positive account of the οὐσία of a manifest thing, they have given up on the hope that motivated Z3-16, the hope that some total or partial οὐσία of the manifest thing will be a prior non-manifest οὐσία. Z17-H6 are thus in a sense a digression from the continuing inquiry into all possible routes to the ἀρχαί, to "incorruptible οὐσίαι beyond the individual and sensible ones," though Aristotle promises that the digression will ultimately be useful for the inquiry (Z17 1041a7-9).<sup>41</sup>

But before abandoning, for now, the inquiry into eternal οὐσίαι, Aristotle adds in the last paragraph of Z16 a reflection on the failure of the routes he has tried so far, offering first a diagnosis of why the Platonists went wrong, and then a word of consolation and encouragement. Aristotle's diagnosis is that the Platonists, rightly seeking divine eternal οὐσίαι beyond the manifest things, but not finding the right causal path and so not being able to discover the genuine eternal οὐσίαι, instead posit eternal duplicates of the familiar corruptible οὐσίαι. More charitably, the Platonists posit their ἀρχαί as formal causes, rather than (with Aristotle) as efficient or final causes. But, as Aristotle insists in *Metaphysics* A9, the Platonists' alleged eternal οὐσίαι are not really any kind of cause of the manifest things: "though wisdom seeks the cause of the manifest things, we [Platonists] have let this go ... but thinking that we are naming their οὐσία, we say that there are other οὐσίαι: but as to how these should be οὐσίαι of those, we are talking vacuously, for 'participation' ... is nothing" (A9 992a24-9).<sup>42</sup> Platonic forms are not

<sup>39</sup>note on the μὲν οὖν ... δέ construction and the chapter-break (this construction invites editors to put a chapter-break). note textual problem in 1040b33

<sup>40</sup>I will describe Aristotle's positive account in IIε below, after describing the aporiai especially in IIδ.

<sup>41</sup>note on his calling the οὐσία here an ἀρχή; but it is not an ἀρχή in the desired sense, being prior only λόγῳ. how exactly will Z17-H6 help? I suppose by showing us that there can be an ἀρχή which is not a στοιχεῖον; and then by showing, in H6, that the causes of a thing's being that exist beyond the thing itself will be causes of its actuality.

<sup>42</sup>Aristotle here runs through all four kinds of cause; text and discussion in Iβ1 above

genuine formal causes, since a formal cause or οὐσία of a thing is not separate from the thing whose οὐσία it is: the path of formal causality leads only to causes present within the sensible world, but the Platonists, unable to find the eternal causes they are looking for, simply eternalize the sensible things by adding the word "-itself" to them, deceiving themselves into thinking that in saying "X-itself" they are signifying something more than the ordinary X. As Aristotle says in B#5, it is a terrible disappointment, first to be promised that there are divine things beyond the things we are familiar with, but then to be told that these divine things are just the same as the ones we already know: "what is most absurd is to say that there are natures besides those within the heaven, but that these are the same as the sensibles except that these are eternal while those are corruptible. For they say that these are man-himself and horse-itself and health-itself, and nothing other [than man, horse, etc.], doing much the same as those who say that the gods exist but are human-shaped: for neither were those [the poets] positing anything other than eternal men, nor are these [the Platonists] making the Forms anything other than eternal sensibles" (B#5 997b5-12). But now, after bringing out this disappointment, and showing that the Platonists, like the poets, have failed to reach genuine divine οὐσία, Aristotle adds an odd consolation: "even if we had never seen the stars, nonetheless, I suppose, there would still be eternal οὐσία beyond those we knew; so also in the present case, even if we cannot tell what they are, it is still doubtless necessary that there should be some" (Z16 1040b34-1041a3). This is double-edged, containing both a promise that we can succeed where the Platonists have failed in finding eternal divine οὐσία, and a crushingly negative judgment on the Platonists. "If we had never seen the stars" means "if we had spent our whole lives in a cave," as in *De Philosophia* Fr. 13 Ross, where "those who had always lived under the earth," even in pleasant and well-decorated subterranean dwellings, would be ignorant of the stars and thus of divinity. It is very much to the credit of the Platonists--as of Aristotle's cave-dwellers who "have accepted by rumor and hearing that there is some divinity and power of the gods"--that they have suspected that we are living in a cave, even if it is a nicely decorated cave, and that they have been motivated to look for a passage out. This means, putting it positively, that the Platonists have suspected that there are eternal οὐσία which are as much superior to the familiar things as the heavenly bodies are to the furnishings of the cave.<sup>43</sup> But they have not succeeded in finding a passage out, and they remain trapped inside the cave like all the other philosophers; worse, they have fooled themselves into thinking they have reached the outside. To develop the metaphor: the Platonists, in following out their chosen causal path, have followed a passage leading up out of the depths of the cave. This passage leads them up some distance, but it dead-ends below ground, within the realm of corruptible things. The Platonists are in some upper chamber within the cave, where their passage dead-ends, and they have fooled themselves into thinking that this is the outdoors.<sup>44</sup> But, Aristotle says, "even if we had never seen the stars, nonetheless ... there would still be eternal οὐσία beyond those we knew": the fact that the Platonists have not found a passage out is not evidence that there are no stars, or even that there is no passage out from the cave to where we will be able to see the stars. The cave is more complicated than Plato supposed. There is not a single straight passageway leading up from the bottom of the cave to an opening; rather, the tunnel forks, into the many different causal paths leading up from the familiar things, and some of these forks in the tunnel

<sup>43</sup>but note that Aristotle's cave-dwellers are not compelled to look at two-dimensional images on a wall, and are not taking illusions for realities; they are just severely limited in what kinds of realities they encounter. also note Wilamowitz *Glaube der Hellenen* on the exclamation "there are gods!"

<sup>44</sup>compare *Phaedo* 109c3-5 and context on wrongly thinking you're at the surface of the earth; cite and discuss, probably in the body of the text. cp also, more remotely, *Republic* IX 584d3-e5

dead-end under ground, while others may lead us outside. At the end of Z16, Aristotle has finished examining some dead-ends, the path from a manifest οὐσία to its ὑποκείμενον, to its essence, to a part of its essence, to a universal considered either as a total or as a partial essence; but, he promises, there is another path that will genuinely lead to eternal οὐσίαι beyond the manifest οὐσίαι. This is not the path of Z17-H6, which are devoted to solving the aporia that Z10-16 had raised about how it is possible to give a λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of a thing, even though Aristotle's positive account of this, unlike the accounts he has refuted in Z10-16, does not claim to lead us to anything prior κατ' οὐσίαν to the manifest οὐσίαι. But at the beginning of Metaphysics Θ Aristotle goes back to take up the last of the four senses of being listed in Δ7 and in E1, being as actuality and potentiality, and to seek the causes of this kind of being. The cause of being-as-actuality to a thing is its efficient cause, and Aristotle will show, in the line of argument leading up to Θ8 and then in Metaphysics Λ, that at least in some cases a chain of efficient causes of being-as-actuality leads up from the manifest beings to an ἀρχή that is pure actuality and exists prior to the manifest beings. The chief function of ZH in the Metaphysics is not, as Owens and Patzig and Frede thought, as a step on the path to a positive theology (something other than the theology of Λ); rather, it is to show the other paths to the ἀρχαί do not work, and so motivate us to pursue the path of ΘΛ instead. But ZH do give us, as a byproduct, a positive though non-"metaphysical" account (in Z17-H6) of the οὐσίαι of the manifest things; and they also reach the result (finally in H6) that the constituents of the λόγος τῆς οὐσίας of X are not prior κατ' οὐσίαν to X, and that the only way to find a prior cause of the unity of these constituents, and thus of the existence of X, is to look for the cause of actuality.