

Metaphysics EZHΘ: Aristotle's Unified Treatise *περὶ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τοῦ ὄντος*, *de Essentia et de Ente*

I

First, let us state the issue.¹ The *Metaphysics* text in its present form consisting of fourteen books is evidently, „on the face of it”, as Ross in the *Introduction* to his great *Metaphysics* edition puts it, „not a single finished work”.² This much is common consent, for since from Werner Jaeger onwards the *Chorizontes* (οἱ χωρίζοντες), as we may call them by an old name originally given to those ancient grammarians who split up Homer into two, scrutinized the structure of the work, its unity vanished once and for all; these efforts at dissecting it into strata and treatises were carried to the extreme by Ingemar During, who viewed the *Metaphysics* as nothing more than a collection of separate treatises, calling them *Schrift Alpha*, *Schrift A elatton*, *Schrift Beta*, and so on.³

But even During left untouched the unity, evident as it is, among the three books *ZHΘ* – Jaeger's *Substanzbücher* –, calling them the *Schrift ZHΘ* on sensible substances, *περὶ οὐσιῶν αἰσθητῶν*.⁴ On the other hand, it is common wisdom that the short book *E* does not belong to the treatise *ZHΘ* but (During's radicalism set aside) rather to the preceding book *Γ*, as the end of a treatise *ABΓE*, as is argued, e.g., by Ross.⁵

Now, this tearing off *E* from the following book *Z* is bound to strike the innocent reader of the *Metaphysics* as odd, and even more so when finding the very same Ross stating this apparent plain truth that „[t]he substantial continuity of *ZHΘ* with *E* is [...] evident”:⁶ how can one and the same Aristotle scholar, and a great one indeed, both affirm a substantial continuity between the two books

1 This paper is based on an honorary doctorate address at the University of Belgrade.

2 Ross W. D., *Aristotle's Metaphysics. A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary* (1924), 2 vols, reprint with corrections Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953, vol. I, p.xiii.

3 Ingemar During, *Aristoteles. Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*, Heidelberg: Winter, 1966, p.586–93.

4 *Ibid.* p.589, 593.

5 Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xviii; see also Michael Frede & Gunther Patzig, *Aristoteles, Metaphysik: Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, 2 vols, Munich: Beck, 1988, vol. I, p.27f. – The books α and Δ (Aristotle's 'philosophical dictionary') are commonly agreed to be later additions to the *Metaphysics*, and are in any case not our concern.

6 Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xxi.

E and *Z* and yet deny that they are parts of what originally was a single unified treatise?

Of course, that substantial continuity Ross is speaking of was earlier noted as well by those luminaries of 19th century Aristotle scholarship, Bonitz and Schwegler. Bonitz, although believing the seven books *ABΓEZHΘ* to have been written *uno tenore et eodem disputationis contextu*, nevertheless accorded a special unity to the books *EZHΘ* which he says *ita inter se sunt connexi, ut alterum divellere ab altero aegre sustineas*, and, secondly, that in *E*, as if it were the beginning of a new treatise altogether, *quasi de integro disputationem videtur ordiri*;⁷ and Schwegler even held the severing of *E* from *Z* as a separate book to be a blunder of some early editor of the *Metaphysics*.⁸

By and large, we will in the following defend the view of Bonitz and of Schwegler to the extent that *E* belongs together with *ZHΘ*, though conceding to our more recent *Chorizontes* a split, albeit of course not one between *E* and *Z*, but between *E* and the preceding book *Γ*, which was seen clearly by Bonitz already (*quasi de integro* etc.) who, however, shunned back from drawing the natural conclusion (why so, will come forth in sec. III); and we shall also see that to some extent at least Schwegler's contention that *E* and *Z* are even one single book is perfectly defensible.

II

Perhaps one would now expect the substantial connection of book *E* with book *Z* which we have made so much of to be fleshed out in more detail. But at this point this would be premature, and in any case it will become gradually apparent as we proceed. Presently, let us simply look at certain textual evidences for the unity among the *Substanzbücher* which are usually taken as well as evidences for them having originally been a separate treatise.

These are, first of all, three back references, two of them in book *Θ*. The first of these two is the beginning of the book:

[1] Now we have treated of what primarily is being and to which all the other categories of being are referred, i.e., substance (περὶ μὲν οὖν τοῦ πρώτως ὄντος καὶ πρὸς ὃ πᾶσαι αἱ ἄλλαι κατηγορίαι τοῦ ὄντος ἀναφέρονται εἴρηται, περὶ τῆς οὐσίας).

For it is in virtue of the formula of substance that the others are called beings, i.e. quantity and quality and the like; for they all will contain the formula of substance, as we said in the first discussions (κατὰ γὰρ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον λέγεται τᾶλλα ὄντα, τὸ τε ποσὸν καὶ τὸ ποιὸν καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ οὕτω λεγόμενα).

7 Hermann Bonitz, *Commentarius in Aristotelis Metaphysicam* (1849), reprint Hildesheim: Olms, 1992, p.10, 14.

8 “[D]as sechste Buch hängt so unmittelbar [...] mit dem siebenten zusammen, das man beide nur als Ein Buch auffassen, und ihre ganz sinnlose Zerreiung nur für ein Misverständnis des Ordners der Metaphysik ansehen kann”. Albert Schwegler, *Die Metaphysik des Aristoteles. Grundtext, Übersetzung und Kommentar nebst erläuternden Abhandlungen* (1847–48), 4 vols, reprint Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1960, vol. IV, p.1.

πάντα γὰρ ἔξει τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον, ὥσπερ εἵπομεν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις λόγοις) (Θ.1 1045b27–32).⁹

The reference is to Z.1, where Aristotle argues that all the other categorial beings, the accidents, are beings only in virtue of being quantities, qualities etc. of substance,¹⁰ and that therefore substance is primary in every respect, including primacy ‘in formula’ (τῷ λόγῳ 1028a32, 34), that is, in account or definition.¹¹

We have rendered the phrase ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις λόγοις in passage [1] as ‘in the first discussions’, these πρώτοι λόγοι being of course about primary being i.e. substance mentioned right before. Now the word λόγοι when used for referring to some other text may of course also mean ‘treatise’, or ‘tract’, but here this cannot be the case, since ‘in the first treatise’ would make no sense: thus, Aristotle refers back to Z.1 as the beginning of his discussion of substance in ZH within a work to which Θ itself belongs.¹²

The other of those two back references is Θ.8 1049b27–29:

[2] It has been said in our discussion of substance that everything which comes to be, comes to be something from something and by something, and this is the same in species as it (εἴρηται δὲ ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς οὐσίας λόγοις ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γιγνόμενον γίγνεται ἕκ τινος τί καὶ ὑπό τινος, καὶ τοῦτο τῷ εἶδει τὸ αὐτό).

The reference is to Z.7 1032a13f., a24f., Z.8 1033a24–27, b29–32; *qua* reference, this one differs from the former only by saying explicitly that the earlier discussion it refers to is about substance, περὶ τῆς οὐσίας; but this is only to be expected because unlike the former reference it does not have mentioned the topic of those λόγοι right before in the preceding sentence.

Both Ross and Frede & Patzig claim that the Θ references indicate that originally book Z was the beginning of a separate treatise distinct from the books ABΓE. Ross says „ZHΘ evidently form a fairly continuous work”, which of course is uncontested, but to add:

9 The translation, as in the following *Metaphysics* quotes, is based on, but by no means identical with, Ross's, in vol. II of *The Complete Works of Aristotle. The Revised Oxford Translation*, 2 vols. Ed. by Jonathan Barnes, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984. The Greek *Metaphysics* text we use is Jaeger's edition, W. Jaeger ed., *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957. Citations from other works of Aristotle are taken from the Bekker edition, *Aristotelis Opera*, 2 voll. Ex rec. Immanuelis Bekkeri. Ed. altera quam curavit Olof Gigon, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1960. (Our numbering of Aristotle quotes is intended to facilitate cross references).

10 They are not *entia* properly speaking but only *entis*, as Aquinas puts it, or in Alexander's phrase, they are only οὐσίας τι, something-of-substance. See S. *Thomae Aquinatis in duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio*. Ed. M.-R. Cathala & R. M. Spiazzi, Turin; Rome: Marietti, 1964, lib. XI, lect. 3, §2197; lib. XII, lect. 1, §2419. For Alexander's phrase, see *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis in Aristotelis Metaphysica Commentaria*. Ed. Michael Hayduck, Berlin: Reimer, 1891 (CIAG I), p.242, ll.22, 23 (fuller quote in n.24 below). – As to Aristotle himself, see the Z.1 part of citation [9] below.

11 “Necessarily in the formula of each [of the other] things the formula of substance is contained”, ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἐν τῷ ἐκάστου λόγῳ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας ἐνυπάρχειν Z.1 1028a35f.

12 That is, Θ.1–9, dealing with potential and actual being; Θ.10, turning to the topic of being as the true (and non-being as the false), is a different matter altogether.

It is evident, again, that the reference of Θ to Z as ‘our first discussions’ implies that $ZH\Theta$ is in a sense a distinct treatise from $AB\Gamma E$ (Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xviii).

To this, Frede & Patzig only add that the Θ references refer to ZH as an originally separate treatise on substance, to which Aristotele afterwards attached Θ .¹³

Thus, both Ross and Frede & Patzig take it for granted that the $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\iota$ $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\iota$ of passage [1] are first discussions – on substance of course – in a separate treatise: but the addition ‘in a separate treatise’ is wholly unwarranted, as we have seen; and if so, the reference in [2] to $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\tau\eta\varsigma$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$ does not indicate anything in their support either.

In arguing for their view, Frede & Patzig (see quote in n.12) draw attention to yet another back reference, which is in /.2, referring back to the central thesis of Z.13:

[3] Now if no universal can be substance, as has been said in the *logoi* on substance and being ($\epsilon\iota$ $\delta\eta$ $\mu\eta\delta\epsilon\nu$ $\tau\omega\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\theta\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\upsilon$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\tau\acute{o}\nu$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\nu$ $\epsilon\iota\nu\alpha\iota$, $\kappa\alpha\theta\acute{\alpha}\pi\epsilon\rho$ $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$ $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\epsilon\iota\rho\eta\tau\alpha\iota$ $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\iota\varsigma$) [...] (1053b17f.).

We have left $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\iota\varsigma$ untranslated in order not to prejudice the issue: does the word here simply mean ‘discussions’ leaving open whether in the same work or in another, or is it to be understood as ‘treatise’? Well, in view of the fact that no-one will take book / as having originally belonged together with the books $ZH\Theta$,¹⁴ here the word actually refers to a treatise on its own. This much, then, Frede & Patzig are perfectly right. But they simply ignore that Aristotle does not call that treatise as being on substance, $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$, only, but as being on substance *and* on being, $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$, with $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha$ literally translated into Latin, *de essentia et de ente*: and to have anything to which this $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ could be geared, we must look beyond Z , which already is $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$, to the preceding book E , stating in its first sentence that the incipient work is one about beings, or things-that-are, in general:

[4] We are seeking the principles and the causes of the things-that-are, and plainly of them *qua* things-that-are ($\alpha\iota$ $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\alpha\iota$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\alpha\iota\tau\iota\alpha$ $\zeta\eta\tau\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ $\tau\omega\nu$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\omicron\nu$, $\delta\eta\lambda\omicron\nu$ $\delta\grave{\epsilon}$ $\acute{\omicron}\tau\iota$ η $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\alpha$) (E.1 1025b3f.), which is to say that this inquiry will be $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ $\delta\upsilon\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\lambda\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ (b9), about being simply.

13 “Man wird also sagen dürfen, das Z und H eine ursprüngliche Einheit bildeten, das es aber fraglich ist, ob Θ schon von Anfang an Teil dieser Einheit war. Nennen wir diese ursprüngliche Einheit, Θ 8 folgend, die Abhandlung „Über die ousia“.

Manches spricht dafür, das es sich bei dieser Abhandlung „Über die ousia“ um eine ursprünglich selbständige Abhandlung handelte, die erst später, nun schon durch Θ 1–9 ergänzt, als Kernstück für die „Metaphysik“ verwendet wurde. Nicht nur bezieht sich Θ 8, 1049b27–28, auf ZH als die Abhandlung über die ousia, auch I 2, 1053b17–18, verweist auf ZH als „die Ausführungen über die ousia und das Seiende“ [...], so als handle es sich um eine selbständige Schrift. Z beginnt ohne Verbindungspartikel, so als handle es sich um den Anfang einer ganzen Schrift. Dazu past auch, das Θ 1, 1045b32, sich auf den Anfang von Z so bezieht, als handle es sich um den Anfang einer Abhandlung“. Frede & Patzig [see n.4], vol. I, p.22f.; cf. p.28f.).

14 As Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xxii puts it, “I is evidently a more or less self-contained treatise, dealing with the nature of unity and of kindred conceptions”.

Hence we cannot but conclude that the reference in *I.2* is to a treatise beginning with book *E*, treating of being in general, and continuing with the *Substanzbücher* focussing on what is primary being, such that *E* will not belong to the preceding books *ABΓ* but will be the beginning of a unified treatise *EZHΘ* *de ente et essentia*, covering the '*de ente*' part.

Thus the three back references in Θ.1, Θ.8, and in *I.2* respectively, do nothing to support the contention of our Chorizontes, while the last one rather supports the opposite view, viz., that *E* belongs together with *ZHΘ*.

However, they adduce still another textual phenomenon in support of their view: namely the fact that there are connecting particles at the beginning of *H* and Θ (*δή* and *μέν*, resp.) but none at the beginning of *Z*, this book beginning baldly with τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς 1028a10, so as if it were the beginning of a separate treatise.¹⁵

But now, look back at passage [4]: it is the first sentence of *E*, but has no connecting particle either, such that by parity of reason one should rather infer that *E* is the beginning of a separate treatise but not a continuation of *Γ*. Indeed, in the latter case one would expect an even stronger connecting device. In that first sentence of *E* Aristotle takes up the conclusion of *Γ.1* (quote in n.18 below), such that on the presupposition of an original connection of *E* with *Γ* one would expect some referring remark such as ὡςπερ εἴρηται πρότερον, 'as has been said earlier', or the like; but there is none, and we are reminded of Bonitz' '*quasi de integro* etc.', only that by now we are strongly inclined already to drop its '*quasi*'.

In a word, the lack of a connecting particle at the beginning of *Z* proves nothing, and moreover, we will see later on that this lack can anyway quite easily be treated as a mere pseudo-obstacle.

So far, then, the claim that *Z* was originally the beginning of a separate treatise to which *E* did not belong has only very feeble support. But there are also stronger reasons behind that claim, and they are to be found in book *K*.

III

Book *K* is a somewhat odd thing. It consists of two clearly distinguishable parts, of which the first, *K.1–8*, is a parallel version of the content of the books *BΓE*, whereas the second, *K.9–12*, consists of almost literal excerpts from the *Physics*¹⁶ and hence does not concern us here at all.

Now from the fact that *K.1–8* corresponds to *BΓE*, and from the general assumption that it is a very early text, the conclusion is ordinarily drawn that *E* actually is connected with *B* and *Γ*, and not with the books *ZHΘ* which certainly were written fairly late. Ross, for instance, says:

The doubt which has sometimes been expressed on the question whether there is any real connexion between *E* and *ABΓ* is set at rest by the fact that the first part of *K* [*K.1–8*], which is certainly very old and may well be a pupil's notes

15 See Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xviii, and for Frede & Patzig the quote in n.12.

16 More precisely, the dividing line is in *K.8* 1065a26.

of a course of lectures by Aristotle himself, is a continuous parallel treatment of the topics discussed in BΓE.¹⁷

The same view is expressed by Frede & Patzig.¹⁸ And to add, it was nothing else but K.1–8 that hindered Bonitz to draw from his insight that in *E* the discussion starts anew, the conclusion that *E* cannot be viewed as a continuation of the discussion in *Γ* and may, as the beginning of a new treatise *EZHΘ*, even have been intended by Aristotle himself to be completely separated, *omnino seiungi*, from *ABΓ*: but any such query, Bonitz ([see n.6], p.14) says, *tolli videbitur comparato libro K*. Now to see what this *K* spell, as it may be dubbed, is all about, we have to cast a look at *K*'s chapter 3, corresponding to *Γ*.1–2, and at its chapter 8, corresponding to *E*.2–4.

As to *K*.3, it will be fitting first to look at *Γ*.1–2. In *Γ*.1, Aristotle posits a science of being *qua* being, and argues to the conclusion that this science investigates the first principles and causes of being *qua* being.¹⁹ Then, *Γ*.2 starts with stating that

[5] being is spoken of in many ways, but in relationship to one single thing, one definite nature, and not homonymously ((τὸ δὲ ὄν λέγεται μὲν πολλαχῶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἓν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐχ ὁμωνύμως) (*Γ*.2 1003a33f.)

which is to say that although 'being', ὄν, is not a genus word such that what-is does not exhibit the unity of a genus,²⁰ it nevertheless does not bear the same name 'being' equivocally (ὁμωνύμως), by mere linguistic accident²¹ – just as little as what is called healthy (the body, the food, the climate etc.) does –, but everything (ἅπαν 1003b5) called a being is so called – again as it is in the case of what is called healthy – in virtue of a πρὸς-ἓν or focal-meaning relationship „with respect to one single principle (πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν)” (b6):

[6] For some things are called beings because they are substances (τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὅτι οὐσίαι, ὄντα λέγεται),
others, because they are affections of substance (τὰ δ' ὅτι πάθη οὐσίας),
and still others because they are a way towards substance (τὰ δ' ὅτι ὁδὸς εἰς οὐσίαν)

17 Ross [see n.1], vol. I, p.xviiif. He even finds it apt, *ibid.* p.xxvi, to „even conjecture that *K* represents an earlier course than BΓE“. This was definitely asserted by Jaeger: see Werner Jaeger, *Aristoteles. Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1923, p.216ff. See also end of sec. V.

18 Frede & Patzig [see n.4], vol. I, p.28: “Das *E* zu der Reihe *A*, *B*, *Γ* gehört, wird [...] auch dadurch belegt, das *K* in seinem ersten Teil den Gedankengang von BΓE kontinuierlich in einer Parallelfassung vortragt (*K* 1–8 ist vermutlich die Nachschrift eines Schülers von einer Vorlesungsreihe, die Aristoteles selbst einmal vorgetragen hat)“.

19 “There is a science which investigates being *qua* being and those things which belong to this in virtue of itself“, ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη τις ἣ θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό 1003a21f. – „Therefore we also must grasp the first causes [and principles] of being *qua* being“, διὸ καὶ ἡμῖν τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν τὰς πρώτας αἰτίας [καὶ ἀρχὰς a29] ληπτέον a31f.

20 οὐ γὰρ γένος τὸ ὄν, *An. Post.* II.7 92b14.

21 As, e.g., both the donkey and the engine are called ὄνος. The example is in *Topics* I.15 107a19f.

or destructions or privations or qualities or productive or generative of substance or of things spoken of with reference to substance (ἢ φθοραὶ ἢ στέρησεις ἢ ποιότητες ἢ ποιητικά ἢ γεννητικά οὐσίας ἢ τῶν πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν λεγομένων),
 or negations of an instance of these or of substance (ἢ τούτων τινὸς ἀποφάσεις ἢ οὐσίας) (1003b6–10).

Of this list, we note here just this one feature, which will show to be important, namely, that it covers among the beings spoken of with reference to substance not only things falling into the non-substantial categories, as is most obvious in the case of the qualities, but also things outside the categories altogether, as again is most obvious in the case of privations (e.g., blindness) and negations (e.g., not-man, not-white and the like, cf. especially *N.2* 1089a16–19).

Then, in 1003b11–19, *Γ.2* goes on to argue that for the unity of a science it is sufficient that its domain has the unity of a focal-meaning structure, and that a science with such a domain studies everything in it:

[7] Just as there is one science which deals with all the healthy things, this is equally so in the other cases (καθάπερ οὖν καὶ τῶν ὑγιεινῶν πάντων μία ἐπιστήμη ἔστιν, ὁμοίως τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων) b11f.,

but it studies chiefly its primary item (κυρίως τοῦ πρώτου ἢ ἐπιστήμη b16), and hence it is plain that

- (i) it belongs to a single science to study all the things-that-are *qua* things-that-are (δῆλον οὖν ὅτι καὶ τὰ ὄντα μιᾶς [sc. ἐπιστήμης] θεωρησαὶ ἢ ὄντα b15f.), and, since substance is the primary item in this all-encompassing domain, that
- (ii) the philosopher must grasp the principles and causes of substances (τῶν οὐσιῶν ἂν δέοι τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἔχειν τὸν φιλόσοφον b18f.).

This much is from *Γ.2* enough for our purposes. Let us now turn to *K.3*.

K.3, from its beginning 1060b31 up to 1061a10 corresponds to *Γ.1* and to *Γ.2* till the end of the list of being at 1003b10. It will be sufficient to quote only the corresponding *K.3* list. Being is a *πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον* (1060b32f.), just as for instance the healthy things are, but just as these display a focal meaning structure,

[8] in the same way everything that-is is spoken of (τὸν αὐτὸν δὴ τρόπον καὶ τὸ ὄν ἅπαν λέγεται): for in virtue of being an affection or a permanent or a transient state or a movement of being *qua* being, or something else of this sort, each of these things is called a being (ττῷ γὰρ τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν πάθος ἢ ἕξις ἢ διάθεσις ἢ κίνησις ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τι τοιούτων εἶναι λέγεται ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ὄν) (*K.3* 1061a7–10),

such that by this focal meaning structure „every being is referred to some one common thing”, παντὸς τοῦ ὄντος πρὸς ἓν τι καὶ κοινὸν ἢ ἀναγωγή γίγνεται a10f.

Somewhat odd here is the use of ὄν ἢ ὄν, since here it must mean ‘substance’.²² As to πάθος, ἕξις and διάθεσις, we best take these words to refer

22 Thus, Ps.-Alexander in his paraphrase of 1061a7–10 replaces ὄν ἢ ὄν without any comment by οὐσία: “[...] in the same way [as in the case of what is healthy] the things-that-are too

to the affective qualities, the third class, and to the more stable and less stable states, e.g. knowledge *versus* health, these being the first class in the category of qualities in *Categories* chapter 8; and κίνησις certainly stands, as it often does, for the categories of acting, ποιεῖν, and being acted upon, πάσχειν.²³

But then, the main difference between this K.3 list [8] and the Γ.2 list [6] is that the K.3 list is confined to categorial being only, expressly called τὸ ὄν ἅπαν, the entirety of being, apart from substance consisting of „quantity, quality, where, and the other categories”, as Ps.-Alexander, commenting on 1061a10f., puts it.²⁴

And this difference is all-important. For on the Γ.2 approach by way of the πρὸς-ἐν structure of being there is no basis nor any motivation to separate out from the entirety of what is called being first categorial being, and to set aside other sorts of being such as privations and negations:

- (a) no basis, since the fundamental dividing line is the one between being strictly so called, i.e. substance, and what is, in Alexander's phrase which occurs precisely in his commentary on [6], only οὐσίας τι, something-of-substance, and of such kind is a privation just as well as a non-substantial categorial being, a quality, a quantity, and the like;²⁵ and
- (b) no motivation regarding the determination of the proper object of the science of being *qua* being, since according to the Γ.2 approach a science whose domain forms a πρὸς-ἐν structure studies everything within it (passage [7]), albeit primarily its ἐν, that is substance in the case of this particular science; thus, even non-categorial beings such as privations or negations will not be wholly excluded from it. And to add, it is telling that in K.3 after 1061a10f. nothing follows which would correspond to Γ.2 1003b11–19, where Aristotle argues for this.

Thus, the K.3 list of being, already confined as it is to categorial being, presupposes some eliminating procedure, which cannot stem from the notion of

have got this name from some one thing, viz., substance, which is being in the principal sense”, οὕτω καὶ τὰ ὄντα ἀπὸ ἑνός τινος, τῆς οὐσίας, ἥπερ κυρίως ὄν ἐστι, τὴν προσηγορίαν ταύτην εἴληφε. *Alexandri etc.* [see n.9], p.642 ll.22f. Similarly Aquinas ([see n.9], lib. XI, lect. 3, §2197) identifies the *ens inquantum ens* of his Latin *Metaphysics* with *ens simpliciter*, which is what *in se habet esse, scilicet substantia*.

23 See, e.g., *Ethica Eudemia* I.8 1217b29, or Z.4 1029b25, and Frede & Patzig [see n.4] *ad loc.*, vol. II, p.62f.

24 εἰσὶ δὲ ταῦτα, i.e. the things referred to some one common thing, ποσὸν ποιὸν ποῦ καὶ αἰ λοιπαὶ κατηγορίαι.

Alexandri etc. [see n.9], p.642 ll.29f. The same confinement to categorial being is taken for granted in Aquinas' comments on the K.3 list, see the reference in n.21.

25 In fact, Alexander applies the phrase in particular to non-categorial items, among them privations, presumably in order to emphasize their status as beings: “And both the destructions and changes of substance we call beings, because these too [and not only such things as the πάθη which are qualities] are something-of-substance [...] And likewise the privations too: for blindness is a being because it is something-of-substance”, καὶ τὰς φθορὰς δὲ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ μεταβολὰς ὄντα λέγομεν, ὅτι καὶ ταῦτα οὐσίας τί ἐστιν [...] ὁμοίως καὶ αἰ στερῆεις· ἡ γὰρ τυφλότης ὄν τι ὅτι οὐσίας τι. *Alexandri etc.* [see n.9], p.242 ll.21–23.

a *πρὸς-ἐν* structure, which is to say that the K.3 list cannot be understood with reference to Γ.2 only.

On the other hand, it bears a striking resemblance to something in Z.1. After having stated at the beginning of Z.1 once more that being, here meaning categorial being, λέγεται πολλαχῶς 1028a10, and having argued that substance is the primary being, he continues with what we best present face to face with the K.3 list:

<p>K.3: in the same way as the healthy [9] everything that-is is spoken of (τὸ ὄν ἅπαν λέγεται): for in virtue of being an affection or a permanent or a transient state or a movement of being <i>qua</i> being, or something else of this sort (τῷ γὰρ τοῦ ὄντος ἧ ὄν πάθος ἢ ἕξις ἢ διάθεσις ἢ κίνησις ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τι τοιοῦτων εἶναι), each of these things is called a being (λέγεται ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ὄν) (1061a8–10).</p>	<p>Z.1: primary being is substance, the other things [the accidents] are called beings (τὰ δ' ἄλλα λέγεται ὄντα) in virtue of some of them being quantities of being in that sense, others qualities of it, others affections of it, and others something else of this sort (τῷ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος τὰ μὲν ποσότητες εἶναι, τὰ δὲ ποιότητες, τὰ δὲ πάθη,, τὰ δὲ ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον) (1028a18–20).</p>
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The two passages resemble each other, both in expression by their τῷ ... ὄντος ... εἶναι and materially by their taking into account categorial being only, to such an extent that one cannot help but to surmise that the K.3 list of being relates really rather to Z.1 as its background, and not to Γ.2.

But in order to see more clearly what is going on here, and to pin down the eliminating procedure that contracts the indiscriminate Γ.2 list of being to what we have in K.3, we must now turn to E.2–4 to which in *K* corresponds chapter 8.

IV

Having in E.1 re-opened the quest for the principles and causes of being *qua* being (passage [4]), and having towards the end of it identified the science of supreme being (ἡ θεολογικὴ ἐπιστήμη) with the science of being *qua* being i.e. of being in general – more on this will come in sec. V, (γ) –, Aristotle at the beginning of E.2 once again says, as he had done at the beginning of Γ.2 (passage [5]), that being is a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον. But the way he now explains this is entirely different from what we have in Γ.2, by taking up the fourfold partition of being in Δ.7:

- [10] But since being, so called without qualification, is spoken of in many ways (ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τὸ ὄν τὸ ἀπλῶς λεγόμενον λέγεται πολλαχῶς), of which
- [a] one was [in Δ.7] accidental being (ὄν ἐν μὲν ἦν τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκός [sc. ὄν]),
 - [b] another being as the true, and non-being as the false (ἕτερον δὲ τὸ ὡς ἀληθές, καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν τὸ ὡς ψεῦδος),

[c] but apart from these there are the figures of predication (παρὰ ταῦτα δ' ἔστι τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας), e.g., what [a thing is, i.e., substance], of what quality, of what quantity, where, when, and anything else that signifies in this way (οἷον τὸ μὲν τί, τὸ δὲ ποιόν, τὸ δὲ ποσόν, τὸ δὲ πού, τὸ δὲ ποτέ, καὶ εἴ

τι ἄλλο σημαίνει τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον),

[d] again apart from all these, potential and actual being (ἔτι παρὰ ταῦτα πάντα τὸ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ [ὄν]) [...] (E.2 1026a33-b2).

No word of a πρὸς-ἔν, or focal-meaning structure here. Let us further note just this point, that although the third member of this list, which is categorial being, is itself again a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον, in that the categories are *summa genera* (see, e.g., Δ.28 1024b12–16), this is not mentioned here in E.2 at all, whereas it is mentioned in Δ.7:

[11] For 'to be' signifies in as many ways as the figures of predication are spoken of ([...] τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας· ὅσαχῶς γὰρ λέγεται, τοσαυταχῶς τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει) (1017a23f.);

and this again is something which will prove significant.

After introducing the fourfold partition of being, Aristotle in E.2 immediately, with the words

[12] Now since being is spoken of in many ways, we must first say concerning accidental being that there is no scientific study of it (ἐπεὶ δὴ πολλαχῶς λέγεται τὸ ὄν, πρῶτον περὶ τοῦ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς λεκτέον, ὅτι οὐδεμία ἐστὶ περὶ αὐτὸ θεωρία) (1026b2–4),

turns to the discussion, lasting till the end of chapter 3, of accidental being, that is, beings that are compounds resting on accidental predications, e.g., musical Socrates who exists because Socrates is musical; and then in chapter 4 he discusses more briefly being as the true which rests on the use of ἔστι in the sense of 'is true' and consists in such judgment-contents as, e.g., *Socrates is musical*, or *Socrates is not pale*.²⁶

And both these modes of being are excluded from the domain of the science of being *qua* being (1027b28–1028a3): accidental being has no determinate cause such that it cannot be studied by any science, and being as the true is disqualified by its being mind-dependent, being „an affection of thought”, τῆς διανοίας τι πάθος 1027b34–28a1. There is, however, also a common reason for their exclusion, which is much more interesting:

[13] and both are around the remaining genus of being, and do not indicate there being any extra nature of being (καὶ ἀμφοτέρω περὶ τὸ λοιπὸν γένος τοῦ ὄντος, καὶ οὐκ ἔξω δηλοῦσιν οὐσάν τινα φύσιν τοῦ ὄντος) (1028a1f.),

that is to say that they are parasitical upon categorial being: musical Socrates does indicate the categories of substance and of quality, but 'no extra nature of being', and the same holds of the being as the true *Socrates is musical*.

26 An example for this alethic use of ἔστι by Aristotle himself is in the beginning of the *Posterior Analytics*: To acquire knowledge we must beforehand assume, for instance, „that in every case either to affirm or to deny it is true (ὅτι μὲν ἅπαν ἢ φῆσαι ἢ ἀποφῆσαι ἀληθές), that it is (ὅτι ἔστι)“; *An. Post.* I.1 71a13f.

Thus, „these two are to be dismissed”, ταῦτα μὲν ἀφείσθω 1028a3: „But what is to be investigated”, σκεπτέον 1028a3, „are the causes and principles of being itself qua being”, τοῦ ὄντος αὐτοῦ τὰ αἷτια καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἧ ὄν a3f.

From the context it is plain that this being itself, a few lines before, 1027b31, called κυρίως ὄν, principal being, with substance, quality, and quantity as examples, is categorial being, being ‘according to the figures of predication’.

And with that we finally have the eliminating procedure we need to understand the restriction of the Γ.2 list of being to categorial being in the corresponding K.3 list: in a word, the K.3 list presupposes E.2–4, or within *K*, chapter 8. Let us now look briefly at this chapter.

K. 8 does not start, as *E*.2 does (passage [10]), with presenting first the fourfold partition of being according to Δ.7, but presupposes it as familiar: though it begins with almost the same words as *E*.2 up to the mention of accidental being, it then proceeds, without any enumeration of the other three modes of being, straightforwardly to the discussion of that mode:

[14] But since being, without qualification, is spoken of in several ways (ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ ἀπλῶς ὄν κατὰ πλείους λέγεται τρόπους), of which one is what is called to be accidentally (ὄν εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς εἶναι λεγόμενος), we must consider first what is being in this way (σκεπτέον πρῶτον περὶ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος) (*K*.8 1064b15–17).

Even more obvious becomes that presupposition when within the discussion of accidental being as contrast to it categorial being shows up in passing, which is here, as in Δ.7 but not in *E*.2 where Aristotle speaks only of ‘the figures of predication’, called ὄν καθ’ αὐτό, being in its own right, or in virtue of itself.²⁷

[15] But it is plain that of accidental being (τοῦ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὄντος) there are no causes and principles of the same kind as those of being in its own right (τοῦ καθ’ αὐτό ὄντος) (*K*.8 1065a6–8).

And similarly out of the blue, so to speak, being as the true shows up in the closing lines of the *E*.2–4 part of *K*.8 (cf. n.15), corresponding to *E*.4 1027b29–1028a3 where being as the true, together with coincidental being, is dismissed:

[16] But as to being as the true and accidental being (τὸ δ’ ὡς ἀληθὲς ὄν καὶ τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς), the former lies in a combination of thought and is an affection of it – therefore it is not the principles of being in this sense which are sought, but of being which is outside and separable (περὶ δὲ τὸ ἔξω ὄν καὶ χωριστόν). And the latter, I mean accidental being (λέγω δὲ τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς). And the latter, I mean accidental being (λέγω δὲ τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς), is not necessary but indetermined, and its causes are unordered and indefinite (*K*.8 1065a21–26).²⁸

27 Δ.7 1017a7f.: τὸ ὄν λέγεται τὸ μὲν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ δὲ καθ’ αὐτό – a22f.: καθ’ αὐτὰ δὲ εἶναι λέγεται ὅσα περ σημαίνει τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας, „to be in their own right are said the things that are signified by the figures of predication“.

28 We may note that ἔξω is used here differently from how it is used in *E*.4 1028a2 (passage [13]), this *K*.8 use spoiling the insight that accidental being and being as the true are parasitical upon categorial being.

Oddly, Jaeger ([see n.16], p.217) takes the rather casual way in which the A7/E.2 account of the πολλαχῶς of being makes its appearance in K.8 as corroborating the view that K.8 (that is, its E.2–4 part) was written earlier than E.2–4: but what to say on this except that it, if anything, is a case of putting things upside down?

V

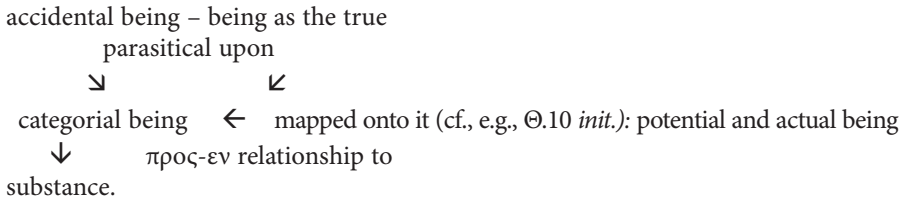
Let us now pause for a moment and draw together what has come forth in the two previous sections, adding a few appropriate remarks and expansions.

(α) To begin with, the Δ.7 approach to the πολλαχῶς of being, taken up in E.2 *init.* (passage [10]), is quite different from the Γ.2 approach in terms of a πρὸς-ἐν relationship (passages [5], [6]). In this case Aristotle did little apart from simply transferring to being what he had observed regarding the things that are called healthy. In contrast, the Δ.7 approach is based on the various uses, or senses, of εἶναι, ‘to be’: it may mean

- to be *F* accidentally, κατὰ συμβεβηκός, as, e.g., for Socrates to be musical, yielding accidental compounds such as musical Socrates, in contradistinction to
- to be *F* essentially, καθ’ αὐτό, as, e.g., for Socrates to be a man, for whiteness to be a colour, and so on; to be essentially is equivalent to be an item in a category, and the categories in turn are determined by ‘the figures of predication’, σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας, such that there are as many ways of καθ’ αὐτὸ εἶναι as there are such σχήματα (see Δ.7 1017a22f., quoted in n.26).
- furthermore, there is the alethic use of εἶναι, according to which ἔστι means ‘is true’, as we have said above (after passage [12], and see n.25), yielding being as the true; and again,
- here is the potential construction of εἶναι, according to which it means to be *F* potentially, or to be *F* actually.

In this much more complex configuration not only categorial being is sharply demarcated, but show up also ways of being that do not fit into the πρὸς-ἐν structure of Γ.2 at all, viz., accidental being and being as the true. For the πρὸς-ἐν structure of being fits best the case when one thing is predicated of another, e.g. the quality musicalness of Socrates, the privation blindness of Homer, the negation not-man of the God Zeus, and what not. But obviously musical Socrates cannot be predicated of Socrates, nor the being as the true *Socrates is musical*: these items relate quite differently to the entities they indicate, in that these are already contained in categorial being such these two modes of being are parasitical upon the latter.

The Δ.7 structure, however, does not exclude the πρὸς-ἐν structure but includes it, in that it obtains within categorial being, as the Z.1 part of [9] shows. Thus the structure of being according to the Δ.7 approach may be represented by the following diagram:



And it goes without saying that this more complex Δ.7 scheme is the more mature account of the *πολλαχῶς* of being than the simple *πρὸς-ἐν* structure of Γ.2, providing as it does the frame for the entire discussion from E.2 to book Θ.

Thus, all those who from the fact that K.1–8 presents a parallel treatment of the content of *BTE* with K.3 and K.8 corresponding to Γ.1–2 and to E.2–4 respectively, infer that book *E* is to be tied not to the *Substanzbücher* but to ΒΓ, simply ignore the deep-going difference between the Δ.7 scheme taken up in E.2 *init.* and the more simple account of the *πολλαχῶς* of being in Γ.2 *init.*; they put the cart before the horse, for it ought to be asked whether in this essential point there is a continuity from *Γ* to *E* in the first place: and since there is none, an appeal to K.1–8 in order to attach *E* to ΒΓ is just idle.

(β) We have drawn attention to the fact that according to Δ.7 there is a twofold *πολλαχῶς* of being, of which, however, the second, the *πολλαχῶς* of categorical being (see passage [11]), is not mentioned in E.2. Again, this difference is often ignored, and not taking it into account is the very basis of what seems to be Jaeger's main argument for the original disconnectedness of *E* and *Z*. Book *Z* starts, to repeat, with saying that being, by now confined to categorical being already, λέγεται *πολλαχῶς*, with a reference to Δ.7:

[17] Being is spoken of in many ways, as we distinguished them earlier in the work on the various ways [in which things are spoken of] (τὸ ὄν λέγεται *πολλαχῶς*, καθάπερ διειλόμεθα πρότερον ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς).

For it signifies on the one hand what a thing is and this-something [i.e., substance], on the other hand of what quality or quantity [it is] or each of the other things predicated in this way (σημαίνει γὰρ τὸ μὲν τί ἐστι καὶ τότε τι, τὸ δὲ ποῖον ἢ ποσὸν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον τῶν οὕτω κατηγορουμένων) (1028a10–13).

Now, Jaeger's claim is that in case *Z* were written subsequently after E.2–4, at the beginning of *Z* Aristotle would have referred back to E.2 but not to Δ, which in that time certainly was a separate work *περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς*.²⁹ But this

29 "Seltsamerweise fängt das neue Buch [*Z*] mit fast den gleichen Worten und derselben Aufzählung der Bedeutungen des Seienden an, die unmittelbar vorhergeht: 'Vom Seienden spricht man in mehrfacher Bedeutung, wie wir früher – nun erwarten wir wenigstens einen Rückweis auf die vorangehende Aufzählung in *E* 2, aber es folgt eine Überraschung – in der Schrift über die mannigfaltigen Bedeutungen der Begriffe unterschieden haben. Denn es bedeutet bald ein Etwas und ein bestimmtes Dieses, bald ein irgendwie beschaffenes oder irgendwie großes oder ein beliebiges anderes aus der Anzahl dieser Art von Kategorumena.' Hier ist ganz klar: wäre *E* 2 schon vorangegangen, als Aristoteles diesen Anfang des Substanzbuches niederschrieb, so hätte er sich entweder auf die dort ausführlich entwickelten verschiedenen Bedeutungen des Seienden berufen oder er hätte überhaupt keine neue Aufzählung gegeben, da jeder sie ja im Gedächtnis hatte. Ist aber *Z* eine unabhängig von

argument of Jaeger's is easily answered. In E.2, passage [10], the *πολλαχῶς* of categorial being is not mentioned at all: indeed, this would have been far too early there, where Aristotle sets out to discuss the first two members of the fourfold *πολλαχῶς*, viz., accidental being and being as the true; only after they have been dealt with, that is, towards the end of E.4, categorial being comes into focus, and now it was fitting to recall that it too is a *πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον*, as is done in Z.1 *init.*: but now the reference can only go beyond E.2 to Δ.7 itself, where categorial being is expressly said to be such, see passage [11]. And moreover, Aristotle makes it perfectly clear what exactly he is referring to in Δ.7: after passage [17] he adds in Z.1,

τοσαυταχῶς δὲ λεγομένου τοῦ ὄντος [...] a13f., „but while being is spoken of in as many ways [...]”,

and this can only be taken as a deliberate allusion to Δ.7 1017a24,

τοσαυταχῶς τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει, „in as many ways [as there are figures of predication] ‘to be’ signifies”.

So when Heidegger said that so far it has been overlooked, and in particular by Jaeger, that the *πολλαχῶς* of being is twofold,³⁰ he certainly had this argument of Jaeger's in mind. (Another case of this mistake we will meet in the final section VI).

(γ) An all-important juncture in the line of thought in book E is when at the end of E.1 Aristotle identifies theology, the science of supreme being, with the science of being *qua* being, i.e., being in general, which provides the frame for the entire discussion in the rest of E, and in the *Substanz-bucher ZHΘ*.

So far we have, at the beginning of sec. IV, only in passing stated the mere fact of this identification: but obviously more has to be said on it, since without its soundness book E itself will fall apart into E.1 and the rest. Hence on this point we will have to be fairly extensive.

To repeat, at the beginning of E.1 Aristotle takes at his starting-point the conclusion of Γ.1, viz., that the enquiry is about the causes and principles of being *qua* being (see [4], and the Γ.1 quotes in n.18). However, after explaining (though more extensively than it had been done in Γ.1) the nature of this science of being *qua* being, E.1 proceeds on lines quite different from those in Γ.

While in Γ, chapter 2 proceeds with stating that being is a *πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον* displaying a *πρὸς-ἓν* structure, E.1 in contrast switches from the

den übrigen Metaphysikbüchern entstandene Untersuchung über die οὐσία, so ist gleich zu verstehen, warum zu Beginn einer solchen die Stellung der οὐσία innerhalb der Gesamtheit der möglichen Seinsaussagen zunächst an Hand der Kategorientafel kurz bestimmt werden musste. Zu diesem Zweck berief Aristoteles sich auf die zweifellos öfter von ihm vorgetragene Ausführungen Περὶ τῶν πολλαχῶς λεγομένων, [...] das sog. Buch Δ^c. Jaeger [see n.16], p. 210. By and large, Frede & Patzig [see n.4], vol. II, p.10, seem to agree.

30 “Man hat diese Doppelung des *πολλαχῶς* bisher übersehen; so besonders W. Jaeger“. Martin Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1993, p.291. Of course, in this generality Heidegger's statement is not true: after all, that *Doppelung* is clearly expounded in Brentano's dissertation of 1862, which, by the way, Heidegger was very well acquainted with: see Franz Brentano, *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles*, reprint Hildesheim: Olms, 1960, p.6f., 72. Thus it is very likely that Heidegger himself derived his appreciation of that *Doppelung* from Brentano.

delimitation of the science of being *qua* being to a classification of the theoretical sciences, or philosophies (φιλοσοφίαι θεωρητικαί 1026a18f.), according to their subject-matter. These are three:

- physics or natural science, ἡ φυσικὴ [sc. ἐπιστήμη], subject-matter: the things which are ‘separable’,
i.e. existing independently, but not immovable (χωριστὰ μὲν ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀκίνητα 1026a14), that is, the sensible substances;
- mathematics, ἡ μαθηματικὴ, subject-matter: things which are immovable but perhaps not separable (ἀκίνητα μὲν οὐ χωριστὰ δὲ ἴσως a15); and
- divine science or theology, ἡ θεολογικὴ, subject-matter: things which are both separable and immovable (καὶ χωριστὰ καὶ ἀκίνητα a16), this science being, in virtue of the dignity of its subjectmatter, the first one, ἡ πρώτη ἐπιστήμη (a15f., a29), and that is, it is the *First Philosophy*, ἡ πρώτη φιλοσοφία (a24).

And then, in the remaining part of E.1, Aristotle returns to the science of being *qua* being and poses the question whether First Philosophy, i.e. theology, having a particular subject-matter, is also that most universal science dealing with being in general.

His answer is in the affirmative: if there were only natural substances as the only things that exist independently, physics would be First Philosophy; but if there is an immovable substance, the science dealing with it, i.e. theology, will be First Philosophy, and just because of this the universal science of being *qua* being as well:

[18] One might indeed be puzzled by the question whether First Philosophy is universal, or deals with some one genus and some single nature of things (ἀπορήσειε γὰρ ἂν τις πότερόν ποθ’ ἡ πρώτη φιλοσοφία καθόλου ἐστὶν ἢ περὶ τι γένος καὶ φύσιν τινὰ μίαν) [...]

[We answer:] now if there is not a substance other than those formed by nature, physics would be the first science (εἰ μὲν οὖν μὴ ἔστι τις ἕτερα οὐσία παρὰ τὰς φύσει συνεστηκυίας, ἡ φυσικὴ ἂν εἴη πρώτη ἐπιστήμη); but in case there is an immovable substance, this one is prior and [the science of it] is First Philosophy, and general in this way, just because it is first (εἰ δ’ ἔστι τις οὐσία ἀκίνητος, αὕτη προτέρα καὶ φιλοσοφία πρώτη, καὶ καθόλου οὕτως ὅτι πρώτη) – and it will belong to this science to study being *qua* being, both what-it-is and what holds of it *qua* being (καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν ταύτης ἂν εἴη θεωρῆσαι, καὶ τί ἐστὶ καὶ τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἢ ὄν) (E.1 1026a23–32).

Aristotle’s answer to the question posed, namely, that the science of the highest kind of being is by this very fact also the science of being in general, has perplexed commentators. Bonitz [see n.6], p.285: *licet in ipsis verbis difficile sit solutionem agnoscere*.

Jaeger even saw in this answer a blatant contradiction. He held the view that in Aristotle there are two entirely different, and incompatible, conceptions of metaphysics or First Philosophy, viz., an earlier, more Platonic one, according to which it is theology and to which *ABΓ* + E.1 without the concluding passage [18]

belong, and a later, genuinely Aristotelian one, which Aristotle expounds in the *Substanzbücher* and according to which metaphysics is the general investigation of substance, or more precisely, of sensible substance: only later, when he joined the originally independent *Substanzbücher* to the earlier treatise ABΓE.1, Jaeger argues, Aristotle wrote E.2–4 as connecting piece and added [18] to E.1 as a marginal note, which, however, makes in his view the clash between the two irreconcilable conceptions of metaphysics even more glaringly obvious.³¹

Such criticism is, however, entirely misconceived. The science of being *qua* being is to study the principles and causes (or rather, the ‘because’, τὰ διότι) thereof, and thus also, as Aristotle says in the last line of E.1, the τί ἐστὶ, the What-it-is or quiddity, and that is, the essence or the What-it-is-to-be-something, the τί ἦν εἶναι, of things, i.e., their formal cause. Now there are no causes, and hence no essence, to be studied of what does not exist, see, for instance, *An. Post.* II.8 93a18–20:

[19] It is not possible to grasp the Why before the That, and in the same way it is plain that the What-it-is-to-be-something is not without the That (οὐτι πρότερόν γε τὸ διότι δυνατόν γνωρίσαι τοῦ ὅτι, δηλον ὅτι ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι οὐκ ἄνευ τοῦ ὅτι ἐστίν): for it is impossible to know what a thing is, if we are ignorant whether it is (ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἰδέναι τί ἐστίν, ἀγνοοῦντας εἰ ἔστιν) (cf., e.g., II.7 92b4–8).

Or in Aquinas’ measured words: *quaestio enim quid est sequitur quaestionem an est.*³² And because of this existential presupposition it is plain that in case there are only sensible i.e. movable substances, physics will be both First Philosophy and the science of being *qua* being: but if there is an immovable substance, theology as the study of that substance which then turns out to be the first cause of motion in the universe, τὸ πρῶτον κινουῦν ἀκίνητον αὐτό (Γ.8 1012b31, Π.7 1072b7), will also encompass *per primam causam*, so to speak, the domain of the movable, and will thus be the science of being *qua* being as well. Thus the only presupposition for the identification of theology with the science of being *qua* being is that the universe does not fall apart into mere episodes like a bad tragedy (as Aristotle puts it in *N.3* 1090b19f.), i.e., that the domains of theology and of physics are interconnected, as they are by the relationship of first mover to what is moved by it.³³

Thus it would seem that our problem with the concluding passage of E.1 is rather our being prejudiced by modern philosophy: the study of being *qua* being,

31 “Die Randglosse schafft den Widerspruch nicht fort, sie macht ihn im Gegenteil nur noch sichtbarer [...] Die beiden Ableitungen des Begriffs der Metaphysik sind zweifellos nicht aus ein und demselben geistigen Schöpfungsakt hervorgegangen. Zwei grundverschiedene Gedankengänge sind hier ineinandergeschoben. Man sieht sogleich, dass der theologisch-platonische der ursprünglichere und ältere ist, [...] während umgekehrt die Definition des ὄν ἦ ὄν [...] der letzten und eigenartigsten Entwicklungsstufe des aristotelischen Denkens [entspricht]”. Jaeger [see n.16], p.227.

32 *S. Thomae Aquinatis in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis Expositio*. Ed. P. M. Maggiolo, Turin; Rome: Marietti, 1965, lib. IV, lect. 10, §507.

33 It seems that Kirwan views the matter in a similar way: see *Aristotle. Metaphysics Books Γ, Δ, and E*. Translated with notes by Christopher Kirwan, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 21993, p.188f.

then called ontology, is in the first place study of essence, and since Descartes turned Aquinas' *dictum* upside down by saying that

*iuxta leges verae Logicae de nulla unquam re quaeri debet an sit, nisi prius quid sit intelligatur,*³⁴

it is simply taken for granted that essence is *daseinsfrei*, or at least can be studied without bothering whether it is instantiated.³⁵ But as soon as we take seriously the fact that Aristotelian essence is in the way stated entirely different from modern conceptions of essence, it will perhaps be not so difficult anymore to appreciate Aristotle's move in the concluding *E.1* passage.

Of course, one might also raise the more basic question why Aristotle did not move from the beginning of *E.1*, where being *qua* being was the issue, straightforwardly to the *πολλαχῶς* of being which we have at the beginning of *E.2* in the first place, but went on with classifying the theoretical sciences to finally identifying the supreme one of them with the science of being *qua* being and thus returning only after a long detour in a sort of *Ringkomposition*, as classical scholars call such a thing, to the starting-point. A possible answer could be this. Aristotle's intention in the treatise *de essentia et de ente* was to eventually study non-sensible substance, as he frequently says in it:³⁶ but since it has now become clear that the supreme science of non-sensible substance is in a certain way a science of sensible substance as well, he is justified in studying first sensible substance, what he does in *ZHΘ*, as a sort of preparation for the study of non-sensible substance which would have brought the treatise *de essentia et de ente* to completion.

VI

We have, in some detail, considered arguments that have been brought forth for severing book *E* from the *Substanzbücher* and attaching it to the books *ABΓE* and found them wanting in cogency; and simultaneously good evidence has shown up for the view defended here, namely, that in *E* the discussion of the science of being *qua* being is taken up not only *quasi de integro*, as Bonitz had put it, but *de integro simpliciter*, i.e., Aristotle makes a fresh start in his efforts at a systematic exposition on that subject, which he completes up to *Θ* and which he then in *I.2* refers to as the treatise *περί τῆς οὐσίας καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος*, *de essentia et de ente*.

We have followed the consistent thread of argument in book *E* from its very beginning, saying that

34 *Meditationes: Primae Responsiones*. Descartes, *OEuvres*. Ed. Ch. Adam & P. Tannery, vol. VII, Paris: Vrin, 1964, p.107f.

35 Thus our Graz celebrity Meinong found it even worthwhile to formulate, in §3 of his 1904 essay *Über Gegenstandstheorie*, a special principle of independence of essence from existence, which he called „das Prinzip der Unabhängigkeit des Soseins vom Sein“. Alexius Meinong, *Über Gegenstandstheorie. Selbstdarstellung*, Hamburg: Meiner, 1978, p.8.

36 See, e.g., *Z.2* 1028b28–32, *Z.3* 1029b3–12, and *Z.17* 1041a7–9.

- the object of inquiry are the principles and causes of being *qua* being (passage [4]),

through

- the identification of the science of supreme being with the science of being *qua* being in the concluding passage [18] of E.1,
- the return to the topic of being *qua* being in terms of the fourfold partition of being according to the Δ.7 scheme at the beginning of E.2 (passage [10]),

the result of the subsequent discussion first of accidental being, and then of being as the true, viz.,

- that both accidental being and being as the true are to be excluded from the domain of the science of being *qua* being,

stated towards the end of E.4, up to the conclusion that

- the object of inquiry, σκεπτόν 1028a3, are the principles and causes of categorial being. And this is where Z.1 takes up the discussion, passage [17].

There remains to consider the transition from *E* to *Z* itself. After the σκεπτόν conclusion 1028a3, *E* has one more sentence:

[20] But it is clear in the work in which we distinguished the various ways in which things are spoken of, that being is spoken of in many ways (φανερὸν δ' ἐν οἷς διωρισάμεθα περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς λέγεται ἕκαστον, ὅτι πολλαχῶς λέγεται τὸ ὄν) (*E*.4 1028a4–6).

This last sentence of book *E* says in quite similar words the very same thing as the next one which book *Z* begins with, to put it from passage [17] down once more:

Being is spoken of in many ways, as we have distinguished them earlier in our work on the various ways [in which things are spoken of] (τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς, καθάπερ διειλόμεθα πρότερον ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ ποσαχῶς) (1028a10f.).

Regarding the last sentence of *E* Ross ([see n.1], vol. I, p.366) says:

The remark is pointless here, as it has already been noted (1026a33 [E.2 in.]) that 'being' has a variety of meanings and two of them have been discussed in chs. 2–4. The sentence is a free version of the first sentence of *Z*, and is evidently a later addition meant to indicate the connexion of the two books.

But of course, the last sentence of *E* is not pointless at all: just as Jaeger, Ross does not appreciate that before in E.2 only the fourfold πολλαχῶς of being was mentioned without any indication that the third member of that partition, viz., categorial being which is focussed on by now, itself is a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον too.

Now, one of the two sentences is superfluous. On Bonitz' view ([see n.6], p.14, 294), it is a matter of indifference which one we retain. Following Schwegler's proposal ([see n.7], vol. IV, p.33), we delete the second one from the beginning of *Z*. Then the whole passage from *E*.4 1028a3 to *Z*.1 1028a13 reads as follows:

[21] These two [accidental being and being as the true] are to be dismissed (ἀφείσθω), but what what is to be investigated (σκεπτέον 1028a3), are the causes and principles of being itself *qua* being. But it is clear (φανερὸν δ' a4) in the work in which we distinguished the various ways in which things are spoken of, that being is spoken of in many ways.

For it signifies (σημαίνει γάρ a11) on the one hand what a thing is and this-something, on the other hand of what quality or quantity [it is] or each of the other things predicated in this way.

No superfluous repetition and no disrupting separation of books conceals anymore the uninterrupted flow of thought from *E* to *Z*: it is all of one piece.

And to add, the problem with the connective particle missing at the beginning of *Z.1* has vanished, just as another awkwardness has gone: the word πρότερον, 'earlier', in the first sentence of *Z.1* which, as Frede & Patzig ([see n.4], vol. II, p.10) note, Aristotle normally uses to refer to an earlier discussion in the same work.

Afterwards in *Z.1*, Aristotle argues that substance is among categoral being primary, which here we need not go into any further anymore, and concludes *Z.1* with the words that

[22] we must investigate chiefly and primarily and so to speak exclusively what that is which is being in that sense [i.e. substance] (ἡμῖν καὶ μάλιστα καὶ πρῶτον καὶ μόνον ὡς εἶπεῖν περὶ τοῦ οὕτως ὄντος θεωρητέον τί ἐστίν) (1028b6f.).

Pay attention to the θεωρητέον 1028b7, 'it is to be investigated': it corresponds exactly to the σκεπτέον 1028a3 towards the end of *E.4*. That σκεπτέον refers to categoral being in its entirety as that what is to be studied by the science in hand. This result was, however, only provisional. But now the θεωρητέον in the last line of *Z.1* has finally pinned down the most proper object of this science, namely substance.

In this way, then, *Z.1* completes in one continuous exposition what book *E* is all about, and to this extent we can fully agree with Schwegler's objection to the separation of *E* from *Z*. But only this far, for then in *Z.2* Aristotle does what he usually is doing when starting an enquiry into some topic, namely, to survey first various opinions about it embedded both in common sense and in relevant scientific theories, which are in this case, among others, the doctrines of Plato and of Speusippus in particular. (These two are mentioned *Z.2* 1028b19–21): and so one may conclude that *Z.1* still belongs to book *E*, and that book *Z* really begins with *Z.2*.

In closing we may look back at / .1–8, and suggest the following alternative hypothesis about it. When Aristotle prepared the course on First Philosophy of which *K.1*–8 may well be a pupil's notes, he used for it texts he already had written some time ago, i.e. *B* and *Γ*, but as well what he at that time was just working on, viz., the treatise *de essentia et de ente* which as work in progress had got at least as far as to what we have as *Z.1*: and this required him to adapt in that most crucial point of the πολλαχῶς of being the *Γ.2* list of being to *Z.1*, such that the *K.3* list resulted which bears that striking resemblance to *Z.1* 1028a18–20 which we observed when in section III (see [9]) we compared the two passages, and which cannot possibly be explained by the *Γ.2* approach to the matter.