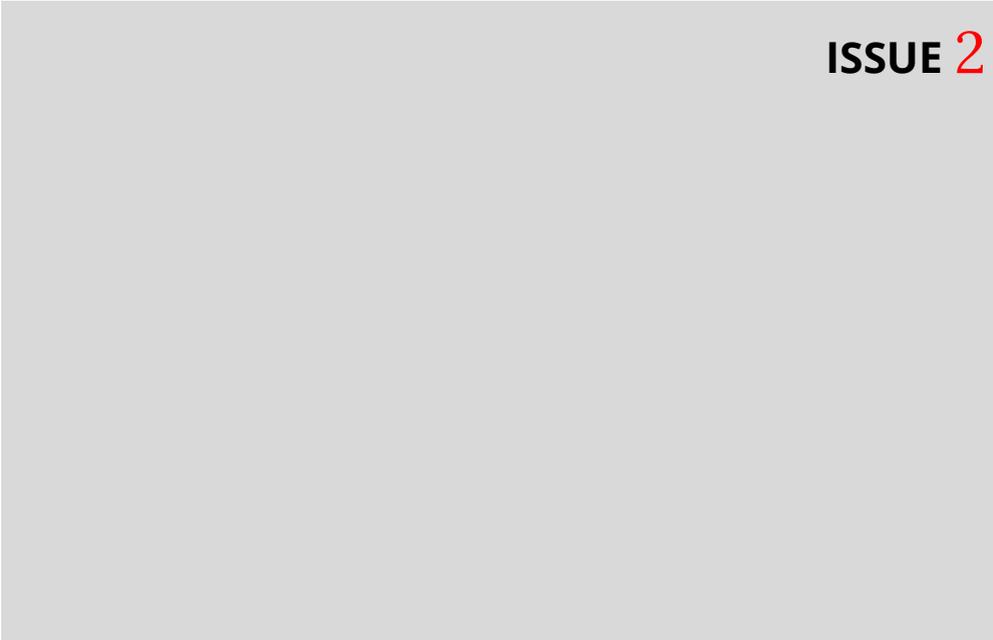
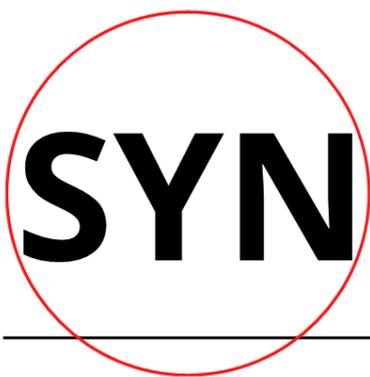




**SYNTHESIS**  
Journal for Philosophy

---



ISSUE 2

*This page intentionally left blank*

# SYNTHESIS

Journal for Philosophy

2

---

Res, Ens, Obiectum

---

December 2022

## **Editors in-chief**

*Francesco Aronadio*  
*Francesco Fronterotta*

## **Editorial Board**

*Enrico Berti †*  
*Annalisa Coliva*  
*Paolo Crivelli*  
*Erminia Di Iulio*  
*Matteo Favaretti Camposampiero*  
*Franco Ferrari*  
*Gabriele Galluzzo*  
*Laura Anna Macor*  
*Jenny Pelletier*  
*Federico Maria Petrucci*  
*Alice Ragni*  
*Nicholas D. Smith*  
*Ernest Sosa*  
*Achille Varzi*  
*Giovanni Ventimiglia*

## **Editorial Assistant**

*Marco Picciafuochi*

## List of contributions

Parmenide, Platone, Tommaso d'Aquino. Lineamenti di una Ontologia Continua by <i>Lorenzo Pampanini</i>	7
Why is Being not a Genus? by <i>Andrea Buongiorno</i>	37
Geraldus Odonis on Being, Logic and Intelligibility by <i>Ana Rieger Schmidt</i>	65
The Notion of Res in the Medieval Theories of Signification: A Reconstruction of Duns Scotus's and Antonius Andreae's Contributions by <i>Maria Cabré Duran</i>	91
Praxisorientierte Dingontologie. Die Kulturelle Situiertheit des Menschen als Zugang zum Nichtmenschlichen by <i>Giovanna Caruso</i>	119
Why the Objective World Depends on Thought. Dissolving Stroud's Metaphysical Aporia Using Kant's Notion of an Object by <i>Till Hoepfner</i>	145



Andrea Buongiorno  
(University of Oxford, Wadham College)

## Why is Being not a Genus?<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Aristotle famously holds that there is no such thing as a single genus of *being*, or of *what is* (τὸ ὄν). This paper aims to offer a comprehensive account of his arguments in defence of this stance. I begin by examining a renowned passage of *Metaphysics* B3, where Aristotle argues that *being* is not a genus based on the somewhat controversial assumption that a genus cannot be predicated of its own differentiae. Part of my aim is to show that this assumption is adequately supported by certain predicational principles which Aristotle lays out in *Topics* IV.2 and VI.6. I then aim to draw attention to two lesser-known arguments, to be found in *Topics* IV.6 and VI.3. I will mainly focus on the latter passage. Aristotle here insists that a genus must distinguish its members from members of other genera: since it is predicated of absolutely everything, *being* cannot distinguish the items of which it is predicated from anything else; as such, it fails to qualify as a genus. Having considered the most serious challenges which this argument may face, I will show that these can be overcome by invoking certain principles of predication deriving from *Topics* IV.1.

**Keywords:** *Being; Genus; Aristotle; Metaphysics*

### Introduction

Aristotle considers *being*, alongside *oneness*, to be among the most universal attributes of all: at the same time, he cautions that not all universal attributes qualify as genera [Met. A9, 992b12-13]. Thus, while he reports Platonic and Pythagorean thinkers as having counted *being* among the highest genera of all [Met. B3, 998b4-11], he argues that *being* is not a genus (or: that there is no such thing as a single genus of *what is*) [998b22-26]. This paper aims to offer a comprehensive account of his arguments in defence of this stance, which I shall hereafter refer to as ‘BNG’.

I begin by examining the renowned argument for BNG which Aristotle offers in *Metaphysics* B3. The latter has been a source of interest for such

---

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Michail Peramatzis for his invaluable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I also thank two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

influential philosophers as Heidegger (*Being and Time*, p. 3). More recently, B3's argument has been brought to the attention of analytic meta-metaphysicians by McDaniel (2017: 7), who takes Aristotle to defend a particular version of what Turner has called 'Ontological Pluralism' (2010: 5), namely the view that there are different kinds (or perhaps modes) of being.<sup>2</sup> B3's argument has also been widely criticized by ancient and contemporary readers alike. Alexander objects to it on account of its 'rather verbal (λογικωτέρω)' character [In Met. III, 206,12-13]. Barnes calls it 'a short, bad argument' (1994: 215). Shields (1999: 255) takes it to be underpinned by the assumption that *being* is not a homonym, which (he retorts) is incompatible with Aristotle's claim that 'being' is used in many ways [Met. Γ2, 1003a33]. McDaniel similarly suggests that B3's argument seems to presuppose that there is in fact a generic sense or concept of 'being', since it relies on the assumption that everything is (2017: 30-31). In §2 of this paper, I aim to ward off such lines of criticism by defending a more charitable reading of B3's argument for BNG. The latter famously draws on the assumption that a genus is not truly predicated of its own differentiae. As I aim to show, this assumption is adequately supported by certain predicational principles which Aristotle lays out in *Topics* IV.2 and VI.6.

Throughout the rest of the paper, I shall draw attention to certain passages of the *Topics*, where Aristotle similarly sets out to defend BNG, but which have only received little (if any) scholarly consideration. These passages differ from Met. B3, in that Aristotle here attempts to defend BNG without assuming that a genus cannot be predicated of its own differentiae. The first argument, from Top. IV.6, posits that *being* cannot be a genus of anything because it cannot be a genus of things that are *one*. The second argument, from Top. VI.3, states that *being* cannot be a genus because, if it were, it would fail to separate its members from members of other genera. I will consider some of the main objections which each argument might face, and show why these do not succeed.

---

<sup>2</sup> It would certainly be interesting to examine whether Aristotle's commitment to BNG is compatible with, or even entails a commitment to some form of ontological pluralism. The last two paragraphs of my *Conclusions* implicitly touch upon this problem, which however likely calls for a separate discussion.

Two prefatory notes are warranted at this stage. First, I should comment on what I take to be the main thrust of Aristotle's endorsement of BNG. In the *Topics*, Aristotle defines a genus as a type of common feature, which essentially belongs to many objects that are different in species from one another [Top. I.5, 102a31-32]. As part of a thing's essence, a genus is the sort of feature which it would be appropriate to put forward in order to exhibit *what that thing is* (τί ἐστί): for instance, the genus *animal* is part of *man's* essence; should one ask what the species *man* is, it would be appropriate to answer that it is *a certain type of animal* [102a32-35].<sup>3</sup> From this vantage point, Aristotle's endorsement of BNG has two chief implications. First: if *being* is not a genus (or a species, or a differentia), then *being* cannot be part of a thing's essence; when we state that x is a being, we do not exhibit the type of thing which x essentially is. Secondly: for different types of item, to *be* is not essentially one and the same thing; rather, for certain values of 'x' and 'y', what it is for x to *be* is ultimately something different from what it is for y to *be*. In this paper's conclusions, I shall comment on how this insight bears on Aristotle's doctrine of the categories.

A second, cautionary note, concerns the use of the verb 'to be' underpinning Aristotle's various arguments in defence of BNG. Aristotle more or less explicitly distinguishes between the existential and the predicative use of the verb 'to be' in various passages of the *Posterior Analytics*: specifically, he seems to distinguish a thing's *existence* from that thing's *being what it essentially is* [A.Po. A2, 72a18-24; B8, 93a14-28] (Peramatzis 2011: 210). As a result, BNG seems to lend itself to at least two possible readings: Aristotle might be denying that there is a single kind of way for each and every thing (a) to *exist*, or (b) to *be what it essentially is*. None of the various passages which I shall examine clearly indicates which of these two interpretations of BNG Aristotle sets out to defend. In fact, I take it that Aristotle's defence of BNG does *not* demand that we endorse either reading to the exclusion of the other. As we shall see, the common underlying assumption of Aristotle's various defences of BNG is that 'each and

---

<sup>3</sup> Here, I ignore certain potentially controversial aspects of Aristotle's remarks concerning the role which genus and differentia respectively play as part of a species' definition [Top. VII.3, 153a15-22]: e.g. whether they are supposed to play an equally important role, or the genus is somehow more important than its differentiae. For a dedicated discussion of this issue, see Granger (1984).

every being is', and Aristotle would likely accept that this assumption holds true regardless of whether we interpret it along existential lines (meaning that each and every being *exists*) or along predicative-essentialist ones (meaning that each and every being is *essentially some or other type of thing*). This is not to say that either view is uncontroversial, but simply that Aristotle may be inclined to rely on either interpretation of the above assumption when arguing for BNG.<sup>4</sup>

Before discussing Aristotle's arguments for the claim that *being* is not a genus, I shall briefly present his argument for the claim that *being* is not the species of some higher genus. As we shall see, the latter meaningfully contributes to Aristotle's formulation of (and, ultimately, to his answer to) the question of whether *being* is a genus or not.

### 1. *Everything* is

Aristotle broadly defines universals as common features, namely as items which are apt to belong to (ὑπάρχειν) or to be predicated of (κατηγορεῖσθαι) many objects [De Int. 7, 17a39-40; PA I.4, 644a27-28; Met. Z13, 1038b11-12].<sup>5</sup> Alongside *oneness*, Aristotle takes *being* to be a universal feature of a peculiar sort, in that it belongs to or is truly predicated of *absolutely everything* [Top. IV.1, 121a17-18, 121b3-7; Top. IV.6, 127a27-28, 127a33-34].<sup>6</sup> In other words, Aristotle holds that each and every thing is.

One chief implication of his endorsement of this view is explored in Top. IV.1 [121a10-19], where it is argued that *being* cannot be a species of some hypothetical higher kind. Aristotle's argument meaningfully draws on the assumption that a genus may not 'participate (μετέχειν)' in its own species. 'Participation' is here defined in terms of essential predication: x participates in

---

<sup>4</sup> I address some potential controversies surrounding the existential and the predicative-essentialist reading of Aristotle's claim that 'each and every thing is' in §1 and §2.3 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> I understand *belonging* as a real or non-linguistic relation, and *predication* as its linguistic counterpart: that F is *predicated of* x means that F is *said to belong to* x; F is *truly predicated of* x iff F is not only *said to belong to* x but also *belongs to* x in *reality*. For Aristotle's thoughts on the priority of reality over true statements, see Cat. 12 [14b9-23].

<sup>6</sup> Also see Met. Γ2 [1004b20], B3 [998b20-21], and I2 [1053b20-21]. While Aristotle's views about *being* and *oneness* are intimately connected, I shall hereafter narrowly focus on the former.

y if and only if y (or, perhaps, y's name), as well as the account which states *what it is to be y*, are truly predicated of x.<sup>7</sup> Based on this definition, Aristotle establishes that, as a rule, species participate in their genera (τὰ μὲν εἶδη μετέχει τῶν γενῶν), but not conversely. For instance, the species *man* participates in its genus, *animal*, insofar as all men are essentially animals (i.e. living organisms of a determinate type). By contrast, the genus *animal* does not participate in its species, *man*: for it is not the case that every animal is essentially a man.

This rule being granted, Aristotle presents *being* as a clearly unsuccessful candidate for being a species of a hypothetical higher kind. Note, in passing, that species are synonymously predicated of their subjects: thus, if *being* is a species, the definition of *being* must be predicated of all things that *are* [see Cat. 5, 3a33-3b9]. In the light of these considerations, Aristotle's argument may be reconstructed as follows.

Assume that *being* is a species of a hypothetical higher genus, F. *Being* is truly predicated of everything: by assumption, the hypothetical higher genus F is a being; therefore, *being* must be predicated of its alleged genus, F. Moreover: if *being* is a species, and species are synonymously predicated of their subjects, *being* must be synonymously predicated of F; hence, the definition of *being* must also be predicated of F. By the stated definition of 'participating', it follows that, if *being* is a species of F, F must participate in one of its own species. However, genera cannot participate in their own species. Hence, it is absurd for *being* to constitute a species of a hypothetical higher genus.

Aristotle's argument goes to show that, even if *being* did constitute a single common kind, it would not constitute a species of some higher genus. Rather: because it is truly predicated of everything, it would have to be classed among the highest kinds of all (τὰ ἀνωτάτω τῶν γενῶν) [Met. B3, 998b17-19] or the primary genera (τὰ πρῶτα γένη) [998b19-21]. In what follows, I aim to offer an

---

<sup>7</sup> Compare with Cat. 5 [2a19-27].

exhaustive account of the reasons why Aristotle holds that *being* in fact fails to qualify as such a genus.

Before doing so, I shall mention some possibly problematic aspects of Aristotle's claim that *being* is predicated of absolutely everything, which I will however have to largely ignore in what follows. First, take non-standard kinds of object, such as items which have existed in the past but which no longer exist in the present (e.g. Homer), and imaginary items (e.g. the kind *goat-stag*). Since both sorts of item presumably *are not*, one may wonder whether—and, if so, how—Aristotle takes *being* to be truly predicated of them. While Aristotle himself seems to address this issue in *De Int.* 11 [21a18-33], this is a controversial matter which calls for a separate treatment.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, Aristotle seems to hold that, if a certain object *is*, then *being* is truly predicated of it. However, some modern and contemporary philosophers may object to the view that *being* is a predicable item, or at any event to some version thereof.<sup>9</sup> Suffice it to say that this assumption is clearly at play throughout the *Topics* and the *Metaphysics*. Finally, one may suggest that the statement 'all beings are' amounts to a mere tautology. As we shall see, however, Aristotle's endorsement of this claim has far-reaching implications for his attempt to answer the question as to whether *being* may qualify as a genus or not.

## 2. A genus cannot be predicated of its own *differentiae*

Aristotle's most renowned argument in defence of the claim that *being* is not a genus ['BNG'] is presented in *Met.* B3. Aristotle notes that some of his predecessors (notably, Pythagoreans and certain Platonists) have countenanced *being* and *one* as genera [998b4-11], and goes on to argue that neither feature may in fact qualify as a single genus of beings.

---

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of Aristotle's thoughts on these borderline cases, see Jacobs (1979), Carson (2000), and Mignucci (2007).

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Kant's celebrated claim that 'Being is obviously not a real predicate' (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A598/B626).

But it is not possible for either *one* or *being* to be a single genus of beings. For it is necessary for the differentiae of each genus to *be* and for each of them to *be one*, but it is impossible either for the species of the genus to be predicated of their own differentiae or for the genus to be predicated apart from its species. So, if *one* or *being* is a genus, no differentia will be either a *being* or *some one thing*. [998b22-26] (Trans. Madigan, slightly modified.)

B3's argument for BNG may be reconstructed as follows:

1. *Being* is truly predicated of the differentiae of each genus (for *being* is truly predicated of each and every being, and each differentia is a being).
2. Assume, for the sake of argument, that *being* is a genus.
3. Hence, the genus *being* must be predicated of its differentiae.
4. However, a genus cannot be predicated of its differentiae.<sup>10</sup>
5. Hence, we must either grant that *being* is not a genus, or that (while being a genus) *being* is not truly predicated of its differentiae.
6. The latter option is absurd, since *being* is truly predicated of everything, including the differentiae of each genus.
7. Hence, there is no such thing as a single genus of *being* [BNG].

All commentators of B3 seem to agree that the above argument for BNG relies on the assumption that a genus is not truly predicated of its differentiae, which I hereafter refer to as 'NGD'.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, NGD entails that the two claims, that *being* is a genus, and that *being* is truly predicated of everything (including the differentiae of each genus), are mutually incompatible. Since Aristotle accepts the latter claim, he must reject the former. In the following subsections of §2, I aim to defend B3's argument for BNG by showing that Aristotle lends adequate support to NGD in various passages of the *Topics*.

---

<sup>10</sup> As I explain below, I take premiss 4 to follow from Aristotle's claim that 'it is impossible either for the species of the genus to be predicated of their own differentiae or for the genus to be predicated apart from its species'.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Ross (1924: 235) and Madigan (1999: 73).

## SYNTHESIS

Before proceeding, I will briefly discuss what I take to be two important aspects of B3's argument. First, I take NGD to imply that a given genus, F, cannot be predicated of *its own* differentiae, namely of those differentiae whereby F *itself*, as opposed to some other genus G, divides into species. For instance, *animal* and *knowledge* are different genera (neither of which is subordinated to the other as a species). Thus, the differentiae of *animal* are different from those of *knowledge*: a kind of knowledge does not differ from another (e.g.) by being biped [Cat. 3, 1b16-24].<sup>12</sup> According to NGD, *animal* cannot be predicated of its own differentia, *being biped*. Thus interpreted, NGD would not disqualify a given genus, F, from being predicated of those differentiae through which genera other than F itself divide into species. This reading looks particularly advantageous since it allows us to circumvent one of Alexander's objections to B3's argument [In Met. III, 206,12-207,4]. Drawing on Aristotle's remark that a differentia must signify a quality [Top. IV.2, 122b12-17], Alexander notes that at least one genus, i.e. *quality*, must be predicated of differentiae. On the current proposal, this does not constitute a genuine objection to NGD, since the Aristotle of B3 does not deny that a genus may be predicated of any differentiae whatsoever, but of any of its *own* differentiae. Because, e.g., *being biped* is not a proper differentia of qualities, but of substances, nothing absurd follows from the claim that *quality* is predicated of *being biped*.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, I take it that Aristotle does not *explicitly* invoke NGD throughout 998b22-26.<sup>14</sup> Rather, NGD seems to follow from two of the claims which he advances in the above passage:

---

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, a kind of animal presumably does not differ from another by being grammatical.

<sup>13</sup> On the proposed reading, the genus *quality* may not be predicated of those features through which it divides into different species. This insight is consistent with the principle (examined in the following paragraph) according to which the same item may not be a species and a differentia of the same genus. In effect, Aristotle's own classification of kinds of quality suggests that at least some differentiae of the genus *quality* do not fall under the genus of 'ποιόν' itself, but rather under some other category, such as 'πάσχειν': cf. 'παθητικαὶ ποιότητες καὶ πάθη' [Cat. 8, 9a28-29]. This gives rise to some questions, which I will however have to leave open. Do the differentiae of qualities signify that the kinds which they are predicated of are qualified in a certain way? If so, how is this possible, without said differentiae being kinds of or individual qualities themselves?

<sup>14</sup> Compare with the argument for BNG which is offered in Met. K1 [1059b31-34], where it is explicitly stated that none of the differentiae of a given genus 'participate in' that genus.

- a. the species of the genus cannot be predicated of their own differentiae (ἀδύνατον δὲ κατηγορεῖσθαι ἢ τὰ εἶδη τοῦ γένους ἐπὶ τῶν οικείων διαφορῶν);
- b. a genus cannot be predicated apart from its species (ἢ τὸ γένος ἄνευ τῶν αὐτοῦ εἰδῶν).

Aristotle seems to be implying that a given genus, F, is not truly predicated of anything apart from its species (claim b), and from the items of which its species are themselves predicated: in other words, every member of F is either a species of F, or an individual member of one of F's species. For instance, something is not an animal without being either a certain type of animal, such as the species *man*, or an individual animal, such as an individual man. However, F's differentiae presumably *are not* species of F, nor are F's species predicated of them (see claim a): in other words, F's differentiae are neither species nor individual members of F. For instance, *being biped* is a differentia of animal, but is presumably neither a type of animal nor an individual animal. Therefore, F is not truly predicated of its own differentiae: for instance, *animal* is not truly predicated of *being biped*.

This proposal has two main merits. First, claim a, which states that species cannot be predicated of their own differentiae, need not be cast aside as being 'irrelevant to what Aristotle is proving', as Ross would have it (1924: 235), but can be shown to make a clear contribution to B3's argument for BNG, insofar as it lends support to Aristotle's endorsement of NGD (premiss 4). Secondly, the Aristotle of B3 is shown to *motivate* his endorsement of NGD. Moreover, the way in which he does so appears to be wholly consistent with his own attempts to defend NGD in Top. IV.2 and VI.6, which I proceed to examine in the following subsections.

## SYNTHESIS

### 2.1.

I shall start from the following passage of Top. IV.2.

Also, see whether he has placed the differentia inside the genus as a species, e.g. saying that *being odd* is essentially a number (οἶον τὸ περιττὸν ὅπερ ἀριθμὸν). For *being odd* is a differentia of number, not a species. Nor is the differentia thought to participate in the genus; for what participates in the genus is always either a species or an individual, whereas the differentia is neither a species nor an individual. Clearly, therefore, the differentia does not participate in the genus, so that *being odd* too is no species, seeing that it does not partake of the genus. [122b18-24] (Trans. Pickard-Cambridge, slightly modified.)

Aristotle here argues that the differentiae of a given genus are not members of that same genus, since (i) whatever falls under a given genus F is either a species of or an individual F, while (ii) F's differentiae are neither species nor individual members of F. For instance, *being odd* is not a number, since every number is either an individual or a type of number, while *being odd* is a differentia, as opposed to a type of or an individual number. Since the differentiae of a given genus F are not themselves members of F, it follows that F is not truly predicated of its own differentiae. On my proposed reading of Met. B3, this same line of reasoning underwrites Aristotle's appeal to NGD at 998b22-26.

The key underlying assumption of the above argument is that the differentiae of a given genus, F, are neither species nor individual members of F. One way of corroborating this assumption would be to insist that F's differentiae are rather features that are *predicated of* F's species or of the latter's individual members [Cat. 5, 3b1-2]. Or, as Aristotle points out in the *Metaphysics*, differentiae are not themselves species, but rather features in virtue of possessing which the species of a given genus differ from one another: for instance, *being biped* is not itself a type of animal, but rather a feature by

possessing which one type of animal (e.g. *man*) differs from another (e.g. *horse*) [I8, 1058a2-7].<sup>15</sup>

Separating the differentiae of a given genus from the latter's species would also allow Aristotle to overcome the following, possible objection to his endorsement of NGD. Aristotle would likely accept that predications such as 'the biped is an animal' are true. Perhaps, one might suggest that this commits him to the view that the genus *animal* is truly predicated of its own differentia. Yet this is not the case. For the subject term of the above predication ('the biped') does not designate the differentia *being biped* itself, but rather some or other animal of which that differentia is truly predicated, namely a biped *thing*. Thus, the predication 'the biped is an animal' is true, not insofar as the differentia itself, *being biped*, but rather insofar as some biped thing, such as the species *man* or an individual man, is an animal.<sup>16</sup>

## 2.2.

I now turn to the following, renowned passage of Top. VI.6.

Again, see if the genus is predicated of the differentia; for it seems that the genus is predicated, not of the differentia, but of the objects of which the differentia is predicated. *Animal* (e.g.) is predicated of *man* and of *ox* and of the other terrestrial animals, not of the differentia itself, which is said of the species. For if *animal* is to be predicated of each of its differentiae, then many animals would be predicated of the species (πολλὰ ζῶα τοῦ εἶδους ἂν κατηγοροῖτο); for the differentiae are predicated of the species. Moreover, the differentiae will be all either species or individuals, if they are animals; for every animal is either a species or an individual. [144a31-144b3] (Trans. Pickard-Cambridge, slightly modified.)

The above passage offers two arguments in support of NGD. One such argument, which I here discuss very briefly, is virtually identical in form to the

---

<sup>15</sup> Thus, differentiae are not themselves species, but so to speak 'produce' species, or 'make the same genus *other*', meaning that they make members of the same genus specifically different from one another [Met. I7, 1057b4-7; I8, 1058a7-8].

<sup>16</sup> Alexander offers a comparable argument, by using *being rational* as an example of a differentia of *animal* [In Met. III, 205,30-206,1].

## SYNTHESIS

Top. IV.2 argument for the claim that *number* cannot be predicated of its own differentiae. It runs as follows:

Every animal is either a species of or an individual animal. Let us assume, then, that each differentia of *animal* is itself an animal. It follows that each differentia of *animal* is either a species of *animal* (like *man*) or an individual animal (like an individual man). Yet this would be absurd. For (as we saw in §2.1) the differentiae of a given genus are neither species nor individual members of that genus. Therefore, *animal* is not (truly) predicated of each—and, in effect, of any—of its differentiae.

Aristotle takes the conclusion of the above argument to exemplify the more general rule, according to which a genus is not truly predicated of any of its own differentiae. Thus, like Top. IV.2, Top. VI.6 defends NGD based on the following two assumptions: (i) that whatever falls under a given genus is either a species or an individual member of that genus; (ii) that the differentiae of a given genus are not themselves species or individual members of that genus.

Top. VI.6 also presents us with a further, more controversial argument in defence of NGD, which I shall focus on throughout the rest of this subsection. It runs as follows:

Let us assume that the genus *animal* is (truly) predicated of each of its differentiae. Clearly, the differentiae of *animal* are predicated of the latter's species. It follows that 'many animals' are predicated of one and the same species of *animal*. Yet this would be absurd. Therefore, *animal* is not (truly) predicated of any of its differentiae. More broadly, a genus is not truly predicated of any of its own differentiae.

The most controversial aspect of this argument seems to lie in Aristotle's claim that, if *animal* were predicated of each of its differentiae, then 'many animals' would be predicated of the same species.

The traditional interpretation of this claim is laid out by Ross (1924: 235). On this reading: if *man* were defined as a rational biped animal, but *animal* were

itself an attribute of *being biped* and of *being rational*, then *animal* would be transitively predicated of *man* many times over, first insofar as *being biped* is, then insofar as *being rational* is, and so forth for each of the differentiae of *man*. Hence, the definition of *man* would be redundant, insofar as the genus term would appear many times over in it. Due to such redundancy, we must reject the view that a genus is predicated of its differentiae. This reading is expanded upon by Lewis (2014: 15-18), who holds that predicating a genus of even one of its own differentiae would result in a violation of certain rules of predicate composition, which Aristotle appears to defend in the *De Interpretatione*. One resulting absurdity is that the statement ‘man is a biped animal animal’, which the Aristotle of the *Sophistici Elenchi* would refer to as ‘babbling’, will qualify as a single assertion.

The working assumption of the traditional interpretation is that, if *animal* were predicated of *biped*, then the same attribute (*animal*) will be predicated of *man* many times over. As pointed out by Berti (2009: 135), this line of interpretation could in principle have been vindicated if Aristotle had written, say, ‘πολλάκις τό ζῶον’ instead of ‘πολλά ζῶα’. Since this is not the case, it seems advisable to search for an alternative reading.

Upon one such alternative, which is proposed by Shields, Aristotle’s argument involves an implicit appeal to the notion of homonymy. Suppose that the predications ‘the species *man* is an animal’, ‘this (individual) man is an animal’, and ‘*being biped* is an animal’ each had a true reading. Shields suggests that, if that were the case, the definition of ‘animal’ which is predicated of *man* or of some individual man would have to be ‘significantly unlike’ the definition of ‘animal’ which is predicated of *being biped* (Shields 1999: 252-253). By *Categories* standards [1a1-6], it would follow that *being biped*, on the one hand, and the species *man* or some or other individual man, on the other, are homonymously called ‘animals’. On Shields’ view, this outcome is problematic since it involves an uncontrolled proliferation of definitions of the term ‘animal’: thus, if *animal* were predicated of *being biped*, one would be at a loss as to which definition of ‘animal’ is involved in any statement wherein animal is predicated of something.

There are two main reasons for resisting Shields' interpretation. First, what Shields shows is that, if a genus were predicated of its differentiae, 'animal' would be used *in many ways* (πολλαχῶς ἂν λέγοιτο τό ζῶον), while what Aristotle states is that *many animals* would be predicated of the same species (πολλά ζῶα τοῦ εἴδους ἂν κατηγοροῖτο): it is by no means obvious that Aristotle would treat these two claims as being equivalent. Secondly, Shields' reading yields results which are notoriously unfavourable to Aristotle, since it faults him with a gross self-contradiction. According to Shields, Aristotle thinks that *being* cannot be a genus since, if it were, it would have to be predicated of its own differentiae, in which case *being* would have to be a homonym. Upon this reading, B3's argument for BNG draws on the assumption that *being* is not a homonym. However, the contradictory of this assumption seems to underwrite Aristotle's commitment to the view that 'being' is used in many ways [Met. Γ2, 1003a33] (Shields 1999: 255). In the light of these considerations, it seems worth searching for a more charitable, linguistically more intuitive reading of the 'πολλά ζῶα' clause. This is what I set out to do in the following paragraphs.

As we saw, Aristotle suggests that, if a genus were predicated of its differentiae, then 'many animals' would be predicated of a species of the kind *animal*. For instance: if *animal* were predicated of *being biped*, the species *man* would be many animals. There is a rather straightforward way in which this claim might be interpreted, without invoking the notion of homonymy: if *animal* were predicated of *being biped*, then one and the same species, *man*, would in fact turn out to be many species of *animal*. I will now present this reading—which is proposed by Berti (2002: 91-92; 2009: 124-125)—and further corroborate it, by considering a possible objection and showing how the latter might be overcome.

Because a genus is only predicated of its species (or individuals), it follows that, if a genus were predicated of any of its differentiae, the latter 'would become itself a species' thereof (Berti 2002: 91). Now, if *man* is essentially a biped animal, and *being biped* were a species of animal, then *man* would be many, as opposed to a single species of *animal*: 'man would be one animal as subject of the predicate "animal" and another animal as subject of the predicate "biped"' (Berti 2009: 125). The reason why this would be absurd is that, as a biped animal,

an individual man would be identified as a member of many species, as opposed to one and the same species of the genus *animal*.

One could perhaps retort that an individual member of a certain genus may in effect fall under two species of said genus, on the assumption that one such species is subordinated to the other. Suppose, then, that an individual man were one type of animal insofar as *animal* is predicated of it, and another type of animal insofar as *being biped* is. In order for this not to constitute an absurdity, one would need to assume that one such type of animal is subordinated to the other as its sub-species: namely, that *man* is a sub-species of *being biped* (or, perhaps, vice versa). Yet this would seem to yield a further absurdity. A differentia seems to distinguish the items of which it is predicated from other items which lie *at the same level of specificity* within the same genus: for instance, *being biped* distinguishes men from other footed animals (e.g. from quadruped animals, such as horses). Thus, if *being biped* and *man* were both species of *animal*, *man* would not seem to be a subordinate species of *being biped* (or vice versa): rather, they would be two coordinate species. If so, *being a man* and *being biped* would look like two mutually incompatible properties.

Let us remark that the listed absurdities ultimately stem from the assumption that *being biped* is not only a differentia, but also a species of the genus *animal*. From this vantage point, the ‘πολλὰ ζῶα’ clause in Aristotle’s argument supplies us with a concrete example of what could go wrong if we violated the principle, according to which the differentiae of a given genus are not species of that same genus.

### 2.3.

I have thus far tried to show that, in Top. IV.2 and VI.6, Aristotle puts forward similar arguments in defence of the claim that a genus is not truly predicated of (any of) its own differentiae [NGD]. The claim follows from the conjunction of the two following assumptions: (i) a genus is not predicated of anything apart from its own species and individual members; (ii) the differentiae of a given genus are neither species nor individual members of that same genus. On my proposed reading of Met. B3’s argument for BNG, the Aristotle of B3

## SYNTHESIS

invokes both of these assumptions in order to justify his appeal to NGD. If this reading is correct, then one might perhaps attempt to object to Met. B3's argument by suggesting that it would be illegitimate for Aristotle to rely on either of the two aforementioned assumptions, while trying to establish that *being* is not a genus.

One such objection may be formulated by drawing on certain considerations made by Shields. While both of the above rules may be readily assumed to apply to all standard sorts of genera of the likes of *animal*, Shields has called into question the applicability of the former rule to non-standard universal features of the likes of *being*. In order to be predicated of its subjects as a genus is predicated of its species, a universal should qualify as a property of a privileged sort: it should specify the essence of the items of which it is predicated. Additionally, Shields claims that: if something is such a privileged sort of property 'anything instantiating it must be a substance' (1999: 253). If Shields is right, then *being* will clearly fail to qualify as such a privileged sort of property, on account of the fact that it is not only predicated of substances, *per* the doctrine of the categories: for qualities, quantities, relatives, etc. are beings too, but are not substances. Shields' strategy can however be questioned on different accounts. First, if we took *being* to be a genus, but not to be predicated of all of its subjects as a genus is of its species, it would appear that *being* does not, after all, genuinely qualify as the genus of its alleged species. As a result: by challenging Aristotle's choice to apply assumption i to the case of *being*, in order to object to his deployment of NGD in Met. B3, one would end up objecting to the claim that *being* is not a genus by assuming that *being* does not genuinely qualify as a genus.

While this strategy does not seem promising, Shields' challenge does give rise to the question as to whether it would be possible for a certain universal attribute to genuinely qualify as a genus, even if the items of which it is predicated are not substances. As evidence to the effect that Aristotle in fact holds this to be possible, one may note that he customarily refers to *substance* as well as to *quality*, *quantity*, *relative*, etc. as genera [A.Po. A.22, 83b13-16; Top. I.9, 103b20-23; Soph. El. 22, 178a4-8]. Given his definition of the term 'genus', this suggests that Aristotle takes the categories to indicate *which sort of thing* the

items of which they are respectively predicated essentially are, regardless of whether the latter are substances or not. As a result, Aristotle's doctrine of the categories seems to offer support precisely to the view that a genus is supposed to be predicated of its subjects as the genus is of its species, even if its subjects are not substances.<sup>17</sup>

To conclude: assuming that *being* is a genus, there is no apparent reason to presume that *being* should not be predicated of its subjects as a genus is predicated of its species, even though it is not the case that every being is a substance. It thus seems warranted for Aristotle to argue for BNG by invoking assumption i, and thus by assuming that: if *being* were a genus, it would not be predicated of anything apart from its species (or individual members). Because the differentiae of each genus are beings, the differentiae whereby *being* divides into species would themselves have to be species of *being* (or individual beings). Yet this would be absurd, per assumption ii. Therefore, *being* is not a genus.

As a last resort, one might perhaps wish to object against B3's argument, by retorting that it would be illegitimate for Aristotle to invoke assumption ii, while trying to establish that *being* is not a genus. However, it is by no means clear to me how this objection could be further developed or motivated. I shall therefore cast it aside, and proceed to examine two lesser known passages of the *Topics*, where Aristotle similarly endorses BNG, albeit without relying on NGD.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> In Met. Z4-Z5, Aristotle acknowledges that whether non-substances are essentially such-and-such types of being (or: whether they have essences) is a somewhat controversial question. Here, I shall not delve into the details of this controversy, but simply point out that, throughout 1030a17-b13, Aristotle defends a fairly liberal account of essence-bearers: both substances and non-substances have essences and definitions, although the former do so primarily, and the latter derivatively.

<sup>18</sup> This concludes my interpretation of B3's argument for BNG. In developing it, I have refrained from drawing parallels with some equally famous arguments from the *Metaphysics*, such as  $\Gamma$ 4's defence of the principle of non-contradiction (PNC). For one such comparison, see Zingano (2016: 52-55), who raises interesting questions concerning Aristotle's aims in B3. For instance: is B3's argument meant to serve as a direct proof of BNG, or rather as a mere refutation of the contradictory position? Since  $\Gamma$ 4's defence of PNC is controversial in its own right, and the relationship between B3 and  $\Gamma$ 4 lies beyond my present concerns, I shall leave this question open.

### 3. Being cannot be a genus of things that are one

In Top. IV.6, Aristotle proposes to test whether a certain universal attribute F has been correctly predicated of another object as its genus, by examining whether F in fact fails to qualify as the genus of anything at all [127a20-21]. One common-place rule for carrying out this test is to ascertain whether an attribute which is truly predicated of everything has been predicated of a given object as its genus. In that case, the genus will not have been correctly stated, since those attributes which are predicated of everything do not qualify as genera of anything. In order to support this contention, Aristotle goes on to argue that *being* cannot be a genus of anything at all, based on the insight that *being* cannot be a genus of things that are one.

Again, see whether he has named as genus or differentia some feature that goes with everything; for there are several attributes that follow everything: thus (e.g.) *being* and *one* are among the attributes that follow everything. If, therefore, he has rendered *being* as a genus, clearly it will be the genus of everything, seeing that it is predicated of everything; for the genus is never predicated of anything except of its species. Hence *one* too would be a species of being. The result, therefore, is that of all things of which the genus is predicated, the species is predicated as well, since *being* and *one* are predicated unqualifiedly of everything, whereas the species ought to be predicated of a smaller range of items. [127a26-34] (Trans. Pickard-Cambridge, modified)

Aristotle's argument can be summarized as follows:

1. A genus is not predicated of anything apart from its species.
2. Assume, for the sake of argument, that *being* is a genus.
3. It follows that everything of which *being* is predicated is a species of *being*.
4. *Being* is predicated of everything which is *one*.
5. Hence: if *being* is a genus, *one* must be a species of *being*.
6. However, *one* cannot be a species of *being*:

- i. Any given species must be predicated of fewer items than its genus is;<sup>19</sup>
  - ii. Therefore, *one* cannot be a species of *being* unless it is predicated of fewer items than *being* is;
  - iii. However, *being* and *one* are co-extensive attributes: *one* is predicated of everything of which *being* is predicated, and vice-versa.<sup>20</sup>
7. Hence, *being* is not a genus.

To sum up: if it were a genus, *being* would be a genus of *everything* (πάντων ἄν εἶη γένος, 127a28-29), including all things that are *one*; however, *being* is not a genus of things that are *one*; therefore, *being* is not a genus at all.

The above argument meaningfully relies on the assumption that a species must be predicated of fewer items than its genus is (premiss 6.i), which an objector could perhaps refuse to grant. Suppose, for example, that Adam were the only existing animal in the universe. Or, alternatively, that men were the only existing animals. In either case, the genus *animal* and its species *man* would seem to have the same number of members. In order to reply to this objection, Aristotle could perhaps invoke the Top. I.5 definition of ‘genus’. As anticipated in this paper’s introduction, Aristotle holds that a genus comprises many objects which are different in species from one another. This suggests that a given universal, F, does not qualify as a genus unless it divides into different species. In either of the proposed scenarios, however, the universal *animal* would not divide into different species, for all animals would be men. This suggests that, in the proposed scenarios, it would be inappropriate to call *animal* a genus of which *man* is a species. Rather, ‘man’ and ‘animal’ would seem to be different names which designate one and the same kind, i.e., a single type of living organism. If that is correct, then neither scenario would seem to supply a

---

<sup>19</sup> This rule is similarly invoked in Top. IV.1 [121b1-14] in order to establish that *being* is not a genus of *one*, or vice-versa.

<sup>20</sup> Also see Met. Γ2 [1003b22-30], where Aristotle similarly claims that *being* and *one* are convertible attributes.

conclusive counter-example to the claim that a genus must have a greater extension than its species.

#### 4. Being separates off its subjects from absolutely nothing

I will conclude by examining the following passage of *Top.* VI.3:

If he has phrased the definition redundantly, first of all check whether he has used an attribute that belongs to everything—either to entities in general, or to all that fall under the same genus as the object defined; for the mention of this is sure to be redundant. For the genus must separate that which it is predicated of from the other things (δεῖ γὰρ τὸ μὲν γένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων χωρίζειν), and the differentia must separate that which it is predicated of from the other things which fall under the same genus. Now, that which belongs to everything separates off its subjects absolutely from nothing (τὸ μὲν οὖν πᾶσιν ὑπάρχον ἀπλῶς ἀπ’ οὐδενὸς χωρίζει), while that which belongs to all the things that fall under the same genus does not separate them off from the things contained in the same genus. Any addition, then, of that kind will be pointless. [140a24-32] (Trans. Pickard-Cambridge, slightly modified.)

What I wish to draw attention to here is Aristotle’s claim that a given genus ‘must separate that which it is predicated of from the other things’, which seems to imply that a genus must somehow distinguish its own members from members of other genera. Before I go on to substantiate this reading, it is worth noticing that it is by drawing on this insight that contemporary commentators, like Madigan, have sought to lend plausibility to BNG:

[T]o speak of something as a kind presupposes some determinate content and a contrast between that determinate content and the content of other kinds [...] To speak of being as a kind implies no such contrast, for all things are beings. To speak of one as a kind implies no such contrast, for all things are ones. As terms of universal extension, one and being are too broad to count as kinds (Madigan 1999: 75).

The following paragraphs aim to spell out this line of defence of BNG in greater detail, and to show that it is in effect textually supported by Aristotle's remarks at 140a23-32.<sup>21</sup>

Aristotle here argues that an attribute which belongs to all beings (such as *being* or *one*) should not be put forward as a defining feature of a given species because this would be pointless ('μάταιον'): it would not serve the purpose of defining that species. That is because such an attribute fails to satisfy a basic requirement which universal attributes must meet in order to qualify as genera: it fails to separate the items of which it is predicated from other types of thing.

To understand how Aristotle understands this requirement, let us look at the example of two standard genera such as *animal* and *plant*. These are different kinds of organism, neither of which is subordinate to the other: all animals, as well as all plants, are living organisms, yet no animal is a plant and no plant is an animal. On the one hand, *being an animal* does not separate men from horses, in that the attribute *animal* is predicated of all items of which *man* is predicated, as well as of all items of which *horse* is. However, *being an animal* does separate men from trees in that the feature *animal* is predicated of all items of which the species *man* is predicated, but of none of the items of which the species *tree*, which falls under the genus *plant*, is.

In the light of these considerations, I take the above passage to imply that:

in order for some universal feature F to qualify as a genus, it is necessary for there to be at least one genus G other than F, such that: (i) F is not a subordinate kind of G; (ii) G is not a subordinate kind of F; and (iii) F is not predicated of any of the items of which G is predicated.<sup>22</sup>

While genera such as *animal* and *plant* meet the above requirement (hereafter referred to as the 'separation requirement'), *being* clearly does not. In

---

<sup>21</sup> Also see Top. V.2 [130b11-18].

<sup>22</sup> Conditions i and ii posit that it is neither true to say that G is predicated of all items of which F is predicated, nor that F is predicated of all items of which G is predicated. This however leaves open the possibility that F be predicated of some of the items of which G is predicated, and vice-versa. Condition iii is meant to rule out this possibility.

§3, it was noted that, since *being* is predicated of everything, but a genus is only predicated of its own species (and individuals), it follows that: if *being* were a genus, it would be predicated of all kinds other than itself as their genus.<sup>23</sup> Thus, if we assume that *being* is a genus, we must grant that there is no genus G, such that G is not subordinated to *being* as a species (cf. condition ii). As a result, there can be no genus G such that *being* is not predicated of any of the items of which G is predicated (cf. condition iii). Insofar as it fails to meet the separation requirement, *being* is thus disqualified from being a genus.

One important benefit of this interpretation is that *being* fails to qualify as a genus both where it is predicated of lower kinds of the likes of *animal*, and of any of its alleged primary species. *Being* does not separate off men from trees, since it is predicated of all items of which *animal* is predicated, as well as of all items of which *plant* is predicated. The same argument would apply for any given pair of genera—neither of which is subordinated to the other—the further up we go in their hierarchy. Having reached the summit, we shall find that: if it were a genus, *being* would also fail to separate off any of its allegedly primary species from any other species S, since it would be impossible for S to fall under a genus G other than *being*, without G being in turn a subordinate kind of being.

One may object to such line of defence by claiming that the separation requirement for generality is too strict. Indeed, in 121b30-122a2, Aristotle seems to allow that a single item *may* fall under two genera, neither of which is subordinated to the other, as long as these are both subordinated to a common higher genus. *Knowledge* and *virtue* are two genera; neither of them is subordinated to the other; they are both subordinated to the genus *disposition*; and it would be correct to class *prudence* (φρόνησις) both as a kind of knowledge and as a kind of virtue. Thus, *knowledge* and *virtue* do qualify as genera even though *knowledge* is predicated of at least one item of which *virtue* is predicated, and vice-versa.

---

<sup>23</sup> This argument relies on the assumption (i) that a genus is not predicated of anything apart from its species and individual members, but not on the further assumption (ii) that the differentiae of a genus are neither species nor individual members of that same genus. Thus, I take the argument not to rely on NGD.

Of the various ways to meet this objection, the following seems to be most effective. The counter-example cautions that *knowledge* and *virtue* can both qualify as genera of *prudence*, even though neither kind is subordinated to the other, since both are subordinated to a higher common genus. In order to undermine the current defence of BNG based on this insight, one would need to argue that it is in fact possible for there to be a genus G other than *being*, such that (i) *being* is not a subordinate kind of G and (ii) G is not in turn a subordinate kind of *being*, as long as we assume that (iii) *being* and G are subordinated kinds of a common higher genus H. One clear reason why Aristotle would reject clause iii is that *being* would thereby be posited as a species of a higher genus H, which option he deems absurd on account of the fact that H would itself be a being, and would therefore have to 'participate in' its own species (cf. §1).

### Conclusions

I will conclude by summarising the main results of my argument, and by exploring some of the chief theoretical implications of Aristotle's endorsement of BNG.

As I have shown, each of Aristotle's arguments for BNG, in Met. B3, Top. IV.6, and Top. VI.3, meaningfully draws on the (perhaps controversial) assumption that *being* is predicated of absolutely everything. This assumption being granted, each of the above arguments is plausible, based on Aristotle's conception of the nature of genera and differentiae. First [Met. B3], if *being* were a genus, it would have to be predicated of its own differentiae. This is absurd, for: (i) a genus is not predicated of anything apart from its species and its individual members; (ii) the differentiae of a given genus are by nature neither species nor individual members of that genus, but rather features whereby members of that genus differ specifically from one another. Secondly [Top. IV.6]: if *being* were a genus, things that are *one* would have to constitute a species of *being*. This is also absurd, for: (i) *being* and *one* are attributes of equal extension; (ii) a genus has by nature a wider extension than any of its species. Finally [Top. VI.3]: it is in the nature of each genus to separate its own members from

members of other genera; however, if *being* were a genus, it would separate its own members from absolutely nothing.

The major repercussion of Aristotle's endorsement of BNG can be best grasped by reference to his conception of a genus as a sort of common attribute which is part of the essence of its subjects. It is perhaps in this light that we should understand Aristotle's claim that, because it is not a genus, *being* is not the substance of anything: 'τὸ δ' εἶναι οὐκ οὐσία οὐδενί· οὐ γὰρ γένος τὸ ὄν' [A.Po. B7, 92b13-14].<sup>24</sup> That *being* is not a genus implies that *being* is not a single common feature, which is part of the essence of each and every one of its subjects.

This insight seems to impact Aristotle's doctrine of the categories in significant ways. As has been previously remarked, Aristotle often speaks of *substance*, *quality*, *quantity*, *relative*, etc. as genera. Sometimes, he specifically refers to some of them as the highest divisions, genera, or categories of *being* [A.Po. A.32, 88b1-3; DA II.2, 412a6]. Because Aristotle appears to take the genera of the categories as separate kinds of being, but holds that there is no single genus of *being*, such as might be predicated in common of all such genera [also cf. Phys. III.1, 200b34-36; Met. Λ4, 1070b1-2; EE I.8, 1217b23-35], it seems natural to infer that the categories of *substance*, *quality*, *quantity*, etc. are not strictly speaking definable. Since the definition of each kind consists of a genus and differentia(e), but *being* may not figure as the genus term in the definition of any of the categories, it will not be possible, in strict terms, to distinguish the categories from one another as each constituting a particular kind of being.<sup>25</sup> This gives rise to the question as to whether there is any sense in which the categories may be defined. In other words: how is it possible for us to state what it is for something to be a *substance*, or a *quality*, or a *quantity* (etc.)? Furthermore: on what grounds may Aristotle support the contention that beings falling under one and the same category are one in kind with one another?

A final question that is worth considering arises from McDaniel's contention that B3's argument for BNG 'seems to presuppose that there is a general concept

---

<sup>24</sup> Also see Met. Z16 [1040b18-19].

<sup>25</sup> Aristotle may himself be making this observation in Met. H6 [1045a36-1045b7].

of being' since it relies on the assumption that 'everything whatsoever is a being' (2017: 31). I think that this suggestion should be resisted, since Aristotle can very well claim that each and every thing is truly said to 'be', while stressing that different kinds of thing are said to 'be' in different ways from one another. Borrowing Aristotle's terminology: different kinds of thing (e.g. a substance and a quality, or a quality and a quantity, or a quantity and a relative, etc.) share the name 'being', but enjoy different accounts that state what it is for each of them to *be a being* [Cat. 1, 1a1-6]. Thus: Aristotle's claim that everything is need not (and in effect does not) rely on the further presupposition that generically one and the same account of 'being' applies to each and every entity. Aristotle will presumably emphasise that the ways in which different types of thing are called 'beings' are nonetheless significantly interconnected: presumably, the accounts which state what it is for each of them to *be* are not wholly different from, but must be partly identical with one another; indeed, what it is for different kinds of thing to *be* must partly consist in bearing some or other relation to one and the same kind of being, i.e. substance [Met. Γ2, 1003a33-b10]. Yet the details of Aristotle's defence of this stance are notoriously controversial, and call for a separate discussion.

## SYNTHESIS

### References

#### List of abbreviations

Categories = Cat.

De Anima = DA

De Interpretatione = De Int.

Metaphysics = Met.

Parts of Animals = PA

Posterior Analytics = A.Po.

Topics = Top.

Barnes, J., (1994) *Aristotle, Posterior Analytics*, Oxford, Clarendon Press

Berti, E., (2002) 'Being and Essence in Contemporary Interpretations of Aristotle' in Bottani, A., Carrara, M., and Giaretta, P. (ed.), *Individuals, Essence and Identity Themes of Analytic Metaphysics*, TOPOI, vol. 4, Springer-Science+Business Media Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers

Berti, E., (2009) 'Aporiai 6-7' in Crubellier, M., and Laks, A. (ed.), *Aristotle: Metaphysics Beta: Symposium Aristotelicum*, Oxford, Oxford University Press

Carson, S., (2000) 'Aristotle On Existential Import And Nonreferring Subjects', *Synthese*, 124, 3, 343-360

Dooley, W. E. & Madigan, A., (2013) *Alexander, On Aristotle Metaphysics 2 & 3*, London, Bloomsbury Academic

Granger, H., (1984) 'Aristotle on Genus and Differentia', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 22, 1, 1-23

Kant, I., *Critique of pure reason*, trans. Guyer, P., & Wood, A. W., (1998) Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Heidegger, M., *Being and Time*, trans. Macquarrie, J., & Robinson, E. S., (1962) Oxford, Basil Blackwell

Jacobs, W., (1979) 'Aristotle and Nonreferring Subjects', *Phronesis*, 24, 3, 282-300

Jaeger, W., (1980) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis, Oxonii: E Typographeo Clarendoniano

Lewis, F. A., (2004) 'Aristotle on the Homonymy of Being', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 68, 1, 1-36

Madigan, A., (1999) *Aristotle, Metaphysics Books B and K, 1-2*, Oxford, Clarendon Press

McDaniel, K., (2017) *The fragmentation of being*, Oxford, Oxford University Press

- Mignucci, M., (2007) 'Aristotle on the Existential Import of Propositions', *Phronesis*, 52, 2, 121–138
- Peramatzis, M. (2011) *Priority in Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Pickard–Cambridge, W. A. (1984), 'Aristotle, Topics' in Barnes, J., *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Ross, W. D., (1924) *Aristotle's Metaphysics: A Revised Text*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.
- Ross, W. D., (1970) *Aristotelis Topica Et Sophistici Elenchi*, Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis, Oxonii: E Typographeo Clarendoniano
- Shields, C. J., (1999) *Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle*, Oxford, Clarendon Press
- Turner, J., (2010) 'Ontological Pluralism', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 107, 1, 5–34.
- Zingano, M., (2016) 'Aristóteles y La Prueba De Que El Ser No Es Un Género (Metafísica III 3)', *Diánoia*, 55, 65, 41–65