Aristotle finds truth and falsity in many places and guises. He uses the language of truth and the true as if it were synonymous with reality and the real.\(^1\) He speaks of false things.\(^2\) He talks of persons who not only speak but live the truth.\(^3\) Besides propositions, opinions, beliefs, and the like, sense perceptions, imaginations, and dreams are true or false.\(^4\) He alludes to partial truths, obscure truths, and truth in degrees.\(^5\) This is just a sample of the evidence in Aristotle's writings of an implicit, variegated understanding of truth.

Aristotle also offers two explicit cross-referenced accounts of truth in *Metaphysics* E 4 and Θ 10. These explicit accounts of truth fill out Aristotle's claim that truth is one of the four types of being, along with the categories, actuality and potentiality, and accidental being.\(^6\) These connected accounts offer two versions of truth as it pertains to thinking. The first is a version of propositional truth with its opposite falsity. It is founded in the combining and dividing activity of thought called διά\(\upsilon\)φοι in relation to the combinations and divisions existing in things. This version has earned Aristotle pioneer status with respect to the correspondence theory of truth. It is commonly taken to be his primary, standard, and philosophically coherent account of truth,\(^7\) although

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1 See, e.g., *Physics* i 8, 191a25; viii 8, 263a17; *History of Animals* viii 12, 597a7; *Metaph. A* i, 993a30, b20; A 7, 988a19-20; a 1, 993b23-24; B 1, 996a16-17; *Nicomachean Ethics* i 7, 1098a32; *An. I* i 1, 402a5.
3 *EN* iv 7, 1127b2; cf. *EN* vi 2, 1139a26-27; *Eudemian Ethics* ii 3, 1221a6; iii 7, 1233b3-1234a3.
4 See, e.g., *An.* ii 6, 418a14-16; iii 3, 428a10-11; iii 3, 428a14-15; iii 3, 428b18-25; *Metaph.* A 29, 1024b23; vii vi 2, 1139a17-18.
5 See, e.g., *Phys.* iii 6, 206a13-14; *De Caelo* iv 3, 310b1-3; *Meteorology* i 9, 347a6-8; *Metaph. Z* 3, 1029b8-12; A 4, 985a13-18; A 9, 993a13-17, a30-b4; M 8, 1084b23-26; M 9, 1086a13-14; *EN* vi 13, 1144b17-25; vi 1, 1138b25-26; viii 14, 1163b1; ix 8, 1168b10-15; *EE* i 6, 1216b30-35; ii 1, 1220a15-18; vii 2, 1235b13-17; vii 15, 1249b5-9; *Politics* i 6, 1255a3-4; iii 11, 1281a41-42; vii 3, 1325a23-24.
6 *Metaph.* A 7, 1017a31-35; E 2, 1026a33-35, E 4, 1027b18, Θ 10, 1051a34-b2.
7 See, e.g., Kirkham 1992, 119-120.
Aristotle disclaims its relevance for metaphysics. The second explicit version describes truth as contact of thought with in composite things. Its opposite is not falsity but ignorance. It is associated with thinking as νοεῖν or νοεῖ rather than διάλογον. The meaning and coherence of this more metaphysical kind of truth (the objects of this truth beyond logical combination and division comprise or include separate substances) and its relation to propositional truth remain open questions. The relation of Aristotle’s varieties or degrees of truth to these passages from the Metaph. is also not obvious.

The most fundamental thing that Aristotle says explicitly about truth is that it is a type of being. In itself, this is no innovation, however strange it may sound to us. The veridical sense of the Greek verb ἐστίν—the sense that “is” in Greek means “is true” as “is so, is the case” in contradistinction, say, to the “is” of predication, existence, or identity—is arguably the most ancient sense of the verb. The aim of this paper is an articulation of this being—truth—which at one point Aristotle calls “strictest” or most decisive (κυριότατα) of the four types of being. Considered together, Aristotle’s explicit accounts of (1) propositional truth as a way of being composite things gained through διάλογον and (2) nonpropositional truth as a way of being in composite things gained through noetic contact lead into this study of truth as a type of being. The next step in this study would be a consideration of the other ways in which Aristotle talks about truth, including the notion that things themselves are in some sense true. This larger project is beyond the scope of this paper.

I shall present considerations that noetic truth is the more primary meaning of truth for Aristotle and that it has coherence as the foundational relation of the soul in cognition to existing things in their irreducible and unique identity and definiteness. This is contrary to a common view that propositional truth is the primary meaning of truth and even the only coherent account of truth in Aristotle. I shall also develop the connection between noetic truth and propositional truth wherein noetic truth is the basis for the achievement of propositional truth. Together these types of truth constitute the way in which the soul becomes all things in intellectual cognition.

The first section of the paper considers the explicit discussions of truth in Metaph. E 4 and Θ 10. These discussions treat truth in terms of thought as a πάθος of the soul. The strategy of the section is not to offer a comprehensive reading of the passages but to note what Aristotle says about thinking in these passages that elucidates the claim that truthful thinking is a type of being. The second section of the paper follows through on these aspects of thinking relevant to the being of truth as they recur in the De Anima, the site of Aristotle’s professed account of thought, an account which he summarizes by claiming that “the soul is in a way all things.” Thus the An. account of thought is also an account of a type of being attained by the actual functioning of the intellect. To pursue this connection to the An. is to move between two accounts of being in

8 Metaph. E 4, 1027b29-1028a4.
9 Metaph. Θ 10, 1051b32; 1052a1. For a distinction between διάλογον and νοεῖν or νοεῖ, see An. i 4, 408b24-29, and Owens 1978, 412n10.
10 Kahn 1966, 250-254. See Kahn 1981, 134n45 for a bibliography of his writings on the veridical is.
11 Metaph. Θ 10, 1051b1. See Kahn 1966, 250 for a defense of this controversial phrase: “I understand Aristotle to be saying that, from a philosophic point of view, this use of einaí [‘to be so’, ‘to be the case’, or ‘to be true’] is the most basic and the most literal meaning of the verb.” Cf. Ross 1924, ii: 274-275; Owens 1978, 411n4. The sticking point is Metaph. E 4, 1027b31, where the categories are contrasted with the being of propositional truth as “the things that are in the full sense” (ἐν τῶν κύριων). This is a metaphysical contrast, however, between the two types of being (1027b34-1028a1), and not a claim about usage. The true as a type of being subsists as a πάθος or qualification of the intellect in act, and from that standpoint it is not as fundamental as the being indicated by the categories. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of the texts of Aristotle are from Barnes 1984.
12 See Brentano 1862, 17, regarding propositional and noetic truth in relation to ontological truth, namely, the claim that things themselves are true.
13 Chronological and developmental issues are relevant to considering these two explicit accounts of truth together and much more to the larger project of considering as a whole the implicit account(s) of truth in Aristotle see, e.g., the references to the views of W. Jaeger and H. Maier in Aubenque 1972, 166-167; see also Wilpert 1972, 106-110. I take it to be proper to seek as much consistency and connection as possible in what Aristotle says about truth both explicitly and implicitly in the corpus, and this paper is an exercise in putting some of these pieces together. This is not to ignore chronological or developmental issues but to see them in the light of the literary form of the school λόγος which Aristotle utilized. See Owens 1978, 70-83 and 104-106.
14 See, e.g. Brentano 1862, 19-21; Wilpert 1972, 110, 116-117, 120; Ross 1924, ii: 275.
15 Metaph. E 4, 1028a1 explicitly states this of διάλογον with respect to propositional truth; incomplete truth is a matter of νοεῖν (Metaph. Θ 10, 1051b32; 1052a1), which also takes place in the soul (An. iii 4, 429a10-24).
16 An. iii 8, 431b21.
thought. I shall try to make clear by the consideration of these texts from the *Metaph.* and the *An.* that Aristotle presents in them a seamless account of the type of being in thought that is truth.

I.

Both *Metaph.* E 4 and *Metaph.* Θ 10 discuss being as the true within the context of the four types of being Aristotle recognizes. The burden of the brief chapter at *Metaph.* E 4 is to argue that truth as being, like accidental being, does not represent a domain of being which is properly the object of metaphysical inquiry. According to Aristotle the cause (τὸ...ἀιτίων) of being in the sense of the true is “some affection of the thought” (τῆς διανοίας τι πάθος, 1027b34-1028a1). As an affection of thought this being does not represent “any separate class of being” (σύκεύω δηλούσιν οὐσίαν των φύσιν τοῦ ὄντος, 1028a2) but rather refers to being in the sense of the categories, that separate class of being appropriate for the inquiry into “the causes and the principles of being itself, *qua* being” (1028a1, 3-4).

The argument for this conclusion consists of an extended protasis that begins as the chapter opens at 1027b19 and does not end until the metaphysical disclaimer itself. The protasis begins:

But since which is in the sense of being true, or is not in the sense of being false, depends on combination and separation, and truth and falsehood together are concerned with the apportionment of a contradiction (for truth has the affirmation in the case of what is compounded and the negation in the case of what is divided, while falsity has the contradictory of this apportionment . . . ). (*Metaph.* E 4, 1027b18-23)

Aristotle quickly associates truth and falsehood with propositions formed in thought by combination and division and succinctly characterizes the truth or falsehood of these propositional combinations and divisions as a function of the combinations and divisions obtaining in reality (1027b20-23). This last idea about combinations and divisions in things to which combinations and divisions in thought are related, the heart of Aristotle’s so-called correspondence theory of truth, is developed in *Metaph.* Θ 10 but receives no attention in *Metaph.* E 4 (it is presented as part of a parenthesis in the Greek texts of Ross and Jaeger). Aristotle chooses instead to emphasize a logical point about the paired relationship of truth and falsehood. Truth and falsehood together form a whole (σύνολον, “truth and falsehood together,” 1027b19-20) and this whole is a pairing of contradictory propositions (περί μερισμῶν ἀντιφάσεως, 1027b20). For every true proposition there is a corresponding false proposition, and vice versa. This fact leads Aristotle later in *Metaph.* Θ 10 to be concerned about propositions exchanging or retaining their truth values over time depending on their objects, but for the present his initial interest focuses more narrowly on the logical character of thinking that combines and divides, thereby opening up the logical space for the pair truth/falsehood and for the pair being as true/non-being as false.

Διάνοια always presupposes the logical possibility of combining or dividing, of combining rather than dividing and of dividing rather than combining, of forming one or the other of a pair of contradictory propositions. This does not mean, however, that the thinker engaged in διάνοια can accomplish any given combining or dividing. The next move Aristotle makes, in fact, is to distinguish propositional thinking as a πάθος of διάνοια from logical possibility with respect to the true and the false. Aristotle notes: “It is another question, how it happens that we think things together or apart.” Here he is clearly marking the psychological as different and shifting to it from strictly logical considerations. He immediately goes on to say: “by ‘together’ and ‘apart’ I mean thinking them so that there is no succession in the thoughts but they become a unity.” As this text says, the actual thinking of a combination or a division is the thinking of a certain unity or oneness (ἐν τῷ, 1027b25). The

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16 *Metaph.* E 4, 1027b17-18 with E 2, 1026a33-b3; *Metaph.* Θ 10, 1051a34-b2.
17 Ross 1924, 1:365, points out that the logical apodosis does not come until 1027b33, where the metaphysical insignificance of accidental and verbal being is stated.
18 *Metaph.* Θ 10, 1051b3-5, e.g., shows that Aristotle considers things independent of thought to be combined and divided. *Metaph.* E 4 is interested in distinguishing dianoetic combining and division from the combinations and divisions existing in things, rather than relating them: the combinations and divisions here considered are in thought and not in things. I say that truthful dianoetic combinations and divisions are “a function of” combinations and divisions in things in a considered way so as not to imply an isomorphism or strict parallel between the intellect’s combinations and divisions, which allow the intellect to think the combinations and divisions in things and which exist in thought, and the combinations and divisions in the things themselves which are thought.
19 See *Metaph.* Ι 7, 1011b26-27 and the discussions of *De Interpretatione* 7-11.
20 *Metaph.* Θ 10.1051b9-15, 1052a4-11.
parts combined or divided are not thought in succession but as a whole. The linear linguistic expression of the logical structure of subject, predicate, copula, temporal aspect, and so on, is not the psychological character of the proposition as it is entertained in διάνοια. In διάνοια a unity is thought.

How it happens that we think things together or apart is considered in the An. This turn to the psychological in Metaph. Ε 4, however, shows that Aristotle locates being as true and non-being as false genuinely in thought rather than the linguistic realm. It also indicates that he is not concerned simply with the logical. This conforms to his view at the opening of On Interpretation where Aristotle considers speech as conventionally symbolic of affections of the soul shared naturally by all humans, which in turn are likenesses of things.23 Truth partnered with falsehood is primarily an issue of thought for Aristotle, not language. But neither is it exclusively an issue of logic. It is a matter of being or not-being in thought. Thought consists of affections of the soul as likenesses of things. Aristotle's interest is not restricted to true thought mirroring or paralleling reality but it includes the causal account of thinking, elaborated in the An., where intelligible objects act on the intellect, and provide the basis for the soul being in thought the things that exist.24 It may be the case, then, that there are combinations or divisions that the intellect cannot actually think. Aristotle indicates in his discussion of the principle of non-contradiction that we cannot think contradictions.25 We can or write "square circle" or "the circle is square," but we cannot think them as unities. The limits on the ability actually to combine or divide in διάνοια are not clear, but they are conditioned by the requirements that to think is always to think a oneness or unity and that the affections of soul are likenesses of things. Things that are are always one according to Aristotle: to be is to be one.26 Metaph. Θ 10 considers the oneness of existing things, both composite and non-composite. Metaph. Ε 4 stays on the side of διάνοια, however, and states the form that actual διάνοια takes: when someone actually thinks a combination or division, that person thinks a unity with its own actual undividedness, and not a succession. This holds not only for affirmations, which assert combinations in being, but also for denials, which assert divisions in being. The cause of this unity, as Aristotle notes elsewhere, must be sought.27

Aristotle is now ready to state the main reason why being as truth and non-being as falsehood are not relevant for the inquiry into the principles of being qua being. He states that "falsity and truth are not in things but in thought" (οὐ . . . ῆ τοῖς πράγμασι πρόκειται . . . ἄλλ' ἐν διάνοια, 1072b25-27) and explains that "the combination and the separation are in thought and not in things" (ἡ συμπληροτικὴ ἔστιν καὶ ἡ διάρρηξις ἐν διάνοιᾳ ἄλλ' ῆν ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι, 1072b29-30).

What does Aristotle mean by πράγματα or things? The combinations and divisions in διάνοια are said to be "a different sort of being from the things that are in the full sense" (τὸ δ' οὐτὸς ἐν ἑπτάρ συν τῷ κύριῳ, 1072b31). Aristotle then describes the combining and dividing action of διάνοια as attaching or removing the categories, which he takes to be the things that are in the full sense (1072b31-33). Α πράγμα in this sense is a thing located in one of the categories. This conception of πράγμα as things combined or divided by thought in propositions, fits the logical context of Metaph. Ε 4 mentioned above.

Metaph. Θ 10 gives a fuller picture of what Aristotle means by πράγματα. He refers to the objects of διάνοια in this chapter not only as πράγματα (1051b2, 5), but also as (i) that which is combined or divided (το διπροσνυκτὶ, 1051b3; το συγκείρησα, 1051b4; τά . . . ἐν συνκείρησι, 1051b9; τά . . . ἐν διήρησι, 1051b10), (ii) that which admits the opposites or is capable of being otherwise (τά . . . ἐνδεχομαι τάνυσι, 1051b11; τά ἐνδεχόμεα, 1051b13; τά ἀνάλογα ἀκαλλή, 1051b15-16), and (iii) that which is unchanging (εἰ ἐν τοῖς ἀκαλλής, 1052a4). The examples he uses are a person who is pale (1051b7-8), the wood [being] white (1051b20), the diagonal [being] incomensurate (1051b20-21), the triangle and the triangle having two right angles (1052a6-7), and the even number(s) being prime or not (1052a8-10). In these instances it is ambiguous whether a πράγμα or thing refers to the objects and attributes located in the categories that are combined or separated in reality (the person, pale, the wood, white, the diagonal.

23 Int. 1, 16a3-8. See also Sophistical Elenchos 7, 169a38-40.
24 Hence truth in Aristotle is not simply or merely a matter of the correspondence between thought and reality as in a case where one randomly thinks that p when it happens to be the case that p. All thinking is ultimately grounded by Aristotle in the contact with the world that is expressed in the notion of thinking (or sensing) as foundational reception of form. This reception of form makes the soul to be in some way the thing that it thinks. Section II of this paper on the An. relates to these considerations, as does the case to be presented about the relation between dianoetic and noetic truth.
25 Metaph. 1' 1, 1005b23-26.
26 Metaph. 1' 2, 1053b20, b25; 12, 1054a13; E 4, 1030b10; Δ 10, 1018a35; 1' 2, 1003b23; B 3, 998b21; B 4, 1001a20; K 1, 1059b28; An. 1' 1, 412b8.
27 Int. 5, 17a13-15.
incommensurate, the triangle, right angles, even numbers, prime\textsuperscript{28} or the complexes of them that exist or do not exist (the pale person, the white wood, the incommensurate diagonal, the prime even numbers). Aristotle allows both senses to function when he refers to things in his discussion of truth.

His usage elsewhere confirms this picture. \textit{Πράγματα} can be the particular or universal subjects of predication,\textsuperscript{29} individual existing things,\textsuperscript{30} complex things, states of affairs, or very generally the facts of the matter.\textsuperscript{31} True to the derivation of \textit{πράγμα} from \textit{πράττω}, \textit{πράγματα} also are things done, that is, actions or deeds, to which attributes like “just” or “temperate” may accrue to form a complex,\textsuperscript{32} or the actions that are combined to form the plot of a drama.\textsuperscript{33} When Aristotle talks about false \textit{πράγματα} in \textit{Metaph}. \textit{Δ} 29 he includes non-existent complex objects like the diagonal of a square commensurate with its side or a person sitting (when in fact not sitting).\textsuperscript{34} In the course of this discussion he comments that “the thing itself and the thing itself modified in a certain way are somehow the same, e.g., Socrates and the musical Socrates.”\textsuperscript{35}

Aristotle holds that Socrates and the musical Socrates are somehow the same. This position provides a key to understanding Aristotle’s practice of ambiguity regarding \textit{πράγματα} and an indication of how much his account of propositional truth, which exists in thought, is centered on things.\textsuperscript{36} Although truth (as a type of being) and falsehood (as a type of non-being) are not in \textit{πράγματα} but in \textit{διάνοια}, \textit{πράγματα} determine the truth-value of the combinations and divisions fashioned in \textit{διάνοια}. This combining and dividing in thought is about things located in categories, such as Socrates and musical, insofar as they exist or not together as complex things, such as musical Socrates. Things considered in this sense, existing things and complexes of things located in the categories, are a condition for predication and judgment. They are intelligible, and actual \textit{διάνοια} asserts or denies by combining or separating with respect to them in thought. When an affirmative proposition like “Socrates is musical” is true, however, it is true because Socrates, a thing in the first sense, is musical Socrates, that is, a thing in the second sense of a complex thing. The first sense of things (Socrates, musical) corresponds to the need on the side of \textit{διάνοια} to combine and divide. The second sense of things (musical Socrates) relates to the fact that things as they exist combined or divided determine the truth or falsehood of judgments formed in thought by combining or dividing.\textsuperscript{37}

In \textit{Metaph}. \textit{Θ} 10 Aristotle considers the possibilities of things being combined or divided, either always or sometimes. In this discussion he remarks on the being of these combinations and divisions in things: “being is being combined and one, and not being is being not combined but more than one.”\textsuperscript{38} This statement identifies being with combination and oneness. Aristotle is assigning being to things that exist as unitary complexes; these things are. The statement also identifies non-being with division and being many. When Socrates is not sitting, Socrates and sitting are divided in reality and so are many. The not-sitting Socrates is not a thing in the same sense as the sitting Socrates and Aristotle does not assign being to it but non-being. The not-sitting Socrates, as a being, is Socrates, and the division or separation of sitting from him says what he is not, not what he is (lying down, standing, running, and so on). It would be possible to say that when things are divided, the division has being, the division is, but Aristotle does not put matters this way. Divisions in things are about things, and about things insofar as they are not. This is how centered on things Aristotle’s account is and one reason he allows the ambiguity and seems to move freely between things that are combined or divided and things as combined or divided.

Matters stand differently, however, with being as truth and non-being as falsehood. When Socrates is not sitting, the proposition “Socrates is not sitting” is thereby true and as a \textit{πάθος} in thought it has being as truth rather than...\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Metaph. Ζ} 4, 1029b22-25 reads: “But since there are compounds (\textit{σύνθεσις}) of substance with the other categories...”

\textsuperscript{29} See, e.g., \textit{Int. 7}, 17a38; \textit{Topics} 18, 103b8; \textit{SE} 24, 179a28, a37.

\textsuperscript{30} See, e.g., \textit{An. ι} 8, 432a3; \textit{Phys. iii} 8, 208a15; \textit{Pol. iii} 9, 1280a17-19.

\textsuperscript{31} See, e.g., \textit{GC} 18, 325a18; \textit{Phys. viii} 8, 263a17; \textit{Pol. i} 15, 1299b18; \textit{Rhetoric} 1.1354a22, \textit{SE} 1, 165a6.

\textsuperscript{32} See, e.g., \textit{EN} ν 3, 1105b5; \textit{iv} 6, 1126b12; \textit{Phys. iv} 14, 223b25.

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Poetics} 14, 1453b2, 6, 1450a15, a37.

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Metaph. Δ} 29, 1024b17-21.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{παύη} πος αὐτό καὶ αὐτὸ πεπουθής, ὁ σωκράτης καὶ Σωκράτης μουσικός. \textit{Metaph. Δ} 29, 1024b30-31.

\textsuperscript{36} See Owens 1978, 128-135, about the priority of knowledge of things over concepts or words.

\textsuperscript{37} Cf. Mohan Matthen’s semantic account of the veridical “is” which argues for the equivalence of the dyadic (“the man is running”) and monadic (“the running man is”) use of “is” and consequently for a class of entities which he calls “predicative complexes.” Matthen 1983, 124-126. See also Kahn 1966, 249 on the inconsequence of the syntactic distinction between predicative and absolute constructions.

\textsuperscript{38} τὸ μέν (γὰρ) ἐκεῖ ἐστὶ τὸ συγκείσθαι καὶ ἐν ἑν, τὸ δὲ μὴ εἶναι τὸ μὴ συγκείσθαι ἀλλὰ πλεῖον εἶναι, \textit{Metaph. Θ} 10, 1051b11-12.
than non-being as falsehood.\textsuperscript{39} It exists in thought as what is the case with respect to things. In reality, however, that Socrates is not sitting regards things insofar as they are not, but not insofar as they are. This difference between the being and non-being of things and the being of truth and the non-being of falsehood is part of what Aristotle means when he says that truth and falsehood exist in διάνοια, not in πράγματα. A similar point can be made about the one and the many in διάνοια. A proposition actually thought in διάνοια, whether it is an affirmation or a denial, is one and is thought as a unity.\textsuperscript{40} To think a succession of components of a proposition is to think something many and not to think a proposition. Being and non-being, as well as the one and the many, are distinct in διάνοια, and this shows its distinction from things as a realm of being, even though its being as truth and non-being as falsehood depend on things in their being and non-being.

Indeed, Aristotle uses πράγματα in ways that reinforce the claims made in Metaph. E 4 and Θ 10 that thought is dependent on things for its truth and falsehood. Aristotle uses πράγμα in contradistinction to the διάνοια or name the thing has and in contradistinction to its λόγος as formula or account.\textsuperscript{41} At one place he explains that ἐπιστήμη or science is a λόγος which makes plain both the πράγμα and its privation, though not in the same way (he uses the example of health and disease). The scientific λόγος expresses the nature of the πράγμα as existing reality but applies to the privation by a denial and removal from that positive being.\textsuperscript{42} Thus a privation like disease is parasitic on the πράγμα that is a being in itself, namely, health, and the λόγος that makes plain both the thing and its privation follows that order of being. When Aristotle talks about his predecessors’ initial failure to recognize other causes besides the material cause, he states that αὐτό τὸ πράγμα (literally “the thing itself” but translated “the very facts”) forces them to further investigation and progress towards the other causes.\textsuperscript{43} Things have power over διάνοια.\textsuperscript{44}

With respect to things, both Metaph. E 4 and Θ 10 make a move from the complex to the simple. The move in Metaph. E 4 merely alludes to simple things and denies propositional truth or falsity regarding them, adding a cross-reference to the Metaph. Θ 10 discussion.\textsuperscript{45} After talking about propositional truth and composite reality in Metaph. Θ 10, Aristotle speaks of a truth for which there is no corresponding falsehood and of simple things. In general Aristotle sees priority in being and in knowledge in the simple over the complex, though this principle is complicated by the ambiguity Aristotle recognizes among simple things.\textsuperscript{46} Separate substances, which are one without qualification and ultimate causes, provide primary instances of this principle at work. It is a principle at work in Aristotle’s account of truth as well.\textsuperscript{47}

Aristotle opens the discussion of truth of non-composite things at Metaph. E 4,1027b27-28 by stating: “with regard to simple things and essences (τὰ ἀπλά καὶ τὰ τί ἐστιν) falsity and truth do not exist in thought (οὐδεὶς ἐν διάνοια).”\textsuperscript{48} He proposes discussing the being of simple things later, which happens in Metaph. Θ 10.\textsuperscript{49} Here Aristotle dissociates “falsity and truth” from the thought of simple things. This denial of falsehood and truth in διάνοια for simple things can be read as a denial of truth with respect to their apprehension by νοεῖν. Such a reading contradicts what is stated later at Metaph. Θ 10, 1051b22-25 and 1052a1-3.\textsuperscript{50} What Aristotle is denying with respect to simples, however, is that the pair truth/falsehood, which apportions contradictory propositions to a thing, applies to them. The two places in Metaph. E 4 where Aristotle denies the pair truth/falsehood, first, to things, and then to διάνοια with respect to simple things, reverse the usual order from “truth and falsity” to “falsity and truth,” something that happens nowhere else in our two chapters. The present text merely denies the “falsity and truth” of διάνοια to non-composite reality. The possibility of falsehood is at issue. At the beginning of An. III 6 Aristotle writes: “The thinking of indivisibles is found in those cases where falsehood is impossible: where the alternative of false and true applies, there we always find a sort of combining of objects of thought in a quasi-unity.”\textsuperscript{51} Besides corroborating Metaph. E 4, 1027b27-29. See Ross 1924, 1: 365.

\textsuperscript{39} Metaph. E 4, 1027b20-23; Θ 10, 1051b3-5. See Brentano 1862, 23, on being as true belonging to the fully articulated judgment and not the copula.

\textsuperscript{40} An. III 6, 430b3-4 equates the effect of division with that of combination.

\textsuperscript{41} See, e.g., Top. vi 7, 146a3, a13; vi 8, 146a13; SE16, 175a8, a19; 19, 177a31.

\textsuperscript{42} Metaph. Θ 2, 1046b4-15.

\textsuperscript{43} Metaph. A 3, 984a18.

\textsuperscript{44} τέμνεται οὖν ἡ ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἡ αἰσθήσεις εἰς τὰ πράγματα, An. ΙΙΙ 8, 431b24-25.

\textsuperscript{45} Metaph. E 4, 1027b27-29. See Ross 1924, 1: 365.

\textsuperscript{46} See, e.g., Metaph. M 2, 1076b19; 17, 1057b21; Z 13, 1039a17; Z 15, 1040a23; K 1, 1059b35; Cael. ii 11, 286b17; Pol. ii 11, 1252a19; Metaph. Ι11, 1053a9; Δ 5, 1015b12.

\textsuperscript{47} An. ΙΙ 4, 408b14-30 presents διάνοια as a lower grade of cognitive activity tied to the body in contrast to νοεῖν, which may have a more divine status.

\textsuperscript{48} Metaph. E 4, 1027b27-28; translation emended.


\textsuperscript{50} Ross 1924, 1: 365.

\textsuperscript{51} ἡ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἀδιάφορων ὑπόστασις εἰς τούτοις περὶ ὧν ἐστι τὸ ὑπόστατον, ἐν οἷς ἔδει καὶ τὸ ὑπόστατον καὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς, συνδέεται τις ἡ θητος ὑπομνήματος ὑπερ ἐν ὑπομνήματι.
1027b23-25 regarding the formation of unities by the action of διάνοια, this passage precludes falsehood from simple things, not truth tout court, and locates this falsehood in the pair truth/falsehood that applies to διάνοια (again reversing the usual order by placing falsehood first). Furthermore, Aristotle states directly in *Metaph.* Θ 10 that a different type of truth pertains to simple things as a different type of being: “as truth is not the same in these cases, so also the being is not the same.”

This different truth of simple things is “contact and assertion” (θυγείων καὶ φάναι, 1051b24) by thought in the sense of νοείν (1051b32, 1052a1, a3). Its opposite is ignorance as non-contact or lack of νοείν, not falsehood (1051b25, b32). Aristotle explains what he means by “assertion” (φάναι) by distinguishing φάσις from κατάφασις (1051b24-25). A φάσις is the smallest significant unit of speech contained in a statement. Aristotle at one place gives the example of “man.” To have truth with respect to simple things is to be in contact with them. This contact with a simple thing is like saying or speaking the most elementary units of significance among things. In the An. Aristotle says that “sensing (τὰ αἰσθάνεσθαι) . . . is like bare asserting or thinking (φάναι μόνον καὶ νοείν),” which suggests a comparison between this noetic contact and sensation.

The text at *Metaph.* E 4.1027b27-28 reads τὰ ἁπλὰ καὶ τὰ τὶ ἐστὶν, “simple things and essences” (1027b27-28). The καὶ is likely explicative. Thus simple things are τὰ τὶ ἐστὶν, translated “essences.” When *Metaph.* Θ 10 introduces simple things it refers to them first as τὰ ἁπλῆτα, “incomposites” (1051b17) and then moves to τὸ τὶ ἐστὶν, “what a thing is” (1051b26, b32). It also introduces τὰς μὴ συνθέσεις ὁμοίαι, “non-composite substances” (1051b27).

A simple or incomposite thing for Aristotle ends up either a τὶ ἐστὶν, an “essence” or literally a “what is,” or a non-composite ὁμοίαι. In Aristotle’s

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An. iii 6, 430a26-28. The translation has been emended to render τὸ ψευδός καὶ τὸ ἀληθές literally.

52 See also the treatment of truth and falsehood in *Int.* 1, 16a10-19, where the pair at several instances is rendered false and true (cf. 16a10-11, a13, a16, a18).

53 *Metaph.* Θ 10, 1051b22-23. For a succinct expression of the view that a non-propositional notion of truth is incoherent, see Ross 1924, ii:275.

54 *Int.* 4, 16b27; cf. 5, 17a17; 1, 16a10-2, 16a30.

55 An. iii 7, 431a8; translation emended. See also An. iii 3, 427a19-21. Aristotle develops his account of νοείν in terms of sensation at An. iii 4, 429a13-15 precisely insofar as both cognitive events occur through the action of their respective objects on passive faculties. For the infallibility of the sense perception of proper sensible objects, which parallels that ascribed to noetic contact with simple things, see An. ii 6, 418a16 and cf. iii 6, 430b29-30.

56 Ross 1924, ii:365.

57 Owens 1978, 180.

58 *Metaph.* Z 4, 1030a29-1030b3.

59 *Metaph.* Δ 8, 1017b10-26.

60 *Metaph.* Z 13, 1038b34-1039a2; H 1, 1042a29. Cf. the logical treatment of ὁμοίαι in *Cat.* 5, 2a14-19.

61 *Metaph.* Θ 10, 1051b28-30.

62 I follow here Owens’s argument that separate substance as primary ὁμοίαι is “a form that is in no way the form of a matter” (Owens 1978, 456). See, in particular, Owens 1978, 456 and 464.

63 *Metaph.* Λ 6, 1071b20-22; Λ 7, 1072a25-26.

64 Jaeger 1923, 204-205.

65 Owens 1978, 413.

66 *Metaph.* H 1, 1042a28-29 describes form as separate in notion (τὸ λόγος χωριστόν). An objective sense of separate in intelligible content is meant here; see Owens 1978, 381.

67 See, e.g., An. ii 1, 412a6-8.
nor corrupted. Separate substances as the primary instances of noncomposite substances in Aristotle's ontology may provide special clues to what Aristotle means by the truth of noetic contact with simple things, but the claim holds for forms generally as noncomposite substances in a qualified sense, and more generally for simple things in the sense of τὰ τῆς ἑστίας. They all can be denominated by a φάσις rather than a κατάφασις and cognizance of them all is said to be contact by νοεῖν.

The word Aristotle uses at Metaph. Ω 10.1051b24 and 25 to express noetic contact and lack of contact, διγύγανον, is a synonym for ἀπέσεθαι, to touch. There are instances where Aristotle uses the word not merely to express physical contact but action and passion in touching, one thing pressing itself on another, including a passage where Aristotle talks of nature touching like a modeller of clay with her own hands rather than like a carpenter who uses tools. Contact can imply the action of one thing touching another. Metaph. Λ 7 discusses the life of separate substance which is thinking and which humans also can enjoy "for but a short time" (1072b15). Aristotle there claims that the mind (ὁ νοῦς) thinks itself by means of taking on an intelligible object (μετάληψις τοῦ νοητοῦ, 1072b19-20; cf. Λ 9, 1074b36). He explains this by saying that the mind becomes its intelligible object by "coming into contact with and thinking its objects" (ἀνάγκη ἐν τῇ ἀνατιμή νᾶ τὰ ἐν οὐσία, 431b28). Aristotle uses the example of a stone or its form and it is remarkable how little he talks about propositions or even concepts. Acquaintance or cognizance of things

This account of thinking as contact with οὐσία which acts on the receptive mind amplifies aspects of the discussion of non-composite truth in Metaph. Ω 10, at least with respect to the contact of νοεῖν with non-composite οὐσία. Aristotle's account of νοεῖν in the Αν, however, offers his fullest discussion of the nature and sources of thinking. Both propositional and noetic truth are found in thought, either as διάνοια, the intellect active in combining or separating, or as νοεῖς, the intellect in contact through reception, not action, of what is other than it. Issues about the being and unity of what is thought, both in the intellect and in reality, have been raised. The Αν is the best place to consider these issues further.

II.

Aristotle considers knowing, both in sensation and in thought, to be a type of being. He famously writes that "the soul is in a way all existing things" and explains that "existing things are either sensible or thinkable, and knowledge is in a way what is knowable, and sensation in a way what is sensible." The intellect is in some sense what it thinks and what it thinks is a thing other than itself, thinking itself only reflexively. The things that the soul becomes in cognition are, necessarily he says, things that exist or their forms (ἀνάγκη ἐν τῇ ἀνατιμή νᾶ τὰ ἐν οὐσία, 431b28). Aristotle uses the example of a stone or its form and it is remarkable how little he talks about propositions or even concepts. Acquaintance or cognizance of things

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68 See, e.g., Αν. ι 1, 412a10; Metaph. Ω 8, 1050b2-3.
69 See, e.g., Metaph. Ζ 8, 1033b8; Ζ 10, 1035a25-31; Ζ 15, 1039b20-27; Η 1, 1041a23; Η 3, 1043b15.
70 Metaph. Η 3, 1043a29-31 notes that a name can refer either to a composite substance (τὴν συστάτην οὐσίαν) or to its actuality, that is, its form (τὴν ἑνεργείαν καὶ τῇ μορφῇ).
71 Generation of Animals ι 4, 740b22; Ι 22, 730b30; HA vi 14, 568b7; ΙV 7, 532a13; De Insomniciis 2, 459a30.
72 Αν. ιι 8, 432a1-3 compares the soul to a hand and says that as the hand is a tool of tools, the νοεῖν is a form of forms (ὁ νοοὶ εἰδος εἰδών). The νοεῖν is a form as a part of the soul (ιΙ 4, 429a10, a23), which is the form of the living body. It is "of forms" insofar as it receives them. Cf. PA ιπ 40, 687a20-21, b3-7.
seems to be the dominant model for thought. Against Plato's self-moving soul, he describes thinking as a resting of the soul with an object and all movement in thought through judgment and reasoning is for the sake of such rest and contemplation.

It is indeed remarkable how much of Aristotle's account of cognition, including thinking, is taken up with describing cognitive faculties as passive. Aristotle's relative neglect of the intellect's active operations of combination and division in the account of thinking is striking. The event of thinking is an instance of being acted upon (πάσχειν τι, III 4, 429a14) and receiving (δέκτικον, III 4, 429a15). Aristotle knows and writes explicitly about διάσωσθαι, mostly in An. III 6, but the passive account of thinking dominates. I take it, therefore, that Aristotle intends this passive account to be the foundational account for understanding all thinking, including diacritic thinking. How thinking things (whatever that means) is related to thinking propositions, given the passive character of Aristotle's basic account, is a key issue.

What the intellect as a passive faculty receives is the form. The stone is not in the soul, but its form. Intelligibility for Aristotle, as Thomas Prufer points out, is "that display of unity and definition and necessity for which there is no better word than eidos." Actual thinking, intelligibility actualized, is the receiving and having of the form of the thing. Form is the intrinsic principle of actuality in virtue of which a thing is, is one, and is "this" and of a kind and a subject of definition. Aristotle argues that the intellect, not at all mixed with the body, receives forms immaterially, and he says that it is a "place of forms" (τότε εἶδος, III 4, 429a27-29).

When form is received into matter, the reception is material and a material thing comes to be. A place, more than anything else, has no nature of its own necessitating some mode of reception except to allow things as they are to enter into it. A form received by the intellect as a place is not received into something so that a third thing results but simply is in that place, able to exercise the actuality it is on its own. Thus it is a mistake to picture the intellect as looking at or beholding the form it receives when it thinks. Receiving, having, holding the form in place is the thinking, the thinking of the thing, and because νοστή is not active through some operation of combining or dividing, there is no possibility for error, but only the failure to receive, which is ignorance.

This much of the An. fits and fills out to some degree the Metaph. § 10 account of the being of truth as noetic contact with simples. It does not directly address, however, two major issues. First, what kind of thinking is noetic contact? As reception of form without any combination or division on the part of the intellect, this thinking is non-propositional in character, an acquaintance or apprehension. The coherence of non-propositional thought has been challenged and its presence in Aristotle has been

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76 An. III 3, 427a19-21 states: "Thinking and understanding (τὸ νοεῖν καὶ φρονεῖν) are regarded as akin to a form of perceiving; for in the one as well as the other the soul discriminates and is cognizant of something which is (κρίνει τι ἢ φανερά ἡν καὶ γνωρίζει τῶν οὐντῶν)." The English translation of νοεῖν in these contexts is problematic, as the phrase "to think the stone" shows.

77 An. I 3, 407a32-34. Cf. An. I 3, 407a6-8 in the polemic against Plato's view that the soul is a magnitude, where Aristotle states that νομιματα which make up thinking follow one by one in succession, and Metaph. I 4, 1006b10 that "it is impossible to think of anything if we do not think of one thing." Cf. the personal observation of Richard Sorabji on the joys of the search for knowledge (Sorabji 1983, 148-149). Another theme that Aristotle does not develop in the An. is movement in thought. If thought is actualization by reception of form and a resting with and contemplation of an object, why does actual thinking cease and why does thought move on to other objects? This is a complex issue involving the intellect's relation to perceptual cognition and to the body, but with respect to the proper operation of the intellect itself, the issue bears on limitations in the intelligible object. Separate substances, who think themselves, do not move about in thought (Metaph. A 9, 1074b25-27). Only the vision of God yields to no other.

78 On the meaning of form in Aristotle in relation to cognition, see Owens 1980, 17-27.

79 Prufer 1993, 17.

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80 An. III 4, 429a15-18; 3.8.431b28-432a1. Metaph. Z 6, 1031b6-7 states: "For there is knowledge of each thing only when we know its essence" (ἐπειδὴ οὖσας τὸ ἔργα καὶ ἔργων ἐξουσίας ἄν να τὸ τι τοῦ ἐκεῖνος εἶναι γνώμενος), where "essence" refers to the τὸ τι τοῦ ἐκεῖνος or form.

81 See, e.g., Metaph. H 3, 1043b4-24; H 6, 1045a8-96.


83 An. III 4, 429a21-22 makes this point about the intellect. A place is neither form nor matter but rather like a surrounding vessel or container: Phys. IV 1, 209a19-22; IV 2, 209b21-32; IV 3, 210b27-31; IV 4, 212a1-2, a14-16.

84 Owens 1978, 134n108, discusses the immediate knowledge of being through its form or act.

85 Metaph. A 9, 1074b33-1075a5 argues that separate substance, form existing without matter, is a thinking of itself. It is both what thinks and what is thought. Human thinking based on reception of form without matter is a qualified instance of this primary instance of knowing. It represents the highest and most successful attempt on the part of the human person to actualize as much as possible, the divine life, in keeping with the principle enunciated in An. II 4, 415a25-27 that all acts of soul are attempts "as far as nature allows" to "partake in the eternal and divine."
denied. Second, what is the relation between noetic thinking and diaeontic thinking and how does Aristotle base propositional thought on simple thought? How does one get from thought of something to thought that something is the case? In what follows I consider the first issue in the context of the second.

Aristotle eventually passes from thing-centered passive thinking to propositional thinking and thereby from passive to active thinking by a consideration of the objects of thought themselves. At the beginning of An. III 4 Aristotle speaks of the objects of thought generally as τὰ ὁρντα or τὰ νοητα and also talks of forms. He expands on these references to things at An. III 4, 429b10-22, where he discusses things and the forms of those things, which may or may not differ. Sensible composites and their forms (429b10-17), mathematical and their forms (429b18-21), and separate forms (429b11-12 with the general claim at 429b21-22) are indicated, either explicitly or implicitly. These are what τὰ ὁρντα and τὰ νοητα are for him in the first instance: physical composites and their forms, mathematical composites and their forms, and non-composite things that are just forms, that is, separate or non-physical forms. This tripartite division of things corresponds to the tripartite division of the speculative sciences into physics, mathematics, and theology. This is a neat correlation, but it also displays the issue. Aristotle lists the objects of the respective sciences and says that “actual ἐπίστημα is identical with its object (τὰ πράγματα).” Science, however, proceeds by extending propositional knowledge through demonstrative reasoning.

It is in An. III 6 that Aristotle’s account finally reaches propositions, as well as other intelligible objects that are not τὰ ὁρντα as actually existing things, such as mathematical points and privations. Aristotle introduces these new intelligible objects under the rubric of what is actually and potentially indivisible and divisible. This is a momentous shift. Aristotle capitalizes on the principle that whatever is is one and on the distinction between the actual and the potential to provide a framework accommodating both thinking of things and thinking about them. Not everything which is one is a number. Aristotle points out in Metaph. I 6, 1057a8, for the indivisible (ἀδιαίρετον) is one, and can be thought of or sensed. The discussion of unity in Metaph. I presents two types of indivisibles relevant to cognition, the indivisible in number, namely, individual things, and the indivisible in form, which is indivisible for understanding and knowledge. Contact through νοης with things and their forms is contact with what is one and actually indivisible. An. III 6 opens mentioning such indivisibles, where falsehood is impossible. Propositions are another kind of indivisible, where both falsehood and truth are possible. The intellect produces these unities (“in each and every case that

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86 See note 101 below.
87 Rorty 1979, 146, writes: “Just as Aristotle has no clear way to relate grasping universals to making judgments, no way to relate the receptivity of forms in the mind to the construction of propositions, neither has Locke. This is the principal defect of any attempt to know ‘knowledge that’ to ‘knowledge of,’ to model knowing on seeing.”
88 For details of some of the argument sketched below see Prizel 1984, 140-150.
89 This is in keeping with the method enunciated at An. II 4, 415a16-22.
90 An. III 4, 429a14, a15-16, a18, a 24, a29-29, b3-4.
91 For defense of this view, especially the claim of an allusion to separate substance in this passage, see Prizel 1984, and in particular, 141-142. For the use of the dative and εἰς ἐν without τὸ ἥν to express form, see Owens 1978, 187-188.
92 Phys. II 2, 193b31-35; Metaph. E 1, 1025b18-1026a22; Θ 7, 1064a2-b6.
93 An. VII 1, 431a1-2; III 5, 430a19-20.
which unifies is thought” [τὸ δὲ ἐν πολλοῖς, τούτο ὁ νοῦς ἐκαστος], 430b5-6) in order to express unities existing among things (σύνθεσις τις ἰδή νοημάτων ὧσπερ ἐν υἱοῖς, 430a27-28). Aristotle also treats mathematical points and privations as unities indivisibly thought through the dialogetic activity of dividing and combining. An indivisible actually thought, such as a proposition, a point, or a privation like evil, is potentially divisible into the unities that were combined or divided by διάνωσις to think it, for example, the subject and predicate, the line, or the positive contrary like good. By considering things and thought with respect to things not as beings but as unities subject to combination and division, Aristotle has a way to move on a single scale between things thought simply by νοσος and more complex unities thought by διάνωσις. And it is the intellect by its dialogetic operations of combining and dividing given indivisibles to make new unities (430b5-6) which works along this single scale. The nature of dialogetic thinking as the formation of indivisibles by combining and dividing indivisibles, ultimately indivisibles in form, requires more consideration. But it is important first to look more closely at the character of νοσος as the thinking that is simply reception of form. Aristotle asserts again the existence of this type of thinking at the end of An. III 6, where he contrasts διάνωσις and νοσος explicitly with respect to truth and falsehood.

Assertion is the saying of something concerning something (τι κατα τινος), as to be denoted, and is in every case either true or false; this is not always the case with thought (νοος): the thinking of the τι ἐστι in the sense of τὸ τι ἔστι ἐναι true and it is not the assertion of something concerning something (ὑπὲρ τι κατα τινος); but just as while the seeing of the special object of sight is true, seeing whether the white object is a man or not is not always true, so too in the case of objects which are without matter. (An. III 6, 430b26-30; translation emended.)

The thought or νοος of the τὸ τι ἔστι is true always. The Aristotelian phrase τὸ τι ἔστι ἐναι denotes either the form or in logical contexts the complete specific definition of a thing. The reference to things without

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97 Cf. An. III 6, 430b20-23 with An. II 2, 427a9-12; Metaph. Α 7, 1072a30-31; Z 7, 1032b2-4; Θ 2, 1046b7-9; Top. II 2, 109b17-20.
98 Owens 1978, 180 n.82 documents the scholarly consensus on this point. He notes that the phrase τὸ τι ἔστι ἐναι "expresses the formal, intelligible perfection of a thing. It implies that the form is the fundamental Being of the thing, and that whatever else may be in the thing derives its Being from the form. The form is designated by the peculiarly Aristotelian expression as the element in the thing which is that thing's necessary and unchangeable Being, in contrast in the physical order to the matter and the composite (both of which are changeable), and in the logical order to the generic characteristics (which are not necessarily restricted to

manner confirms that the thinking of νοος is at issue here. It is thinking that is not composite and not the result of the intellect’s dialogetic activity. It is thinking that fits the description of truth with respect to non-composite ὁπότα in Metaph. Θ 10 as contact. It is also thinking that provides the fundamental unities for further truthful thought whose intelligibility διάνωσις works out and articulates by combination and division.

In what sense, however, is this thinking? It can be argued that the thinking of things is incoherent apart from thinking this or that about them and that Aristotle has in fact not saddled himself with the embarrassment of non-discursive or non-propositional thought. The texts seem to me conclusive that Aristotle held for non-propositional thought and non-

the species in question). A thing is its generic nature, its matter, and the composite. They are what it is. But what it necessarily and unchangeably and definitely is, is its form. The genera, the matter, or the composite may be the what-is of the thing. But only its form can be its what-IS-Being. Accordingly, the what-IS-Being is a species of the more generic what-is. The what-is may express the thing as matter, or as form, or as composite. Of these three, the what-IS-Being can denote the form only" (Owens 1978, 186-187). The phrase “the thinking of the τι ἐστιν in the sense of τὸ τι ἔστι ἐναι" at An. III 6, 430b28 corroborates Owens’s account. The truth without possibility of falsehood of the νοος of the τὸ τι ἔστι is tied not only to the passive character of this type of thinking as contact but to the necessity which τὸ τι ἔστι ἐναι as designation form indicates (Owens 1978, 186 n.86: “Exemption from the contingency of matter, therefore, seems to be all that is contained in the notion of the what-IS-Being.”).

99 What it means to think an ἔστις is complicated by the ambiguity of ἔστις as principle of being and as species. Metaph. Μ 10, 1087a15-25, where Aristotle uses the example of a grammarian knowing the letter a, distinguishes actual and potential knowledge. Potential knowledge deals with the indefinite, the universal and the potential, while actual knowledge deals with a definite object and a “this.” Hence the grammarian deals with a definite a which is an a (1087a20-21). Because of actual knowledge’s link to the definite and the “this” and the fact that form as αὐτες in Aristotle must be a “this” and not a “such,” the form received in the intellect makes for the definite actual knowledge as well as being the basis for the indefinite universal thinking of the species.

100 Owens 1978, 134 n.108, cites An. III 6, 430b28 and notes: “For Aristotle...there is potency in the Being directly known to men. This Being is known immediately in itself, though according to its form or act. ... There are elements in the known Being that the first cognition does not immediately reveal, but which can be attained by further penetration of that same Being.”

101 See, e.g., Sorabji 1983, 139-142; Lloyd 1969/70, 261-263, 265-268, 269-274; Ross 1924, ii: 275-276. Cf. Rorty 1979, 142: “We find it natural to think of ‘what S knows’ as the collection of propositions completing true statements by S which begin ‘I know that...’... He [Locke] thought, as had Aristotle, of ‘knowledge of’ as prior to knowledge that,’ and thus of knowledge as a relation between persons and objects rather than persons and propositions.”
propositional truth as contact with forms and the things whose actualities these forms are. If there is such non-propositional thought of things, it is not equivalent or reducible without remainder to propositions that hold of that thing, and so what such thought is in itself as content cannot be exhausted by or reduced to propositions that articulate its meaning. The demand to know what the intelligibility of such contact consists in is the demand to move to propositional thinking. The demand itself, however, proper to the dynamic of thinking, places matters in a propositional framework, so that propositions are the result of asking what noetic contact means. This does not imply that the propositions cited to articulate the meaning of such contact fully express the unity and definiteness conveyed in the original noetic awareness or apprehension. To put matters another way, if non-propositional or pre-predicative thought as contact with things by sheer reception of forms has a definite content as such and is not empty or blank beyond what can be thought in propositions—that is, if reception of form without matter is actual thinking for Aristotle, as the An. account of νοῦς asserts—the fact of such content should admit of indication but not articulation in a non-propositional way.

Aristotle sees form as the principle of what is intelligible in an existing thing and closely associates this with form’s oneness. He says that οὐσία in the sense of ῥό τι ὑπ’ εἶναι, that is, form, is a limit (πρότεις) as a limit of knowledge. It is a limit of knowledge because it is the limit of the thing itself (πράγματος). At Metaph. Δ 6, 1016b17-24 Aristotle asserts that for every class of object there is a specific measure from which knowledge of that class takes its start. This measure is a one and the one is always indivisible either in quantity or in εἶδος. He further states at Metaph. I 1, 1052b19-20 that with respect to intellectual knowledge, the notion of a measure, which originates in the category of quantity, is extended to the other categories. Aristotle uses this talk of measure to reverse Protagoras, who claims that man is the measure of all things. Human knowledge and perception do not measure things but are measured by them. But it is important to note that Aristotle uses the notion of the one analogously and that he is not considering form in its unity as the principle of knowledge as a unit in the quantitative sense or as a blank counter.

Aristotle makes just this point at Metaph. Α 7, 1072a30-34 while remarking on the passivity of thought with respect to its primary objects:

And thought (νοῦς) is moved by the object of thought (νοητοῦ); and in this, substance (οὐσία) is first, and in substance, that which is simple and exists actually. (The one and the simple [ῥό ὑπ’ καὶ ῥό ἀποθεῖται] are not the same; for 'one' means measure, but 'simple' means that the thing itself has a certain nature.)

In this passage Aristotle draws a contrast between the simplicity of substance as form and the one as a measure precisely in order to affirm that the form as simple or one has a certain nature and a definite and unique content. Metaph. Η 3, 1043b32-34 asserts that in whatever sense substances may be considered numbers, they are not numbers in the sense of units (μοιάδων, 1043b34). In the same chapter Aristotle continues:

And the number must have something in virtue of which it is one thing, while our opponents cannot say if it is one (for either it is not one but a sort of heap, or if it is, we ought to say what it is that makes one out of the many); and the definition is one, but similarly they cannot say what makes it one. And this is natural; for the same reason is applicable, and substance is one in the sense which we have explained, and not, as some say, by being a sort of unit or point; each is a complete reality and a definite nature (ἀλλ’ ἐνεργεία καὶ φύσις τις ἐκκατη, 1044a9) (Metaph. Η 3.1044a2-9).

Form is a unity as an actuality and a definite nature. Thus it is the cause of the unity of the thing and of the unity of the definition and is not reducible to their parts. Metaph. Η 6, 1045a36-7, speaking of forms considered apart from their sensible or intelligible matter, confirms and elaborates this view of form:

But of the things which have no matter, either for reason or for sense, each is by its nature essentially a kind of unity, as it is essentially a kind of being—a 'this,' a quality, or a quantity. And neither 'existent' nor 'one' is present in definitions, and an essence (ῥό τι ὑπ’ εἶναι) is by its very nature a kind of unity as it is a kind of being. This is why none of these has any reason outside itself for being one, nor for being a kind of being; for each by its nature a kind of being and a kind of unity, not as being in the genus 'being' or 'one' nor in the sense that being and unity can exist apart from particulars.

The definite and specific unity that is each definite thing, whose cause is form, is not reducible to the components or elements united to constitute that thing. The unity of the definition that expresses the nature of a thing, a unity which is propositional in character and whose parts are related as actuality and potentiality, is not the unity of the form which is its cause.

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102 Metaph. Δ 17, 1022a8-10; cf. Phys. IV 4, 211b13.
103 Metaph. I 1, 1053a35-b3.
104 Metaph. I 1, 1053a31-35.
105 On the tendency to consider form "empty" see Owens 1978, 458n23.
106 I follow Barnes's revised translation which reads with Bonitz ῥό ἀποθεῖται at 1044a3; cf. Ross 1924, ii: 233-234. See also Metaph. M 8, 1084b19-32.
107 A definition is divisible in itself (Metaph. Α 6, 1016a35), since it is composed of parts in terms of genus and difference. Its parts are the parts of the form (Metaph. Z 1035b31-1036a1; Α 25, 1023b22-25; Δ 14, 1023b2), which has
and has its being in itself. Form as an indivisible actuality and nature is the cause of this unity in things and in the definitions of things. It is the forms of things that account ultimately for how reality is divided up into identifiable definite things and how we take reality as divided up into those specific things. Their reception in *νοῆσις* is contact with these things in their irreducible uniqueness and unity as definite natures and not collections of attributes spelled out in propositions. It constitutes their registration with the intellect, a registration which is not a blank unit the same for all things. If this registration did not occur, the business of making judgments and forming propositions would never get off the ground.

In *Metaph.* Θ 10, after Aristotle repeats that it is not possible to be in error about "the things . . . which are essences and exist in actuality . . . but only to think them or not to think them," he goes on to talk in an adversative clause about an inquiry regarding them: "but inquiry about their 'what' takes the form of asking whether they are of such and such a nature or not." This inquiry into the nature of simple things seeks their definitions and is distinct from noetic contact itself. Although Aristotle takes definitions to state what a thing is rather than attribute one thing of another, Sorabji rightly sees them as propositional. A correct definition represents the finest work of δίάνοια, for it is a formula consisting of parts related to each other as form and matter, namely, the genus and the difference. Such a formula is the articulation achieved through combination and division of the definite unity and actuality of the form in question, which must be sought based on the registration of that irreducible and definite unity in *νοῆσις* achieved in the truth that is noetic contact. The infallible *νοῆσις* of τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι, described at *An.* III 6, 430b28-29, as not τί κατὰ τινος, is this registration, it is not the thinking of the definition itself. Διάνοια also forms ordinary propositions that assert or deny attributes of subjects. When these are true, they express combinations or divisions in the world revealed by perception and thought about the being and non-being of things ultimately registered through the reception of their forms.

parts in the sense that its being can be spelled out dianoetically by appropriate common characteristics. These parts are related to each other as form to matter (*Metaph.* H 6, 1045a33-35).

108 *Metaph.* Θ 10, 1051b30-33; the translation has been emended to show the *ἄλλα* at 1051b32.

109 Sorabji 1983, 141.

110 See note 109 above.

111 This interpretation of the relation between noetic and propositional thinking finds Aristotle committed to the position that noetic contact by the actual reception

of form—truth in this one sense of truth as opposed to ignorance—is achieved to some degree or other by every actually thinking human being. It does not refer to the more recherché achievement of correctly thinking a definition, which is the result of considerable mental activity and not on the model of seeing white as opposed to seeing that the man is white.

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