ARISTOTLE'S

METAPHYSICS

A Philological Commentary

by Wolfgang Class

Volume IV

Reception and Criticism

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# Preface

The title of the present fourth volume opens up a boundless field: Which author does not use Aristotelian conceptions, and which philosopher has not spoken critically (agreeing or disagreeing) of Aristotle?[[1]](#footnote-1) We therefore place the following inquiry under a guiding question: the relationship between ontology and theology. Since Natorp this was the main difficulty of the philological interpretation, and according to Heidegger (*Wegmarken*, p. 379) it is its "onto-theological nature" ("onto-theologische Wesen") which marks metaphysics throughout.

What is nowadays offered under the title "metaphysics," is in its lack of structure no longer consistent with Heidegger's characterization. It is an aggregate of themes from both *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis*.

Cf. Kim/Sosa, *A Companion to Metaphysics*, p. 312b:

"A priori divisions such as that of Husserl [into formal ontology and regional ontologies, see p. 312a] are found ill-justified or question-begging, so metaphysics is generally practised today as, on the one hand, general ontology or theory of objects and, on the other hand, an assortment of more or less traditional metaphysical disputes, on such topics as free will, God, universals, space and time and persons."

Loux, pp. 10-11:

"The topics that were central in the various branches of what the rationalists called special metaphysics are now discussed in subdisciplines of philosophy that are not essentially or exclusively concerned with metaphysical topics. The focus of natural theology, for example, was the existence and nature of God; that set of issues is now typically addressed in what we call the philosophy of religion, a subdiscipline of philosophy that addresses a much broader range of issues than old-style natural theology. It deals with epistemological questions about the rationality of religious belief in general as well as the rationality of particular religious beliefs, questions about the relationship between religion and science, and questions about the relationship between religion and morality. Philosophers of religion even discuss issues that were part of what the rationalists called rational psychology — questions about personal survival and immortality. Other issues discussed in rational psychology now fall under what we call the philosophy of mind; but while philosophers of mind worry about metaphysical questions about the existence and nature of mind, they worry about much else besides. They raise epistemological questions about our knowledge of our own mental states and those of others; and they spend much time attempting to get clear on the nature of explanation in psychology and the cognitive sciences. Sometimes, we find philosophers of mind raising questions about freedom of the will, but this problem is as likely as not to be debated in a still different part of philosophy called the theory of action. Contemporary philosophers typically use the term 'metaphysics' to refer to a branch of philosophy different from each of these branches; and when they do, what they are talking about is something that is not far removed from what the rationalists called general metaphysics and what Aristotle spoke of as the science that studies being qua being."

The range of topics of todays Neo-Aristotelian metaphysics is illustrated by the volumes *Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics* (2012) and *Neo-Aristotelian Perspectives in Metaphysics* (2016).

The last phase of the rehabilitation of metaphysical questions, beginning around 1980, is characterized by Johannes Hübner (p. 490a) as follows:

"The early analytic philosophy is already history, one feels no special need to justify pursuing metaphysical questions and thereby possibly picking up Aristotelian thoughts, which mostly happens in detail, without the whole of Aristotelian metaphysics taking effect."

I admit that what I offer is in parts hardly distinguishable from a history of post-Aristotelian metaphysics. But if you want to understand reception and criticism, you should also know the recipients and the critics to some extent; so I thought that I had to do too much rather than too little in this direction.

As far as modern times are concerned, the predominance of German-speaking authors (owed to the author's educational background) will stand out; out of this, you can get out the positive side that some previously unknown things may become more easily accessible to the English-speaking world.

As in the previous volumes, I kept to the rule of quoting literally whatever I found well formulated. My contribution should not appear larger than it is.

In writing Arabic names, I followed the convention of Latin scholastics; so not "Ibn Sina," but "Avicenna," not "Al Farabi," but "Alfarabi".

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--- The Academic Questions, Treatise De Finibus, and Tusculan Disputations of M. T. Cicero. London 1875.

# Survey

In the first two chapters the reception is considered from the linguistic and literary side. The following three chapters outline the history of ideas, which leads to Neoplatonism via the Stoics and the Epicureans. Metaphysics no longer goes beyond this stock of ideas all the way to Suarez; it thus remains in substance Neoplatonic. The 6th chapter follows the structural change of metaphysics, since it has been carried out on an Aristotelian text basis, as an increasingly independent interpretation and transformation of the Aristotelian *Metaphysica*. Until then we have to deal with what Kant calls "dogmatic" metaphysics, which in Kant's view finds its culmination in Christian Wolff, the "greatest of all dogmatic philosophers".

Chapter 7 is devoted to Kant. Our intention is to make clear that Kant, like the Stoics (see below, 3.4.), placed ontology on an anthropological basis (i. e. on an understanding of man as *animal rationale*; the entire ancient anthropology was "essentialist" in this sense, not unlike Hume with his *Treatise of Human Nature[[2]](#footnote-2)*). This led him to a completely new system idea (7. 3.).

The post-Hegelian epoch (chapter 8) brings a similar break as the materialism of Epicurus. In opposition to Hegel's teleological *Weltanschauung*, but in accordance with the new materialist *Zeitgeist*, a concept of "reality" is dogmatically established, which agrees with Epicurus' idea of a world without meaning and purpose. Of the authors treated, only Herbart and Lotze hold on to a "metaphysics". It is, as for Aristotle, a theory of "being," but now in the sense of the value-free ("indifferent") "real". With the successors, metaphysics is still effective, insofar as they propagate a philosophy ("epistemology," "phenomenology") independent of the empirical sciences.

The 9th chapter is a supplement to the 3rd and 8th chapters. As by the ancient and modern materialists the possibility of a *metaphysica specialis* (doctrine of incorporeal "spirits"), by the criticism of the fundamental concepts "being" and "beingness" also the possibility of a *metaphysica generalis* (ontology) is denied, in the sense that the fundamental concepts of ontology are declared unusable and cannot, as with Kant, Fichte and Hegel, so to speak, continue sailing under other flags.

# 1. The translation of metaphysical terminology

The Latinization of philosophical terminology begins with Lucretius and Cicero. In their lifetime the educated Romans still understood Greek. This gradually changed in late antiquity (see Marrou, pp. 351-355); Augustine was already dependent on translations (he got to know Plotinus in translations by Marius Victorinus). Boethius became the most important translator of Greek ideas to the Middle Ages.

Our selection does not claim to be complete; they are the (for me) most interesting terms from the Aristotelian-Neoplatonic tradition. Important applications are mentioned additionally. Where it concerns a philosophical re-marking with a clearly identifiable place of origin, this is noted.

## 1.1. From Greek into Latin

**agathón:** bonum.

**aisthetós:** sensibilis. E.g. kosmos aisthetós = mundus sensibilis (since Philo of Alexandria).

**aitía, aítion:** causa.

Alexander of Aphrodisias[[3]](#footnote-3) establishes the adjectival designations of the four causes, which are epitheta to αἰτία (or αἴτιον): εἰδητική (also εἰδικόν; formal cause), τελική (final cause), ὑλική (material cause) and ποιητική (efficient cause).

**akínetos:** immobilis.

**alethés:** verum.

**anabainein:** ascendere.

Frequent in Plotinus and Augustine respectively, first in Plato, *Res publica* 517a3.

**anábasis:** ascensus.

In Plato (*Res publica* 517b4) and Plotinus (6.7.25). Instead also ánhodos (Plotinus 6.4.16) and epánhodos (Plato, *Res publica* 532b8).

"Ascent" means a transition from less being to more being, which does not run continuously like that from cold to warm, but discontinuously in steps. In Greek this is only occasionally clarified, as for example in Plato's *Symposium* (211c3 ἐπαναβαθμοῖς "step by step"). In Latin, however, "gradibus" (Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 12.2) or "gradatim" (Augustine, *Confessiones* 9.10) are often added. The technical term "gradus" ("degree") developed from this.

**anagogé:** reductio.

**analogía:** proportio.

**anaphorá** (*Categoriae* 5b20): relatio.

**antikeímenon:** oppositum, objectum (*De anima*, 402b15; 415a20).

**aphaíresis:** abstractio.

**áphthartos:** incorruptibilis.

**arché:** principium.

**átomon:** individuum.

**authypóstaton:** stans per se ipsum.

In the *Liber de causis*, propositiones 24-28 "stans per se ipsam".

On the word authypóstaton, which is found in the *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus[[4]](#footnote-4), there are seemingly modeled the terms "self-subsistent" and "self-constituted," cf. Micraelius, column 588:

ἰδιοσύστατον est, quod habet propriam subsistentiam, et dicitur etiam αὐθυπόστατον.

("self-constituted is, what has subsistence of its own; it is also called self-subsistent.")

**choristós:** separabilis.

**dýnamis:** potentia.

**eidos:** forma, species.

Cf. idéa.

**empeiría:** experientia.

**enantíos:** contrarius.

**enérgeia:** actus.

**epistéme:** scientia.

**epítasis:** intensio.

The opposite is ánhesis = remissio. An explanation is given by Micraelius, column 633:

"Intensio et remissio graduum sunt illarum rerum, quae recipere possunt magis et minus secundum diversam subjecti dispositionem. Et propterea recte dicitur, quod solae qualitates intendantur et remittantur i. e. alios atqve alios gradus qualitatis sortiantur. Inde aliquid dicitur calidum in primo gradu, vel in secundo, tertio, et quarto."

("Tightening and easing of degree takes place in those things that can accept the more and less according to the different disposition of the subject. And that is why it is rightly said that the qualities alone attract and diminish, that is about to change. Therefore, something warm is mentioned in the first or second, third and fourth degrees.")

The sensible quality "warm" serves as an example in the "fourth way" of proving the existence of God, the proof "from the steps" (cf. below, p. 117).

**genos:** genus.

**gnosis:** cognitio.

**hen:** unum.

**hyle:** materia.

**hýparxis:** existentia.

Cf. prohýparxis

**hyphístasthai:** subsistere.

E. g. ὑφιστάμενον καθ' αὑτό (Simplicius) = per se subsistens.

hypokeímenon: subjectum, substratum.

Bonitz and Liddell/Scott unanimously distinguish three applications of ὑποκείμενον.

Bonitz, *Index Aristotelicus* 798a-b:

"a. τὸ ὑποκείμενον idem quod ἡ ὕλη." (798a33-34)

"b. τὸ ὑποκείμενον idem quod ἡ οὐσία." (798b4-5)

"c. τὸ ὑποκείμενον idem quod subjectum logicum." (798b32-33)

Liddell/Scott *sub voce* ὑπόκειμαι, II. 8.:

"τὸ ὑποκείμενον has three main applications:

(1) to the matter which underlies the form, opposed to εἶδος, ἐντελέχεια, Aristoteles *Metaphysica* 983a30;

(2) to the substance (matter + form) which underlies the accidents, opposed to πάθη, συμβεβηκότα, Idem *Categoriae*1a10, 27, *Metaphysica* 1037b16, 983b16;

(3) to the logical subject to which attributes are ascribed, opposed to τὸ κατηγορούμενον, Idem *Categoriae* 1b10, 21, *Physica* 189a31;

applications (1) and (2) are distinguished in Idem *Metaphysica* 1038b5, 1029a1-5, 1042a26-31."

3 is the common origin of 1 and 2 (prepared in Plato, *Protagoras* 349b), see 995b35 (for 1), 1028b36-1029a2 (for 2). To 2 there may be added that also the mere form can be "subject," see our volume 2, pp. 104-105. In this sense, it is spoken, for example, of "affections of the soul" (πάθη τῆς ψυχῆς, *De anima* 402a9; 403a3; 403b17; *Rhetorica* 1354a17).

The distinction subjectum - substratum corresponds to the distinction between καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεσθαι ("be said of a subject") and ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ εἶναι ("be in a substrate") in *Categoriae* 1a20-b9.

**hypóstasis:** substantia, subsistentia.

Applied as emphatic expression for "being" (with the accent on permanence), ὑπόστασις gets close to οὐσία, through to equation.

The definitions and explanations fundamental for the scholastic tradition are:

Porphyry, *Sententiae ad intelligibilia ducentes*, § 19, 6-7:

καὶ τὰ μὲν καθ' ἑαυτὰ ὑφεστηκότα, τὰ δὲ ἄλλων εἰς τὸ εἶναι δεόμενα·

("some things are self-subsistent, some are in need of others in order to exist")

Simplicius, *In Categorias*, 42, 17-18:

καὶ γὰρ οὐσία μέν ἐστιν τὸ καθ' αὑτὸ μόνον ὑπάρχον,

("substance is that which exists by itself alone")

204, 29-31:

τὰ πρός τι […] μὴ δύνασθαι καθ' αὑτὸ ὑποστῆναι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἄλλῳ τὸ εἶναι ἔχειν.

("[…] relatives […] are unable to exist per se, and have their being in something else")

From the last passage it becomes clear what is the opposite term to "subsist in virtue of itself" (καθ' αὑτὸ ὑφίστασθαι, vgl. Alexander, *In Metaphysica*, 97, 23): to be ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ("in a substrate"). It is, as we see (cf. our volume 3, p. 144), the characteristic of substance that Aristotle calls "separable" (χωριστόν).

Literally agreeing with Simplicius is Thomas Aquinas (*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* 1. distinctio 23 quaestio 1 articulus 1 corpus):

"patet enim quod esse commune quoddam est, et non determinat aliquem modum essendi; subsistere autem dicit determinatum modum essendi, prout scilicet aliquid est ens per se, non in alio, sicut accidens; substare autem idem est quod sub alio poni."

("For it is clear that «being» is something in common and does not determine any kind of being; «subsisting,» on the other hand, denotes a certain kind of being, *scilicet* insofar something is a being by itself, not a being in something else like the accidens; but «standing under» [substare] is the same as being placed under something else.")

"substantia" was early misunderstood as "support" (Locke), as in Boethius, *Contra Eutychen* 3:

"quod vero illi [Graeci] ὑπόστασιν vel ὑφίστασθαι [supple: dicunt], id nos substantiam vel substare interpretamur. […] Substat autem id quod aliis accidentibus subiectum quoddam, ut esse valeant, subministrat; sub illis enim stat, dum subiectum est accidentibus."

("We interpret what they mean by ὑπόστασιν or ὑφίστασθαι as «standing under» or «to stand under». […] For «standing under» is what provides for other things, the accidents, a «basis» that they can be; it «stands» namely «under» them, insofar it is «substrated» to the accidents.")

Famous is Locke's (2. 23. 2) parodistic comparison with the Indian, "who, saying that the World was supported by a great Elephant, was asked, what the Elephant rested on; to which his answer was a great Tortoise: But being again pressed to know what gave support to the broad-back'd Tortoise, replied, something, he knew not what."

ὑφίστασθαι *can* mean "stand under as a support," see Liddell/Scott *sub voce* ὑφίστασθαι, B 1. But the meaning "subsist," which the passivum ὑφίστασθαι has in philosophical terminology (l. c. , B iv. 2, cf. A i. 4), is rather derived from the meaning "stand one's ground" (l. c. , B iv. 1; cf. A i. 3). The Stoics distinguished "subsistence" from both "being" (SVF 2.115, 32-33, where Galen calls this a "micrology") and "existence" (SVF 2.165, 32-36). Here it is about time with its three stages present, past and future. Since "being" only belongs to the bodies, time is non-being; on the other hand it is not nothing. "Subsistence" only belongs to the past and the future; the present exists as something vanishing, as a nothing without extension (SVF 2.165, 39). This indirectly shows that "subsistence" for the Stoics means: to be something, to be "real" in the sense of Avicenna's ontology.

These subtle distinctions are of course lost when "substantia" is used as a translation for the "ousia" of the Aristotelian *Categoriae*. Since then, the meaning of "hypokeímenon" (subjectum, substratum) affects the meaning of "substantia".

Important for the later (scholastic) use are chapters 43 and 44 of the *Dialectica* of John of Damascus:

Τὸ τῆς ὑποστάσεως ὄνομα δύο σημαίνει· ποτὲ μὲν τὴν ἁπλῶς ὕπαρξιν, καθὸ σημαινόμενον ταὐτόν ἐστιν οὐσία καὶ ὑπόστασις […]· ποτὲ δὲ τὴν καθ' αὑτὸ καὶ ἰδιοσύστατον ὕπαρξιν, καθ' ὃ σημαινόμενον τὸ ἄτομον δηλοῖ […]. (caput 43)

("The name hypóstasis means two things: sometimes the very existence, where ousía and hypóstasis are the same […]; sometimes the subsisting and self-constituted existence, where hypóstasis means the individual […]."

According to chapter 44, the individual (átomon) is "the per se subsisting self-constitutedly of ousía and symbebekóta (accidents)" (τὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸ ἰδιοσυστάτως ἐξ οὐσίας καὶ συμβεβηκότων ὑφιστάμενον).

The influence of these definitions can be traced till the *Lexicon philosophicum* of Johannes Micraelius (cf. above, p. 26)

**idéa:** forma, species.

**kategoroúmenon:** praedicatum.

**kath' hautó:** per se.

**kathékaston:** particulare

**kathólou:** universale.

**kínesis:** motio.

**logos:** ratio.

The fundamental meaning of logos is "account". "To give account" (logon didónai = rationem reddere) of themselves is what Socrates calls upon his interlocutors to do. From this, the two meanings of "reason" (in German differentiated as "Grund" and "Vernunft") develop: "reason" as account why something is the case, and "reason" as faculty of giving account.

**metabaínein** (Plotinus): transcendere.

The idea of transcendence goes back to Plato, who uses "hyperbainein" (*Res publica* 586a4).

From Plotinus' "metabainein" it suggests itself to interpret the metá- in "metaphysics" as "going beyond nature".

From Kant's distinction "immanent - transcendent" (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 295-296 = B 352), in the 19th century the pair of concepts transcendence - immanence became common. Especially in philological literature this became the standing term for being "separated" or "in (things)" ("transcendence of the idea" in Plato, "immanence of the form" in Aristotle).

That especially in historical studies philosophical concepts are used completely unhistorically, i. e. unreflected, is not an isolated case.

**nous:** intellectus, intelligentia, mens.

νοῦς is adequately rendered by "intellect," "understanding" (= German "Verstand"). What is "understood" can be the meaning of a word, of a sentence, of a situation, of an event. Cf. below, p. 187.

It is another (see above, p. 30) example of historical unreflection among historians when Ross and others use "reason" (= German "Vernunft") to translate νοῦς. It seems to be based on the unclear notion that in German idealism "reason" (as the "faculty of Ideas") somehow stands above "understanding" (the faculty of categories) on the one hand, and in the metaphysical (Neoplatonic) tradition the *nous* stands somehow above the *logos*; from the (supposed) equality of proportion there was concluded to the equality of the members.

The bodiless "nóes" of Proclus (*Elementatio theologica*, propositiones 166-183) live on in the Middle Ages up to modern school metaphysics as "intelligentiae"; they were equated with the angels, based on the Jesus-word about the resurrected: "they are like angels in heaven" (Matthew 22. 30; Marcus 12. 25; Lucas 20. 36), from which it was concluded that they no longer have any physical needs.

**noetós:** intelligibilis.

E. g. kosmos noetós = mundus intelligibilis.

**on:** ens.

The etymologically correct present participle of "sum" would be "sens," preserved in composita like ab-sens, prae-sens.

**ousía:** essentia, entitas, substantia, existentia.

Thomas Aquinas (in *De ente et essentia*) makes a distinction between "essentia" and "substantia" (which was commonly adopted): "essentia" is synonymous with the Aristotelian τί ἦν εἶναι (Latin "quod quid erat esse," translated by Ross as "essence"; cf. volume 3, p. 186), for which Avicenna introduced the term "whatness" (Latin "quidditas"). Therefore in Caput I, in agreement with Aristotle, he says:

"Sed quia ens absolute et per prius dicitur de substantiis, et per posterius et quasi secundum quid de accidentibus, inde est quod essentia proprie et vere est in substantiis, sed in accidentibus est quodammodo, et secundum quid."

("But because being without restriction and in the first line of substances, in the second line and at the same time in a certain respect of accidentals, it comes that essence is also in the real sense and in truth in substances, but in accidentals is in a certain way and in a certain respect.")

Cf. the explanation to 1028b34 τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι in *Sententia Metaphysicae*, liber 7 lectio 2 numerus 1:

"id est quidditas, vel essentia, sive natura rei.)

("that is whatness, beingness, or nature of a thing.").

The most faithful is the replica "entitas" ("beingness"), of "ens" like οὐσία from ὄν. According to Owens (p. 150), it "seems to fulfill all the requirements for a correct translation of οὐσία". It can be found at Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, who uses "realitas" ("thingness") as an equivalent.

In the ordinary language of the Greeks, the expressions τὰ ὄντα and ἡ οὐσία meant the totality of useful things present in a household. See for example in Plato οὐσίας δι' ἀμελείας ἀπολλυμένης (*Phaedrus* 252a); οὐσίᾳ καὶ γένει οὐδενὸς ὕστερος ὢν τῶν ἐκεῖ (*Timaeus* 20a); οὐσίαν μάλα πολλὴν κατέλιπεν (*Theaetetus* 144c).

In philosophical use, the concept of a household is transferred to the cosmos (cf. the term διοίκησις in the Stoics, below, p. 133): the cosmos is like a house in which things are. That is why that use of οὐσία is to be taken as the original one in which the totality of things is meant, as in *Metaphysica* Γ, 1005b6 (περὶ οὐσίας τῆς πάσης).

The fundamental idea in question entails that everything that exists must be somewhere (cf. Aristotle, *Physica*, 208a29-31: "all suppose that things which exist are somewhere; the non-existent is nowhere - where is the goat-stag or the sphinx?"), the Ideas too. If they are not to be found in the visible world, they must be somewhere else, e. g. in a "heavenly place" (Plato, *Phaedrus* 247c) or in the soul (the soul as "place of Ideas" in *De anima*, 429a27-28).

In modern times, this spatially determined conception of being is opposed by a more temporally determined conception, according to which the world is the totality of events (cf. below, p. 177 the view of causality as a regulated sequence of events).

Aristotle finds the formula hypokeímenon in *Metaphysica* Z 3 for the things in the world that the pre-Socratics were concerned about. "entity" (beingness, being) in the sense of "substantia" is *abstractum pro concreto*. "entity" in the sense of "essentia" means a new application; here "being" is abstractum, generic term for "humanity," "horseness" and the like. Here Socrates' "flight into the lógoi" (Plato, *Phaedo* 99e) is reflected terminologically.

In a third meaning, ousía describes as verbal noun the act of being, opposed to génesis, coming-to-be. From this meaning, Plotinus criticizes Aristotle's notion of substance (6.1.1-3; 6.3.2).

**pathos:** passio, affectio.

To take not only in the narrow psychological sense of "affect," but encompasses everything that happens to a being, e. g. the predicates of the being that are not implied in its essence, the "passiones" or "affectiones entis," see below, pp. 139 and 178. In this broad meaning "passio" is equivalent to "accidens".

**physis:** natura.

**pneuma:** spiritus.

The career of the expression "spirit" in metaphysics only begins with the Stoics who use it to describe the substance of the immanent deity. Thus the deity is understood as a breath of life that inspires the cosmic organism:

«Haec igitur ita fieri omnibus inter se concinentibus mundi partibus profecto non possent nisi ea uno divino et continuato spiritu continerentur» (Cicero, *De natura deorum* 2.7.19).

("These processes and this musical harmony of all the parts of the world assuredly could not go on were they not maintained in unison by a single divine and all-pervading spirit.")

According to its original meaning "breath," *pneuma* is still thought of as physical.

This changes when the Christian theologians turn away from Stoicism and turn to Neoplatonism. On the one hand God could no longer be thought of as corporeal, on the other hand the high position of the spirit was secured by John 4:24 ("quoniam deus spiritus est"). The spirit understanding of Augustine, who used the expression 'spiritus' to describe an immaterial reality, namely God or the human soul, became fundamental for the following period. (*De Trinitate* 14.16.22; 15.5.7). From here it leads to the *pneumatologia* of modern school philosophy, which is a science of the incorporeal: God and the created spirits, namely the angels and the *anima separata*, the souls of the resurrected, according to the Jesus-word: "they are like angels in heaven" (Matthaeus 22.30; Marcus 12.25; Lucas 20.36).

**poiótes:** qualitas.

**posótes:** quantitas.

**prohýparxis:** praeexistentia.

**prólepsis:** anticipatio.

**prónoia:** providentia.

**soma:** corpus.

**sophía:** sapientia.

**symbebekós:** accidens.

**synécheia:** continuitas.

**synkechyménos:** confusus.

**techne:** ars.

**téleios:** perfectus.

**theoría:** contemplatio, speculatio.

Derived from this are theoretikós = contemplativus, speculativus; e. g. vita contemplativa, scientia speculativa.

"Contemplari," which originally meant the observation of the sky by the Augurs, is used by Cicero and Seneca to translate the Greek θεωρεῖν (Cicero: *De natura deorum* 1.19.50; Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 95.10.). Augustine uses "contemplatio" for the vision of God in eternal life (*De immortalitate animae* 6.10).

Boethius chooses as translation for θεωρεῖν "speculari" (originally "espy") and for θεωρία "speculatio".

**zóon:** animal.

E. g. zóon logikón = animal rationale.

## 1.2. From Latin into German

While the Latin terminology, only slightly modified, lives on in French and English, in Germany, especially since the eighteenth century, an extensive Germanization was pursued, against which Schopenhauer (WWV II, pp. 121-123) protested in vain:

"That Latin has ceased to be the language of all scientific investigation has the disadvantage that there is no longer an immediately common scientific literature for the whole of Europe, but only national literatures. In this way every scholar is primarily limited to a much smaller public, and moreover to a public steeped in national narrow views and prejudices. Then he must now learn the four principal European languages together with the two ancient languages. It will be a great relief for him that the *termini technici* of all sciences (with the exception of mineralogy) are Latin or Greek, as an inheritance from our predecessors; and so all nations wisely retain these. Only the Germans have hit upon the unfortunate idea of wanting to Germanize the *termini technici* of all the sciences."

**actio:** Tat, Tun, Wirkung.

**actualis:** wirklich.

**actualitas:** Wirklichkeit.

**aeternitas:** Ewigkeit.

**anima:** Seele

**animal:** Tier.

E. g. animal rationale = vernünftiges Tier.

The translation "animal" of course does not fit God, the *animal rationale immortale*. In German there is no equivalent for "animal". "Lebewesen" also includes plants, which are differentiated in Greek as phytá from the zoa. "Tier" is too narrow, "Lebewesen" too wide.

**attributum:** Eigenschaft.

**beatitudo:** Seligkeit.

**bonum:** Gut.

**causa:** Ursache.

**cogitatio:** Gedanke.

**cognitio:** Erkenntnis.

**conceptus:** Begriff.

**confusus:** verworren.

**conscius:** bewusst.

**contemplativus:** beschaulich.

E. g. vita contemplativa = das beschauliche Leben.

**contingens:** zufällig.

**continuitas:** Stetigkeit.

**contradictio:** Widerspruch.

**creatio:** Schöpfung.

**demonstratio:** Beweis.

**dependens:** abhängig.

**differentia:** Unterschied.

**distinctus:** deutlich.

**effectus:** Wirkung.

**efficiens**: wirkend.

**ens:** Wesen, Ding, Seiendes.

E. g. ens summum = "das höchste Wesen," ens per se = "Ding an sich" (cf. my Kant-commentary, p. 93).

**entitas:** Wesenheit, Seiendheit.

**essentia:** Wesenheit, Seiendheit.

**ethica:** Sittenlehre.

**existentia:** Wirklichkeit, Dasein.

**experientia:** Erfahrung.

**facultas:** Vermögen.

**finitus:** endlich.

**genus:** Geschlecht, Gattung.

**harmonia:** Übereinstimmung.

**idea:** Vorstellung.

**imaginatio:** Einbildung.

**vis imaginativa:** Einbildungskraft.

**independens:** unabhängig.

**individuus:** einzeln.

**infinitus:** unendlich.

**influxus:** Einfluss.

**intellectus:** Verstand.

**intuitio:** Anschauung.

**libertas:** Freiheit.

**limitatio:** Einschränkung.

**logica:** Vernunftlehre.

**malum:** Übel.

**materia:** Stoff.

**modificatio:** Veränderung.

**motio:** Bewegung.

**motivum:** Bewegungsgrund.

**mundus:** Welt.

**mundus intelligibilis:** Verstandeswelt.

**mundus sensibilis:** Sinnenwelt.

**necessitas:** Notwendigkeit.

**oppositio:** Entgegensetzung.

**particulare:** das Besondere.

**per se:** an sich, für sich.

E. g. ens per se = "Ding an sich," per se subsistere = "für sich bestehen".

**perfectus:** vollkommen.

**philosophia:** Weltweisheit.

**physica:** Naturlehre.

**potentia:** Vermögen.

**primus, primarius:** Grund-.

E. g. prima (or primaria) philosophia = Grundwissenschaft;

Ur-; *e.g.* primum principium = Urgrund.

**principium:** Grund, Satz.

E. g. principium contradictionis = "Grund des Widerspruches" oder "Satz des Widerspruches".

**propositio:** Satz.

**providentia:** Vorsehung.

**qualitas:** Beschaffenheit.

**quantitas:** Größe.

**ratio:** Vernunft, Grund.

**realitas:** Sachheit.

**relatio:** Beziehung, Verhältnis.

**repraesentatio:** Vorstellung.

**sapientia:** Weisheit.

**scientia:** Wissenschaft.

**sensatio:** Empfindung.

**sensus:** Sinn.

**spatium:** Raum.

**species:** Art.

**spiritus:** Geist.

**stans per se ipsum:** selbstständig.

**status:** Zustand.

**subsistere:** bestehen.

E. g. ens per se subsistens = für sich bestehendes Ding.

**substantia:** Eigenstand, Selbststand (cf. "stans per se ipsum"), Selbwesen.

The translation "Eigenstand" seems to be based on the interpretation of the substance as ἰδιοσύστατον, the translation "Selbststand" on the interpretation as αὐθυπόστατον. Cf. under authypóstaton. The expressions "Eigenstand" and "Selbststand," which are foreign to the non-philosophical German language, are obviously modeled after the Greek equivalents mentioned, a fact which, however, has not yet struck the lexicographers known to me.

**tempus:** Zeit.

**theologia:** Gottesgelehrtheit.

**transcendere:** hinausgehen über …

**unio:** Vereinigung.

**unitas:** Einheit.

**universale:** das Allgemeine.

**universum:** das All.

**veritas:** Wahrheit.

**verum:** wahr.

**virtus:** Tugend.

**vis:** Kraft.

**voluntas:** Wille.

We now come to the literary side of the reception.

# 2. Aristotelian renaissances

We first ask about the general conditions under which "renaissances" emerged, of which Roman classicism was the first (2.1.). Aristotle benefited from the Plato-renaissance among the Neoplatonists who included his writings in their curriculum (2.2.). Aristotelianism in the Islamic sphere was of a completely different kind: it was not the result of a long development (like that from Plato to Plotinus), but of the first acquaintance with Greek literature (2.3.) made by peoples who only recently entered into history. Aristotelianism spread from the Arabs to the Christian occident; the felt inadequacy of the Arabs' understanding of Aristotle made people like Thomas Aquinas and William of Moerbeke curious about the Greek originals (2.4.). Only very few had knowledge of Greek at that time. This changed due to the flight of Greek scholars from Byzantium to Italy (2.5).

## 2.1. The birth of classicism in the imperial era

"Aristotelianism owes its renaissance in the second century to the taste that carried the spirits towards the ancient doctrines." (Bréhier 399) Typical for this time is Numenius: he wants to return entirely to Plato and Pythagoras, who, for their part, are presenting the ancient wisdom of the Brahmins, Magi, Egyptians, and Jews. In this, philosophy reflects the spirit of the age: "The civilization of the imperial age was determined by a classicist attitude." (Dihle, p. 31) In literature, the so-called "Atticism" dominated, a repristination of the Attic language (mainly according to the practice of Xenophon); it took place between the late first century BC and the late second century AD (Dihle 67). This is exactly the period where the revivals in philosophy took place: Neopythagoreism, Neoplatonism, and a revival of Aristotelianism.

Classicism in philosophy started with collecting, editing and commenting the writings of the school founders. "The idea behind this was that all the important questions had already been answered in the writings of the school founders." (Dihle 73) This goes along with the education system of the time, which was three-tiered. It started with elementary instruction in reading, writing and calculating. There followed reading and interpretation of canonized poets and prose authors. The supreme tier was dedicated to the seven *artes liberales* (*trivium* grammar, dialectic, rhetoric plus *quadrivium* arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music), with priority for rhetoric. The difference was that in the Neoplatonic education system rhetoric was replaced by dialectic.

Among philosophers, a "dogmatic" attitude spread, as defined by Sextus Empiricus (*Pyrrhoneae hypotyposes* 1. 1. 2-3): the truth is already found. It is purest at the source; thus back to the origin!

Windelband (1908, p. 180) describes the philosophical archaism of these centuries:

"How strongly the need for authority had come to be felt in the later time, we may recognize even from the countless *spuria* that appeared all the time around in Alexandrian literature. Their authors, who, perhaps, for the most part acted *bona fide*, since they themselves regarded their thoughts as only developments and continuations of the ancient doctrines, evidently believed that they could get a hearing for their works in no better way than by assigning to them the name of one of the heroes of wisdom, of an Aristotle, a Plato, or a Pythagoras. This phenomenon appeared most extensively among the Neopythagoreans, whose chief concern it was to invest their new doctrine with the halo of ancient wisdom. But the more the convictions that were to be established in this manner bore a religious character, the more lively became the need to conceive of these authorities themselves as the bearers of a religious revelation, and therefore all the traits that might stamp them as such were sought for within them or even read into them. Not contented, however, with this, the later Greeks believed that they could give a higher sanction to their philosophy, as well as to their entire civilization, by deriving it from the Oriental religions: thus Numenius [note: In Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* IX, 7] did not hesitate to maintain that Pythagoras and Plato had presented only the ancient wisdom of the Brahmans, Magi, Egyptians, and Jews. As a result of this, the extent of literary authorities increased extraordinarily; the later Neoplatonists, a Iamblichus and Proclus, commented not only on Greek philosophers, but also upon the entire Hellenic and barbarian theology, [note: Marinus, *Procli vita* 22] and credulously adopted myths and miraculous tales from these sources."

## 2.2. Plotinus' picture of the history of philosophy

In philosophy, the described attitude of mind led to Neoplatonism, which already reaches its full development in Plotinus. The historical picture underlying Plotinus' return to Plato is reconstructed by Thomas Alexander Szlezák as follows:

"Particularly revealing is the doxographical section of the book *On the three primary hypostases* (5.1.8-9), where Plotinus would like to find his doctrine of the three degrees structure of the intelligible world already among the ancients. Parmenides, Heraclitus, Empedocles and Anaxagoras are mentioned as archegets of the philosophy of the intelligible; in comparison to Plato, however, they appear as unclear preliminary stage, especially since they did not know how to clearly separate unity from the intellect. The doxography of the writing on *The Descent of the Soul into Bodies* leads to the same result: in view of the lack of clarity of the pre-Platonic thinkers «only the divine Plato remains» (4.8.1, 23). Another passage knows two preliminary stages: to learn what Eros is, Plotinus wants to examine the common opinions of men, then the views of the philosophers and «especially what divine Plato assumes» (3.5.1, 4-5). Although this «especially» does not express a precise relationship, the climax in the enumeration conveys the impression that the «divine» Plato is as high above the other philosophers as these are above the «rest of mankind».

This is confirmed by the more precise series at the beginning of the treatise *On intellect, the forms, and being* (5.9.1, 1 ff. ), which is very similar in its structure: at the beginning there is a naive sensualism among «all people» (which leads to a rational system based on Epicurean hedonism, which in Plotinus' eyes cannot yet be evaluated as philosophy: 5.9.1, 7-10). On the other hand, Plotinus finds a serious approach at the Stoics (5.9.1, 10-16), who take the place of the other philosophical views alongside that of Plato from 3.5.1, 4. But since they do not come to the knowledge of the intelligible and sink back to their materialistic starting point, only a «third genus of divine men» remains - the philosophers of Platonic orientation, whose elevation over the world is described in elevated, poetically toned language (5.9.1, 16-21)". (pp. 20-21)

"Plato's unique position in the history of philosophy is also the key to Plotinus' understanding of the post-Platonic development. Plotinus has never tried to get it into view with even an approximate completeness, there is no counterpart to the prehistory of the philosophy of the intelligible in 5.1.8-9. Closest comes the juxtaposition of the philosophical attitudes of the Epicureans, Stoics and Platonists in 5.9.1 and the discussion of Aristotelian, Stoic and Platonic doctrine of categories in 6.1/2. First, Epicureism is sovereignly dismissed as the inability to philosophy elevated to a system. The sensualism on which it is built is a necessary stage (5.9.1, 1-3) to be passed through by all men, but when made absolute it runs counter to the (for Plotinus divine) nature of man (5.9.1, 10). In the philosophy of nature, the Epicureans represent the most absurd variation of materialism (3.1.3, 5), with which it is not worth giving in (2.4.7, 28).

The Stoics, on the other hand, are given a worthy ethical impulse. In the fundamental separation of ethical positions - [ἡδονή versus ἀρετή] - they therefore stand together with the Platonists on the side of those who are driven by a divine aspiration (2.9.15, 4-10); on the other side stands Epicurus alone (who is surpassed by the Gnostics in some respects). Similarly, in 5.9.1, 10 the characterization of the Stoics begins with their correct ethical approach; since here, however, it is also about distinguishing ontological points of view, they again come to the side of the Epicureans: they too are unable to see the 'superior', falling back to the [sensualistic] starting point. Even if their variation of materialism can be taken more seriously than that of the atomists - it is fought against on various occasions - their blindness towards the intelligible definitively disqualifies them as philosophers. They do not appear in the enumeration of the archegetes of the knowledge of the spiritual world in 5.1.8-9; in this enumeration only one post-Platonist appears: Aristotle.

That Aristotle is brought here in a certain proximity to Plato and to those who «particularly endorsed the teachings of Pythagoras and his followers» (5.1.9, 28), has its models in the doxographic tradition: the Neopythagoreans used to count Plato and Aristotle as the ninth and tenth head of school after Pythagoras; since the time of Antiochus the Platonists were ready to emphasize more Aristotle's affiliation to the Old Academy than the later school foundation and to give him at the same time the second place after Plato." (pp. 41-42)

"Plotinus' picture of the history of philosophy can thus be outlined as follows. The truth came to light in two stages: with (Pherecydes and) Pythagoras and such pre-Platonists who followed him, finally and unambiguously then with Plato. A third stage brought only the (not chronologically, rather typewise) graduated loss of truth: Aristotle still has the decisive ontological view for the intellectual, but misses unity; the Stoics are blind to the 'superior', commendable only in their moral zeal; the Epicureans even lack this minimal approach to the superior, they are hardly to be addressed as philosophers anymore." (pp. 41-44)

The order of rank established by Plotinus is based on moral evaluation: the closer to the body and the senses, the worse. A sharp line is drawn again (as in Plato's *Phaedo*) between body and soul, sensuality and intellect. Hedonism in ethics, materialism in physics are not worth considering and bear witness to the same low mind. Plotinus does not argue with the Stoics and Epicureans as Aristotle does with the pre-Socratic materialists (whose physics is taken up by the Stoics and Epicureans). Perhaps he believed that Aristotle had finished things off.

Even Aristotle is too much attached to the sensual where he deviates from Plato. Plutarch (*Adversus Colotem* 1115B-E) already explains Aristotle's contestation of the doctrine of Ideas with his contentiousness as well as the loss of himself in logical aporias or the loss of the transcendent perspective (see Opsomer 410b).

Syrianus later judges similarly: "through his criticism of the Pythagorean-Platonic philosophy, Aristotle only revealed his own inadequate and incomplete understanding of theology." (Opsomer, p. 415a)

## 2.3. Aristotle reception in the Arab-Islamic cultural area

In their reception of Greek literature, the Arabs were particularly taken with Aristotle. It was they who preferred Aristotle over Plato and compared their greatest thinkers not with Plato, but with Aristotle. One can therefore only speak of "Aristotelianism" with regard to the Arabs.

Gutas (p. 234) quotes from a poem probably by Hunain ibn-Ishaq:

"Should you wish to see Plato on this august summit and in this position of repute and exalted station, then look at his influence upon his disciple, Aristotle, for it was the latter, who brought together into a whole the parts of philosophy, lifted it from its lowly states unto its lofty pinnacles, and reaped the fruit that all its custodians had sown. Aristotle is the first teacher, the seal of the ancient philosophers, and the model of the learned men who followed their path."

Averroes, in his introduction to Aristotle's *Physica*, goes the farthest:

"The author of this book is Aristotle, son of Nicomachus, the greatest Greek who founded and completed logic, physics and metaphysics. I say that he founded them, because all the works that were written before him about these sciences do not even deserve to be spoken of, and they have now been completely obscured by his writings. I say that he has completed it: for during a period of almost fifteen centuries there has been no one who has anything to add to his writings or could have found in them an error of any significance. Indeed, that all this is united in a single man must arouse admiration and astonishment. And such a preferred being deserves to be called divine rather than human; this is probably the reason why the ancients called him «the divine» [ὁ θεῖος Ἀριστοτέλης, e. g. Simplicius, *In Physica* 611. 8[[5]](#footnote-5)]. We give our infinite praises to unity who has distinguished this man by perfection and who has put him on such a high level of human superiority that no one and in no century has achieved. And God probably meant him when he said (in the Koran): "this sovereignty lets God give to him whom he likes." - Aristotle's doctrine is the sovereign truth; for his intelligence reaches the level that can be attained at all, so that we can say of him with good rights that Providence has given him to us so that he may teach us what is accessible to human knowledge." (Grüll, pp. 19-20)

In this medieval "faith in authority" we easily recognize the continuation of the described late antique classicism and dogmatism; Averroes expressly refers to the "ancients".

The title of the second "teacher" awarded to Alfarabi (Dieterici, p. 54), while Aristotle is the "first," equates him to the Stagirite (Horten, p. 304). Avicenna is the "third Aristotle," the "prince" among philosophers (Horten 307).

Aristotelianism spread throughout Europe from the Arabs. "In the realm of philosophy the principal transforming agent was the system of Aristotle, which was revealed piece by piece until all was visible, and its author had become, in place of Plato, 'the Philosopher' to all the schools." (Knowles 167)

In the Arabian cultural area, Aristotle was introduced through his Neoplatonic commentators. For this very reason, in the realm of Islam Aristotelianism has never been received in pure form. The combination of Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism is already found in the work of the first Arab philosopher Alkindi, who lived in the caliphate of Baghdad in the ninth century († 873). A century later, Alfarabi, who studied and taught in Baghdad († 950), likewise mixed these two doctrines.

"Their interpretation of Aristotle is dominated by two treatises which are falsely attributed to him. Around 840, a selection of extracts from the last three *Enneads* of Plotinus was translated into Arabic under the name of *Theologia Aristotelis*[[6]](#footnote-6); the translation is preceded by a preface which is a summary of the Neoplatonic theory of hypostases; to the triad God, Intelligence and Soul (where every term derives from the preceding), it adds a fourth term, Nature, which derives from the soul; and it makes correspond each of these four terms to the four causes of Aristotle: final, formal, moving and material. Among the extracts is the second treatise of the fifth Ennead, which contains in short the whole doctrine of Plotinus. The second treatise, falsely attributed to Aristotle, is the *Liber de causis*, which contains extracts from the *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus." (Bréhier 556-557)

The Islamic scholars were far better equipped for the study of Aristotle than the Christian ones. Around 850 to 900 Plato, Aristotle, Theophrast, Plotinus, Porphyry were known to the Orient, together with the commentators Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Syrianus, Ammonius (Horten, p. 301). Baghdad became the centre of studies, whose rich library attracted the scholars (an example is Alfarabi, see above).

## 2.4. Thomas Aquinas and William of Moerbeke

In Western Europe, the massive intrusion of the writings of Aristotle began in the middle of the twelfth century, through translations first from Arabic to Latin, then from Greek to Latin. Most of his writings are known at the beginning of the 13th century, but the consequences of this intrusion of pagan philosophy (for Aristotle is accompanied by other Greek and Arab pagan thinkers) show themselves only gradually in the course of the 13th century.

On March 19, 1255, the Faculty of Artists in Paris requires their students to hear lectures on all known treatises of the philosopher. Around the middle of the century, all the faculties of the "Artes" were effectively faculties of philosophy, where the philosophy of Aristotle was taught.

The Flemish Dominican William of Moerbeke made an important contribution to the understanding of Aristotle. He translated the writings of Aristotle, or revised existing translations. He thus made them accessible to the Latin-speaking scholars of Western and Central Europe, which benefited the subsequent Aristotle reception there. In addition, he also translated commentaries (for example, of Ammonius Hermiae, Alexander of Aphrodisias and John Philoponus) to Aristotle into Latin. Reason for William's translating activity was the doubtful quality and incompleteness of the then available texts. In Central and Western Europe, only a few persons had command of Ancient Greek, and some Latin translations were based on ancient Syrian translations and therefore insufficient. This changed fundamentally with the translations of William, who could use Greek original texts.

His friendly relationship with Thomas Aquinas came about when both met (1261-1264) in Orvieto, at the court of pope Urban IV. Although the official Aristotle prohibitions (1210, 1231, 1263) were still in force at that time, Moerbeke was occupied with nothing else than translating the works of this forbidden philosopher (Pieper, p. 27). Thomas, being one of those who had recognized the inadequacy of the older translations through immanent criticism, encouraged Moerbeke to his work.

Thomas had started early to deal with Aristotle, which we already note in his first writing *De ente et essentia* ("On being and beingness") from1252, whose title literally corresponds to a designation of the content of *Metaphysica* Z in book I (1053b17-18): περὶ οὐσίας καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος ("on beingness and being"). That Thomas constantly refers to Aristotle, calling him simply "philosophus," that he devotes his commenting-activity - besides the Bible - almost exclusively to Aristotle - all this does not make him an Aristotelian. As with the Arabs, it is an "Aristotelianism" intermediated by Neoplatonism (see above, p. 45). Josef Pieper (pp. 66-67) destroys the cliché of an "Aristotelian-scholastic philosophy" and a "Christian Aristotelianism" founded by Thomas:

"From a purely historical point of view, it is a misinterpretation of what happens to see this turn of young Thomas to Aristotle as if «Aristotelianism» had simply begun and Thomas had become «Aristotelian». For decades this idea has almost blocked a real understanding of Thomas - until, in the last few years, it has been energetically pointed to the fact that also Plato, also Augustine, and the Neoplatonist Dionysius Areopagita have a highly effective presence in the work of Saint Thomas, and not only a presence unconscious to Thomas himself. Thomas defends Plato many times against Aristotle, who in his polemics often does not consider what Plato actually meant, not the *veritas occulta* [note: *In Metaphysica* 3, 11; no. 471], but only the outer wording, the *sonus verborum* [note: *In De anima* 1, 8; no. 107. Similarly *In De caelo et mundo* 1, 22; 3, 6]. The doctrine of Ideas, the conception of creation according to the primary models existing in the divine *Logos* - Thomas has never given up these central Platonic doctrines. And over seventeen hundred quotes from Dionysius Areopagita have been counted in the work of St. Thomas."

## 2.5. Western Europe comes into Byzantium's inheritance and learns Greek

In contrast to the Arabs, the Turks were not open to Greek education; they rather expelled the Byzantine scholars, who found reception in Italy. Thereby the Western Europeans learned to read Aristotle in Greek. In 1550, the first complete edition happened at Basel (on that see our volume 2, Preface, p. 7). Meanwhile, however, Aristotle was going to lose his position as a scientific authority by the overthrow of the geocentric model (Copernicus 1543: *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*).

As regards the Aristotelian *Metaphysica*, authoritative for the next two centuries became Pedro da Fonseca (alias Petrus Fonseca) with his *Commentaria in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae* (published 1577-89), which (unlike the medieval commentaria) also contain a Greek text together with a Latin translation. In his "Admonitio lectoris" (1577) Fonseca differs from the pedantry ("molesta diligentia," "annoying care") of scholastic as well as from the negligence ("dissolutior enarrandi forma," "too loose form of interpretation") of Greek commentators. Unlike the scholastics, he is also at home in the non-philosophical literature of the Greeks, which he uses for text criticism (see our volume 1).

Therefore the common label "late scholastics" only partially applies, namely with regard to the philosophical attitude oriented towards Thomas Aquinas and the method of discussing *quaestiones*, which recalls Duns Scotus. Philologically, Fonseca's work marks a new beginning to which Aristotle philology (e. g. Ross) could refer.

The new situation (supply of unknown texts from Byzantium and Gutenberg's invention of bookprinting) benefited above all the alternatives to Aristotelianism (Platonism, Stoicism, Epicureism, Skepticism), which were given a broader textual basis through a series of total editions.

Platonism is to be mentioned first. Only the *Timaeus* was known to the Latin Middle Ages (until the 14th century) (in the partial translation of Calcidius); the dialogues *Meno* and *Phaedo* were translated around 1155 (by Henricus Aristippus), but remained almost unnoticed (exception: Henricus Bate, see Guldentops, pp. 447-448). In the 15th century Nicholas of Cusa also knows translations of the dialogues *Apologia*, *Crito* and *Phaedrus* (Guldentops, p. 449).

The 1578 edition (*Platonis opera quae extant omnia* edidit Henricus Stephanus [=Henri Estienne], Genevae, 1578) also included parallel Latin translation and running commentary by Joannes Serranus (Jean de Serres). It was this edition which established standard Stephanus pagination, still in use today.

Petrarca (*De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, p. 112 Buck) had called for the aversion of Aristotle and for reading Plato (and thus created the myth of the "Aristotelian" Middle Ages). His witnesses to Plato's primacy are Cicero, Vergil (*Aeneis* VI, cf. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 10.30), Pliny, Plotinus, Apuleius, Macrobius, Porphyry, Censorinus, Flavius Iosephus and the Christians Ambrosius, Augustine and Hieronymus.

Plotinus became the authoritative interpreter of Plato. Marsilio Ficino translated the *Enneades* 1484-1486 into Latin and subsequently wrote a commentary. The translation first appeared in print with the commentary in Florence in 1492 and soon attracted much attention in humanist circles.

The first (very faulty) Greek edition of the *Enneades* was not published until 1580 in Basel. This text remained standard until the epochal new edition of Henry and Schwyzer (1951-73).

The knowledge of Stoicism and Epicureism (which in the Middle Ages was mainly based on Cicero) was considerably increased by translations and editions of Plutarch's works (from 1471 they were disseminated in Latin translations) and of the *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius. From 1433 a Latin translation of was available, which was first printed in 1472.

Epicureism received additional impetus through the rediscovery of Lucretius' didactic poem. In the Middle Ages Lucretius had fallen into almost complete oblivion until the humanist Poggio Bracciolini discovered the possibly last surviving copy of *De rerum natura* in an unnamed German monastery in 1417. After the publication of the first printed edition in 1473, a lively reception began in the Renaissance.

The skepticism of Sextus Empiricus became infinitely important for the course of modern philosophy. "In 1562, Henri Estienne, the great Renaissance printer, published a Latin edition of the *Hypotyposes*. This was followed in 1569 by a Latin edition of all of Sextus' works, published by the French Counter-Reformer Gentian Hervet. (This edition consists of Hervet's translation of *Adversus Mathematicos*, and Estienne's of the *Hypotyposes*.) The Hervet edition was republished in 1601. But the Greek text was not published until 1621 by the Chouet brothers." (Popkin 19)

In the following centuries, humanist zeal faded; it was replaced by a belief in progress that presumed to understand the "ancients" better than they understood themselves. We meet it at Kant (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 314 = B 370; A 842-84 = B 870-872) and at those later philosophers who believe they are in possession of a superior logical and conceptual *instrumentarium* and have to "reconstruct" the arguments of the classical authors. In Wolff's and Kant's times there were hardly any people left who had read Aristotle in the original, what can be seen, for example, in the depiction that Brucker (volume 1, pp. 827-832) gives of the *Metaphysica*. Hegel was quite alone[[7]](#footnote-7) when he reached for the volumes of the "Zweibrücker" (= "Bipontina") edition; he gave - along with Schleiermacher - a decisive impetus for the revival of Aristotelian studies in the 19th century.

# 3. Interregnum of "Materialists"

The intermediate period between Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism is a time without metaphysics in the sense of hyperphysics; but on the part of the Stoics and Epicureans there are answers to the question "what is being?" (cf. Metaphysica Z, 1028b4). Calling the rejection of hyperphysics "materialism"[[8]](#footnote-8) is inaccurate in that, as we will see in the following, "matter" is the passive principle among the Stoics; the original principle is rather the body, which is why it would be more correct to speak of "corporealism," as some interpreters do.

Among the "Fragments of the early Stoics" (*Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*) collected by von Arnim, there is no explicit examination of Aristotelian metaphysics, but the adoption of fundamental concepts such as *hyle* and *hypokeímenon* alone proves that such an analysis has taken place. The same applies to Epicurus: for *hypokeímenon* see Diogenes Laertius 10.50 and 72; for *hyle* ibidem, 10.93 and 112. As we will see in chapter 4, Stoic elements enter the Neoplatonic system and from there into medieval metaphysics (beginning with Avicenna), which was never purely Aristotelian (cf. above, pp. 45 and 47).

## 3.1. The idea of a system

The decisive competitive advantage of the Stoics and Epicureans over the Peripatetics was probably that they had to offer a uniform *Weltanschauung*, which was completely lacking among the successors of Aristotle.

Hellmut Flashar (p. 388) describes the decline of the Peripatos as follows: "While Theophrast's work is already characterized by a much stronger disintegration of its sub-areas than Aristotle's, the name ὁ φυσικός ("the physicist") of Theophrast's successor Strato of Lampsacus expresses a renunciation of an ontology that could supply an unifying foundation for the individual disciplines. With Lyco, on whom the scholarchate fell out of sheer embarrassment, a philosophical decline in the level of the Peripatos set in, which did not exist at the other Hellenistic schools."

The Stoics used the term "system" for this uniformity, which was to become so important in modern times (since Descartes' demand for mathematical stringency); see Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 7.40 (= SVF 2.42, 28-29):

ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια ὡς ἂν ἐπιστήμη καθεστηκυῖα τοὐναντίον συστηματική τε καὶ πλειόνων ἄθροισμα τυγχάνειν ὑπείληπται.

("Truth, as consisting in science, is on the contrary [scilicet in opposition to the simple true statement] conceived to be of composite nature and a collection of several elements.")

Leibniz, who published his philosophical program under the title 'Système nouveau de la nature et de la communication des substances, aussi bien que del'union qu'il y a entre l'âme et le corps' in 1695, speaks of "mon système" with regard to his own theory and also describes competing theories as "systems".

## 3.2. The common fundamental assumption of Stoics and Epicureans

Both schools agree that nothing incorporeal can exist, that is, in the equation of being with corporeality. It is unanimously justified by the fact that only bodies can be active and passive.

"Nothing appears more striking to a reader fresh from the study of Plato or Aristotle than the startling contrast presented thereto by the materialism of the Stoics. Whilst so far following Plato [note: *Sophista* 247d] as to define a real thing to be anything possessing the capacity of acting or being acted upon, the Stoics nevertheless restricted the possession of this power to bodies." (Zeller III/1, p. 119)

Cf. Cicero, *Academici libri* 39 (= SVF 1.25, 34-38):

"Discrepabat etiam ab iisdem (scilicet Zeno a Peripateticis et Academicis), quod nullo modo arbitrabatur quidquam effici posse ab ea, quae expers esset corporis […], nec vero aut quod efficeret aliquid aut quod efficeretur, posse esse non corpus."

("But he differed from them again, inasmuch as he thought it absolutely impossible for anything to be produced from that nature which was destitute of body; […] and he would not allow that that which produced anything, or which was produced by anything, could possibly be anything except body.")

We find the same argument for the corporeality of being in Epicurus (Diogenes Laertius 10.67):

Ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τόδε γε δεῖ προσκατανοεῖν, ὅ τι τὸ ἀσώματον λέγομεν κατὰ τὴν πλείστην ὁμιλίαν τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐπὶ τοῦ καθ' ἑαυτὸ νοηθέντος ἄν· καθ' ἑαυτὸ δὲ οὐκ ἔστι νοῆσαι τὸ ἀσώματον πλὴν τοῦ κενοῦ. τὸ δὲ κενὸν οὔτε ποιῆσαι οὔτε παθεῖν δύναται, ἀλλὰ κίνησιν μόνον δι' ἑαυτοῦ τοῖς σώμασι παρέχεται. ὥστε οἱ λέγοντες ἀσώματον εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν ματαιίζουσιν. οὐθὲν γὰρ ἂν ἐδύνατο ποιεῖν οὔτε πάσχειν, εἰ ἦν τοιαύτη· νῦν δ' ἐναργῶς ἀμφότερα ταῦτα διαλαμβάνεται περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τὰ συμπτώματα.

("Another point to appreciate is this. The 'incorporeal', according to the prevailing usage of the word, is applied to that which can be thought of per se. But it is impossible to think of the incorporeal per se except as void. And void can neither act nor be acted upon, but merely provides bodies with motion through itself. Consequently those who say that the soul is incorporeal are talking nonsense. For if it were like that it would be unable to act or be acted upon in any way, whereas as a matter of fact both these accidental properties are self-evidently discriminable in the soul.")

## 3.3. Systematic relationship of ethics and physics

In the expositions of Stoic and Epicurean philosophy known to me, a connection between logic, physics and ethics is either disputed or not sought at all. Regarding the Stoics, Zeller sees a contradiction between "idealistic" ethics and "materialistic" physics.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The contradiction dissolves, however, when we consider that the divine characteristic of ἀπάθεια ("lack of affect"), which distinguishes the wise person[[10]](#footnote-10), is a physical quality, that of ποιοῦν (active) in contrast to matter, πάσχον (passive). The virtuous and wise man becomes part of the active "pneuma" ("spirit") or "aether" that flows through the universe[[11]](#footnote-11).

Ethics and physics also form a unit in Epicurus: the gods are exclusively affected by pleasant things. Since humans are free, so their actions are unpredictable, the gods would constantly fall into confusion if they took care of them. This corresponds to the wise keeping away from politics. ἀταραξία ("undisturbedness," see Diogenes Laertius 10.128) is what, according to Epicurus, constitutes the good life of gods and men. For the Epicureans as well as for the Stoics, the life goal of man is oriented towards the life of gods, cf. Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* 3.73:

"nec vero potest quisquam de bonis et malis vere judicare nisi omni cognita ratione naturae et vitae etiam deorum."

("Nor can any one form a correct judgment of good and evil without being acquainted with the whole system of nature, and of the life of the gods also.")

The difference between the two schools lies in the evaluation of activity and passivity (from the point of view of ethics). The well-known contradiction that the Stoics see the supreme good in virtue (areté), the Epicureans in pleasure (hedoné), ontologically has the sense that for the Stoics activity is not only better than passivity, but simply good, passivity simply bad - while the Epicureans have nothing against being affected in a pleasant way. Accordingly, the gods of Epicurus must be thought of as both active and passive, according to the atoms of which they are composed. This is the fundamental idea which unites ethics and physics: passivity is not bad in itself.

The unifying fundamental idea is the life goal of man. In all schools starting from Socrates, the supreme goal is ὁμοίωσις θεῷ ("assimilation to God") (Plato, *Theaetetus* 176b); only the criterion of divinity is different. In Antisthenes it is self-sufficiency (autárkeia), in Epicurus it is undisturbedness (ataraxía), with the Stoics it is the virtue (areté).

We now turn to the epistemological foundation of the Stoic and Epicurean systems; it will become of great importance for modern metaphysics, which has been epistemologically oriented since Descartes. The background (which we cannot go into here) is always the examination of skepticism: it is about access to truth. How do we get to the fundamental concepts? How can we make sure that we understand them correctly? The common response of Stoics and Epicureans is: through anticipation. What is meant hereby can only become clear through an in-depth interpretation of the sources (mainly Cicero).

## 3.4. Anticipations

Aristotle constantly appeals to the common belief for confirmation of his own judgements: the justification is given in *Ethica Eudemia* 1216b28-35:

κράτιστον μὲν γὰρ πάντας ἀνθρώπους φαίνεσθαι συνομολογοῦντας τοῖς ῥηθησομένοις, εἰ δὲ μή, τρόπον γέ τινα πάντας, ὅπερ μεταβιβαζόμενοι ποιήσουσιν· ἔχει γὰρ ἕκαστος οἰκεῖόν τι πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἐξ ὧν ἀναγκαῖον δεικνύναι πως περὶ αὐτῶν· ἐκ γὰρ τῶν ἀληθῶς μὲν λεγομένων οὐ σαφῶς δέ, προϊοῦσιν ἔσται καὶ τὸ σαφῶς, μεταλαμβάνουσιν ἀεὶ τὰ γνωριμώτερα τῶν εἰωθότων λέγεσθαι συγκεχυμένως.

("It would be best that all men should clearly concur with what we are going to say, but if that is unattainable, then that all should in some way at least concur. And this if converted they will do, for every man has some contribution to make to the truth, and with this as a starting-point we must give some sort of proof about these matters. For by advancing from true but obscure judgments he will arrive at clear ones, always exchanging the usual confused statement for more real knowledge.")

But Aristotle does not make the *communis opinio* the methodical starting point.

As an introductory epistemology leading to the concept of the supreme, universal science (ontology), i. e. as a counterpart to *Metaphysica* A 1-2, in Epicurus and Chrysippus we have the doctrine of *notiones* (or *anticipationes*) *communes*. As in Aristotle (cf. volume 3 on Metaphysica A 2), it remains unclear how the leap from relative general unity (E. g. idea of man) to absolute general unity (idea of being) - i. e., to say it with Kant: from the empirical to the transcendental (rational) - is justified (see below). Already in Aristotle (993a1) the idea of an "innate" (σύμφυτος) knowledge emerges briefly, but is immediately dropped again.

The term "anticipation" was introduced by Epicurus (Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.44). Chrysippus appears to have borrowed the word from Epicurus, defining it as ἔννοια φυσικὴ τῶν καθόλου ("natural notion of general things [e. g. of what is good]") (Diogenes Laertius 7.54).

According to Cicero (*De natura deorum* 1.43), anticipation is an innate concept, "implanted" in the human souls:

"Ea qui consideret quam inconsulte ac temere dicantur, venerari Epicurum et in eorum ipsorum numero, de quibus haec quaestio est, habere debeat. Solus enim vidit primum esse deos, quod in omnium animis eorum notionem impressisset ipsa natura. Quae est enim gens aut quod genus hominum, quod non habeat sine doctrina anticipationem quandam deorum? quam appellat πρόληψιν Epicurus, id est anteceptam animo rei quandam informationem, sine qua nec intellegi quicquam nec quaeri nec disputari potest. Cujus rationis vim atque utilitatem ex illo caelesti Epicuri de regula et judicio volumine accepimus."

("Anyone pondering on the baseless and irrational character of these doctrines ought to regard Epicurus with reverence, and to rank him as one of the very gods about whom we are inquiring. For he alone perceived, first, that the gods exist, because nature herself has imprinted a conception of them on the minds of all mankind. For what nation or what tribe of men is there but possesses untaught some preconception of the gods? Such notions Epicurus designates by the word prólepsis, that is, a sort of preconceived mental picture of a thing, without which nothing can be understood or investigated or discussed. The force and value of this argument we learn in that work of genius, Epicurus' *Rule or Standard of Judgment*.")

As Kant, who most likely read Cicero's *De natura deorum* (see my commentary, p. 412), correctly interpreted, "anticipation" means an "anticipation" of future experience:

"All knowledge by means of which I am enabled to know and determine *a priori* what belongs to empirical knowledge may be entitled an anticipation; and this is undoubtedly the sense in which Epicurus employed the term πρόληψις". (A 166-167 = B 208).

An explanation handed down by Diogenes Laertius (10.33) seems to contradict this (cf. Knight 3, p. 484, n. 1: "Cicero declares πρόληψις false"; Zeller iii/1, p. 402, n. 1; Praechter, p. 448; Long/Sedley, pp. 88-89), which presupposes an empiristic epistemology:

Τὴν δὲ πρόληψιν λέγουσιν οἱονεὶ κατάληψιν ἢ δόξαν ὀρθὴν ἢ ἔννοιαν ἢ καθολικὴν νόησιν ἐναποκειμένην, τουτέστι μνήμην τοῦ πολλάκις ἔξωθεν φανέντος, οἷον τὸ Τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος· ἅμα γὰρ τῷ ῥηθῆναι ἄνθρωπος εὐθὺς κατὰ πρόληψιν καὶ ὁ τύπος αὐτοῦ νοεῖται προηγουμένων τῶν αἰσθήσεων. παντὶ οὖν ὀνόματι τὸ πρώτως ὑποτεταγμένον ἐναργές ἐστι· καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐζητήσαμεν τὸ ζητούμενον εἰ μὴ πρότερον ἐγνώκειμεν αὐτό· οἷον Τὸ πόρρω ἑστὼς ἵππος ἐστὶν ἢ βοῦς· δεῖ γὰρ κατὰ πρόληψιν ἐγνωκέναι ποτὲ ἵππου καὶ βοὸς μορφήν· οὐδ' ἂν ὠνομάσαμέν τι μὴ πρότερον αὐτοῦ κατὰ πρόληψιν τὸν τύπον μαθόντες. ἐναργεῖς οὖν εἰσιν αἱ προλήψεις· καὶ τὸ δοξαστὸν ἀπὸ προτέρου τινὸς ἐναργοῦς ἤρτηται, ἐφ' ὃ ἀναφέροντες λέγομεν, οἷον Πόθεν ἴσμεν εἰ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος;

("Anticipation, they [the Epicureans] say, is as it were a perception, or correct opinion, or notion, or universal 'stored intellection', i.e. memory of that which has frequently become evident externally: e.g. 'Such and such a kind of thing is a man.' For as soon as the word 'man' is uttered, immediately its delineation also comes to mind by means of anticipation, since the senses give the lead. Thus what primarily underlies each name is something self-evident. And what we inquire about we would not have inquired about if we had not had prior knowledge of it. For example: 'Is what's standing over there a horse or a cow?' For one must at some time have come to know the form of a horse and that of a cow by means of anticipation. Nor would we have named something if we had not previously learnt its delineation by means of anticipation. Thus anticipations are self-evident. And opinion depends on something prior and self-evident, which is our point of reference when we say, e.g., 'How do we know if this is a man?'")

In reality, there is no contradiction; it is rather the difference between human nature and the way we get to know it. This happens by communicating with our fellow species, for example by paying attention to how they talk about the gods. By abstracting the common concept from the manifold ideas of the various individuals and nations, we obtain the pure anticipation of divinity. This is initially still vague; the philosopher's task is to explicate what is implied in the preconception. (See below, p. 64.)

Epicurus' sensualistic epistemology requires "that the anticipation that convinces us of the existence of the gods has arisen from the perception of those images from which Democritus had already derived the faith of the gods" (Zeller III/1, p. 445). According to Democritus, certain beings are revealed in the air by making the images emanating from them visible and audible (Zeller I, p. 1161). These experiences correspond to the sensual "evidences" that lead to the preconceptions of "man" and "horse".

A second source is our experience of what is "good," cf. below, p. 65.

From the passage "And what we inquire about we would not have inquired about if we had not had prior knowledge of it" it appears that anticipation is Epicurus' solution for the well-known *aporia* in Plato's *Meno* (81c-d) (cf. Long/Sedley, p. 89). Also from Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 1.57 (οὔτε ζητεῖν οὔτε ἀπορεῖν ἔστι κατὰ τὸν σοφὸν Ἐπίκουρον ἄνευ προλήψεως ("according to the sage Epicurus, it is not possible either to inquire or to doubt without an anticipation") = "sine qua nec intellegi quicquam nec quaeri nec disputari potest" in the above mentioned passage Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.43). That was the problem in this Platonic passage: how can we search for something if we do not know it? We need a prescience. Leibniz will refer to this passage in his distinction of two kinds of truth, see below, p. 181.

An example of anticipation is apparently also the fundamental assumption that being capable of action and passion is the criterion for existence. As Zeller (III/1, p. 126) observes, "there is not the least indication in the records of the Stoic doctrine that it resulted from a criticism of the Platonic-Aristotelian dualism. Far from it, in these records it occurs as an axiom, that everything capable of acting or being acted upon must be corporeal."

The mentioned (above, p. 55) connection between theology and ethics (understood as the doctrine of the purpose of life) requires anticipations of both the concept of divine and of good.

### 3.4.1. Anticipation of God

Among Stoics and Epicureans there is agreement that the belief in the existence of gods is natural to man (atheism thus something unnatural). The Stoic Balbus also speaks for the Epicureans when he states (Cicero, *De natura deorum* 2.12-13):

"Itaque inter omnes omnium gentium summa constat; omnibus enim innatum est et in animo quasi insculptum esse deos. Quales sint, varium est; esse nemo negat."

("Hence the main issue is agreed among all men of all nations, inasmuch as all have engraved in their minds an innate belief that the gods exist. As to their nature there are various opinions, but their existence nobody denies.")

There are also anticipations about the "quality" of the gods; they are only interpreted differently by Stoics and Epicureans; the Stoics say, "God is anticipated and thought of not only as immortal and blessed [as Epicurus assumes] but also as benevolent, caring and beneficent"[[12]](#footnote-12).

According to the common goal in life of "assimilation to God" (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, cf. above, p. 55), in both schools there must be a close connection between the concept of God and the concept of *summum bonum*.[[13]](#footnote-13) Augustine often calls God "the supreme good" - this is entirely in the spirit of the Hellenistic philosophy as he knew it from Cicero.

#### Epicurus' concept of God

The philosophical concepts of god and supreme good are to be developed from the generally accessible anticipations of them (about this "developing" see below, p. 64). For the God concept of Epicurus, this is done immediately after our previous Cicero quotation, *De natura deorum* 1.44-45 (= Long/Sedley 23E):

"Quod igitur fundamentum hujus quaestionis est, id praeclare jactum videtis. Cum enim non instituto aliquo aut more aut lege sit opinio constituta maneat que ad unum omnium firma consensio, intellegi necesse est esse deos; quoniam insitas eorum vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus, de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est; esse igitur deos confitendum est. Quod quoniam fere constat inter omnes non philosophos solum, sed etiam indoctos, fateamur constare illud etiam, hanc nos habere sive anticipationem, ut ante dixi, sive praenotionem deorum (sunt enim rebus novis nova ponenda nomina, ut Epicurus ipse πρόληψιν appellavit, quam antea nemo eo verbo nominarat) - hanc igitur habemus, ut deos beatos et immortales putemus. Quae enim nobis natura informationem ipsorum deorum dedit, eadem insculpsit in mentibus, ut eos aeternos et beatos haberemus."

("You see therefore that the foundation of our inquiry has been well and truly laid. For the belief in the gods has not been established by authority, custom or law, but rests on the unanimous and abiding consensus of mankind; their existence is therefore a necessary inference, since we possess an instinctive or rather an innate concept of them; but a belief which all men by nature share must necessarily be true; therefore it must be admitted that the gods exist. And since this truth is almost universally accepted not only among philosophers but also among the unlearned, we must admit it as also being an accepted truth that we possess a 'preconception,' as I called it above, or 'prior notion,' of the gods. (For we are bound to employ novel terms to denote novel ideas, just as Epicurus himself employed the word prolepsis in a sense in which no one had ever used it before.) We have then a preconception of such a nature that we believe the gods to be blessed and immortal.")

To compare is Diogenes Laertius 10.123-124 (= Long/Sedley 23B):

πρῶτον μὲν τὸν θεὸν ζῷον ἄφθαρτον καὶ μακάριον νομίζων, ὡς ἡ κοινὴ τοῦ θεοῦ νόησις ὑπεγράφη, μηθὲν μήτε τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ἀλλότριον μήτε τῆς μακαριότητος ἀνοίκειον αὐτῷ πρόσαπτε· πᾶν δὲ τὸ φυλάττειν αὐτοῦ δυνάμενον τὴν μετὰ ἀφθαρσίας μακαριότητα περὶ αὐτὸν δόξαζε. θεοὶ μὲν γὰρ εἰσίν· ἐναργὴς γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ γνῶσις.

("First, think of god as an incorruptible and blessed creature, as the common idea of god is in outline, and attach to him nothing alien to incorruptibility or inappropriate to blessedness, but believe about him everything that can preserve his combination of blessedness and incorruptibility. For there are gods — the knowledge of them is self-evident.")

If we consistently adhere to this pure concept of god, we must exclude any influence and responsibility of the gods for world affairs, see Diogenes Laertius 10.76-77 (= Long/Sedley 23C).

According to this, Epicurus' gods lead a carefree life, as it corresponds to the popular notion of living on the Islands of the blessed.

### 3.4.2. Anticipation of "Good"

Because of an anticipation of the good as what is sought and of the bad as what is avoided, according to Epicurus "pleasure" (ἡδονή) is recognized as the good, pain as the bad: we observe in all nature that it is these two that are sought or avoided. Here we have again an example for the emergence of an anticipation through the collection of observations (cf. above, p. 57).

The most detailed exposition we owe to Cicero (*De finibus* 1.29-31):

"Primum igitur, inquit, sic agam, ut ipsi auctori huius disciplinae placet: constituam, quid et quale sit id, de quo quaerimus, non quo ignorare vos arbitrer, sed ut ratione et via procedat oratio. Quaerimus igitur, quid sit extremum et ultimum bonorum, quod omnium philosophorum sententia tale debet esse, ut ad id omnia referri oporteat, ipsum autem nusquam. Hoc Epicurus in voluptate ponit, quod summum bonum esse vult summumque malum dolorem; idque instituit docere sic:

30. Omne animal, simul atque natum sit, voluptatem appetere eaque gaudere ut summo bono, dolorem aspernari ut summum malum et, quantum possit, a se repellere, idque facere nondum depravatum, ipsa natura incorrupte atque integre iudicante. Itaque negat opus esse ratione neque disputatione, quamobrem voluptas expetenda, fugiendus dolor sit. Sentiri hoc putat, ut calere ignem, nivem esse albam, mel dulce, quorum nihil oportere exquisitis rationibus confirmare; tantum satis esse admonere; interesse enim inter argumentum conclusionemque rationis et inter mediocrem animadversionem atque admonitionem; altera occulta quaedam et quasi involuta aperiri, altera prompta et aperta iudicari. Etenim quoniam, detractis de homine sensibus, reliqui nihil est, necesse est, quid aut ad naturam aut contra sit, a natura ipsa iudicari. Ea quid percipit aut quid iudicat, quo aut petat aut fugiat aliquid, praeter voluptatem et dolorem?

31. Sunt autem quidam e nostris, qui haec subtilius velint tradere et negent satis esse, quid bonum sit aut quid malum, sensu iudicari, sed animo etiam ac ratione intellegi posse, et voluptatem ipsam per se esse expetendam et dolorem ipsum per se esse fugiendum. Itaque aiunt, hanc quasi naturalem atque insitam in animis nostris inesse notionem, ut alterum esse appetendum, alterum aspernandum sentiamus. Alii autem, quibus ego assentior, cum a philosophis compluribus permulta dicantur, cur nec voluptas in bonis sit numeranda nec in malis dolor, non existimant oportere nimium nos causae confidere, sed et argumentandum et accurate disserendum et rationibus conquisitis de voluptate et dolore disputandum putant.

("First of all then, said he, I will proceed in the manner which is sanctioned by the founder of this school: I will lay down what that is which is the subject of our inquiry, and what its character is: not that I imagine that you do not know, but in order that my discourse may proceed in a systematic and orderly manner. We are inquiring, then, what is the end, - what is the extreme point of good, which, in the opinion of all philosophers, ought to be such that everything can be referred to it, but that it itself can be referred to nothing. This Epicurus places in pleasure, which he argues is the chief good, and that pain is the chief evil; and he proceeds to prove his assertion thus. He says that every animal the moment that it is born seeks for pleasure, and rejoices in it as the chief good; and rejects pain as the chief evil, and wards it off from itself as far as it can; and that it acts in this manner, without having been corrupted by anything, under the promptings of nature herself, who forms this uncorrupt and upright judgment. Therefore, he affirms that there is no need of argument or of discussion as to why pleasure is to be sought for, and pain to be avoided. This he thinks a matter of sense, just as much as that fire is hot, snow white, honey sweet; none of which propositions he thinks require to be confirmed by laboriously sought reasons, but that it is sufficient merely to state them. For that there is a difference between arguments and conclusions arrived at by ratiocination, and ordinary observations and statements: - by the first, secret and obscure principles are explained; by the second, matters which are plain and easy are brought to decision. For since, if you take away sense from a man, there is nothing left to him, it follows of necessity that what is contrary to nature, or what agrees with it, must be left to nature herself to decide. Now what does she perceive, or what does she determine on as her guide to seek or to avoid anything, except pleasure and pain? But there are some of our school who seek to carry out this doctrine with more acuteness, and who w ill not allow that it is sufficient that it should be decided by sense what is good and what is bad, but who assert that these points can be ascertained by intellect and reason also, and that pleasure is to be sought for on its own account, and that pain also is to be avoided for the same reason. Therefore, they say that this notion is implanted in our minds naturally and instinctively, as it were; so that we feel that the one is to be sought for, and the other to be avoided. Others, however, (and this is my own opinion too,) assert that, as many reasons are alleged by many philosophers why pleasure ought not to be reckoned among goods, nor pain among evils, we ought not to rely too much on the goodness of our cause, but that we should use arguments, and discuss the point with precision, and argue, by the help of carefully collected reasons, about pleasure and about pain.")

Cicero sees a contradiction between an empirical method and an innate idea. In so doing, he is making the same mistake as the newer interpreters in terms of anticipation: he considers to be an alternative what in reality is a complement (cf. above, p. 57). In turn, the Stoics assume a different anticipation: the good is the useful[[14]](#footnote-14). This is because they separate man as animal rationale from the other beings. Only he is able to act rationally, which makes him stand out in communion with God.

The assertion of good as useful is confirmed by Epictetus (1.22; 2.8; 2.17).

The philosopher's task is now to "articulate" what is initially meant by vague anticipation. "The natural πρόληψις contains only a very general and superficial definition of the word in question, not yet a developed and perfect concept of it; it is not yet διηρθρωμένη καὶ τελεία ["articulated and perfect"] (2.17.10), as it must be, so that we can, by means of it, understand and judge the real things and events correctly and according to the truth (καταλλήλως τῇ φύσει 1.22.9). A few examples may illustrate this. Epictetus speaks of a πρόληψις ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ ["anticipation of good and bad"]. What is the content of this πρόληψις? That the ἀγαθόν is an ὠφέλιμον ["useful"], and the κακόν is a βλαβερόν ["harmful"] (2.8.1; 4.1.42). The natural πρόληψις of the ἀγαθόν says that it is συμφέρον ["beneficial"] and αἱρετόν ["to be elected"] and to be aimed for at all costs (1.22.1), as does the πρόληψις of the κακόν, that it is something that must be avoided (1.27.7): as an ἐναργὴς πρόληψις ["evident anticipation"] is designated here ὅτι τὰ κακὰ ἐκκλίνειν καθήκει ["that evil must be avoided"]."(Bonhöffer, pp. 188-189)

"The *terminus technicus* for this intellectual processing and development of φυσικαὶ προλήψεις ["natural anticipations"] is διάρθρωσις ["articulation"] (2.17.13 ἐπιμελείας περὶ τὴν διάρθρωσιν τῶν προλήψεων δεόμεθα: ibidem διαρθρῶσαι τὰς προλήψεις. πρόληψις διηρθρωμένη καὶ τελεία; 2.11.18 we should always διηρθρωμέναις χρῆσθαι ταῖς προλήψεσι; 2.12.9 ἐκπεπληρωκὼς τὴν ἔννοιαν καὶ διηρθρωκώς). The natural πρόληψις is thus a still unarticulated, so to speak undifferentiated, which shows its contents only darkly and in the most general outlines: only its articulation by the logos (1.17.1 ὁ λόγος ἐστὶ ὁ διαρθρὼν καὶ ἐξεργαζόμενος τὰ λοιπά) brings out its whole contents clearly and completely (ἐκπεπληρωκώς)." (Bonhöffer, p. 189)

Most important and indicative of the difference between the schools is what is considered useful and useless in arts and sciences, what belongs to "wisdom" and what does not. From this also derives the concept of God as the perfect wise (cf. what is said above about the connection between ethics and theology).

According to Zeller (II/1, pp. 288-290), the Cynics "not only regarded logical and physical enquiries as worthless, but passed the same opinion on all arts and sciences which have not the moral improvement of mankind for their immediate object". Cf. Diogenes Laertius 6.103-104:

παραιτοῦνται [scilicet οἱ Κυνικοὶ] δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐγκύκλια μαθήματα. γράμματα γοῦν μὴ μανθάνειν ἔφασκεν ὁ Ἀντισθένης τοὺς σώφρονας γενομένους, ἵνα μὴ διαστρέφοιντο τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις. περιαιροῦσι δὲ καὶ γεωμετρίαν καὶ μουσικὴν καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα.

("They [the Cynics] also dispense with the ordinary subjects of instruction. At least Antisthenes used to say that those who had attained discretion had better not study literature, lest they should perverted by alien influences. So they get rid of geometry and music and all such studies.")

Zeller (II/1, p. 289, n. 2) draws attention to the similarity of Diogenes Laertius 6.28 ("that the mathematicians should gaze at the sun and the moon, but overlook matters close at hand") with the story of the Thracian maiden in Plato's *Theaetetus*:

"Maybe already Antisthenes had supported the statement on astronomers by the story of Thales falling into a well whilst contemplating the heavens. An answer thereto is the passage in the *Theaetetus* 174a ff., 175d, on the Thracian maiden who upbraided him for so doing. The mother of Antisthenes was a Thracian slave, and the words which Plato puts into the mouth of the Thracian closely resemble those quoted by Diogenes."

The same applies to Aristippus (Zeller II/1, pp. 345-346):

"Of Aristippus too, and his pupils, it was asserted, as well as of the Cynics, that they neglected questions touching nature and logic, giving to the study of ethics [Diogenes Laertius 2.92. Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 7.11. Aristoteles, *Metaphysica* B, 996a32] exclusive value."

This attitude could refer to Socrates, as he is represented by Xenophon. See Zeller II/1, p. 132:

"Socrates,says Xenophon, [*Memorabilia Socratis* 1.1.11.] did not discourse concerning the nature of the All, like most other philosophers before him; he did not enquire into the essence of the world and the laws of natural phenomena; on the contrary, he declared it folly to search into such subjects; for it is unreasonable to quiz things divine before fully understanding things human; besides, the conflicting opinions of natural philosophers prove that the object of their research transcends the capacity of human knowledge. After all, these enquiries are of no practical use. Quite in keeping with this view, the Socrates of Xenophon tests even geometry and astronomy [ibidem 4.7.] by the standard of immediate utility, as being the knowledge respectively requisite for surveying and navigation. To carry them further than this he considers to be a useless waste of time, or even impious; for man can never come upon the track of the mighty works of the gods, nor do the gods desire that he should attempt such knowledge."

It is Epicurus (not the Stoics) who follows the Socratics mentioned most radically in this. See Zeller III/1, pp. 393-396:

"Nor is happiness, according to Epicurus, directly promoted by knowledge, but only indirectly in as far as knowledge ministers to practical needs, or clears away hindrances to their attainment. All science which does not serve this end is superfluous and worthless. [Cicero, *De finibus* 1.71-72] Hence Epicurus despised learning and culture, the researches of grammarians, and the lore of historians, and declared it a piece of good fortune for simplicity of feeling to be uncontaminated by learned rubbish. [Cicero, *De finibus* 2.12. Diogenes Laertius 10.6] Nor was his opinion different respecting mathematical science, of which he was wholly ignorant. [Sextus 1.1. Cicero, *De finibus* 1.20] The calculations of mathematicians, he maintained, are based on false principles; [Cicero, *De finibus* 1.71. *Lucullus* 106. *De finibus* 1.20] at any rate, they contribute nothing to human happiness, and it is therefore useless and foolish to trouble oneself about them. [Sextus 1.1. Diogenes Laertius 10.93; 10.79-80; 10.113] […] Nor did the greater part of logical enquiries fare any better in his judgment. Himself no logician, he set little store by logic. Definitions are of no use; the theory of classification and proof may be dispensed with; the philosopher does best to confine himself to words, and to leave all the logical ballast alone. [Cicero, *De finibus* 1.22; 1.63; *Lucullus* 97] Of all the questions which engrossed the attention of Stoic logicians, one only, the theory of knowledge, was studied by Epicurus, and that in a very superficial way. Far greater, comparatively, was the importance he attached to the study of nature, [Cicero, *De finibus* 1.63; 1.17] but even natural science was deemed valuable, not so much for its own sake as because of its practical use. The knowledge of natural causes is the only means of liberating the soul from the shackles of superstition; this is the only use of natural science. If it were not for the thought of God and the fear of death, there would be no need of studying nature. [Diogenes Laertius 10.82; 10.85; 10.87; 10.142-143; 10.79; Cicero, *De finibus* 4.11] The investigation of our instincts is also of use, because it helps us to control them, and to keep them within their natural bounds. [*De finibus* 1.64]"

So both schools, starting from Socrates, reject the Pythagorean *quadrivium* of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music theory.[[15]](#footnote-15) The assessment of dialectic is contrary; it loses its value when rationality and providence no longer constitute the essence of man and god (see also above about Aristippus). How far Epicurus has moved away from the Socrates of Xenophon (authoritative for the Stoics, see below, p. 83), is especially shown by the comparison with *Memorabilia* 1.1.16; 4.5.12-6.1.

# 4. From dualism to monism

In the previous chapter we dealt with the contribution of the Stoics and Epicureans to the critique of Platonic-Aristotelian hyperphysics, a contribution that was only taken up again in modern times. Now we ask about the positive after-effect in the ancient history of metaphysics, which is a history of Neoplatonism. The Epicureans are eliminated here; the Neoplatonists did not want anything to do with them (see 2.2.).

To mark the beginning and end of the development from Plato/Aristoteles to Plotinus, we fall back on the frequently but often (e. g. by Zeller) inaccurately used classificatory expressions "monism" and "dualism". They originate from Christian Wolff's *Psychologia rationalis*, where the following definitions are given:

"§ 32.

Monistae dicuntur philosophi, qui unum tantummodo substantiae genus admittunt.

("Monists are philosophers who allow only one genus of substance.")

"§ 33.

Materialistae dicuntur philosophi, qui tantummodo entia materialia, sive corpora existere affirmant."

("Materialists are philosophers who claim only the existence of material being or bodies.")

"§ 34.

Quoniam Materialistae nonnisi corporum existentiam admittunt […] (§. 33.); nonnisi unum substantiarum genus existere affirmant, adeoque Monistae sunt (§. 32.)."

("Since the materialists permit only the existence of bodies, […] (§. 33), they claim that only one genus of substance exists, and are monists in this respect.")

"§ 36.

Idealistae dicuntur, qui nonnisi idealem corporum in animabus nostris existentiam concedunt: adeoque realem mundi et corporum existentiam negant."

("Idealists are those who only allow an ideal existence of the bodies, and in this respect deny the real existence of the world and the bodies.")

"§ 39.

Dualistae sunt, qui et substantiarum materialium, et immaterialium existentiam admittunt, hoc est, et corporibus realem extra ideas animarum existentiam concedunt, et animarum immaterialitatem defendunt."

("Dualists are those who permit the existence of both material and immaterial substances, that is, both conceding real existence to the bodies outside the ideas of souls and defending the immateriality of souls").

With the help of this classification, the history of Greek philosophy can be roughly divided into 4 periods:

1. pre-Socratic materialistic monism,   
2. dualism among Pythagoreans, Plato and Aristotle,   
3. return to materialistic monism with Epicurus and the Stoics,   
4. idealistic monism of the Neoplatonists.

Of course this schema is to be applied *cum grano salis*; so Plotinus' "idealism" is different from Berkeley's that Wolff had in mind.

Monism is at the beginning of philosophy, see Aristotle, *Metaphysica* A, 983b6-8. According to *Physica* 187a20-21 (= Diels/Kranz 1.83, 14-15), part of the natural philosophers "assert that the contrarieties are contained in the one and emerge from it by segregation, for example Anaximander" (οἱ δ' ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἐνούσας τὰς ἐναντιότητας ἐκκρίνεσθαι, ὥσπερ Ἀναξίμανδρός φησι). That is, as we will see, exactly the schema of Stoic monism.

Dualism arises with the Pythagoreans (see the table of contraries at Aristotle, *Metaphysica* A, 986a23-26). It will hold out until Plutarch, Numenius and Philo of Alexandria.

First we follow the development from dualism to monism in the Platonizing so-called Neopythagoreans, i. e. so to speak the internal development of Platonism.

## 4.1. Dualism: Academic ontology

In demand is the Academic doctrine of the elements (or "principles") of the entities to which Aristotle refers and which continues to operate, independently of Aristotle, in Hellenism, to the Neopythagoreans and Neoplatonists. It is to be reconstructed from three main testimonies:

1. Alexander, *In Metaphysica* 56, 14-15 (= *De Bono* fr. 2 Ross):

ἔτι δὲ τὸ ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἄνισον ἀρχὰς ἁπάντων τῶν τε καθ' αὑτὰ ὄντων καὶ τῶν ἀντικειμένων 15 ἡγούμενος […].

("Again, thinking that he was proving that the equal and the unequal are first principles of all things, both of things that exist in their own right and of contraries […].")

2. Hermodorus in Simplicius, *In Physica* 248, 2-5:

τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν καθ' αὑτὰ εἶναι λέγει ὡς ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἵππον, τὰ δὲ πρὸς ἕτερα, καὶ τούτων τὰ μὲν ὡς πρὸς ἐναντία ὡς ἀγαθὸν κακῷ, τὰ δὲ ὡς πρός τι, καὶ τούτων τὰ μὲν ὡς ὡρισμένα, τὰ δὲ ὡς ἀόριστα.

"He [Plato] says that of the beings some exist by themselves, such as man and horse, the others in relation to others. Of these some have a relation to contraries, such as good and bad, the others are relatives. And of these some are determinated, others undeterminated."

3. Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos* 10.263-272:

τῶν γὰρ ὄντων, φασί [οἱ Πυθαγορικοί], τὰ μὲν κατὰ διαφορὰν νοεῖται, τὰ δὲ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν, τὰ δὲ πρός τι. κατὰ διαφορὰν μὲν οὖν εἶναι τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὰ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν περιγραφὴν ὑποκείμενα, οἷον ἄνθρωπος ἵππος φυτὸν γῆ ὕδωρ ἀὴρ πῦρ· τούτων γὰρ ἕκαστον ἀπολύτως θεωρεῖται καὶ οὐχ ὡς κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ἕτερον σχέσιν.

(264.) κατ' ἐναντίωσιν δὲ ὑπάρχειν ὅσα ἐξ ἐναντιώσεως ἑτέρου πρὸς ἕτερον θεωρεῖται, οἷον ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακόν, δίκαιον ἄδικον, συμφέρον ἀσύμφορον, ὅσιον ἀνόσιον, εὐσεβὲς ἀσεβές, κινούμενον ἠρεμοῦν, τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα τούτοις ἐμφερῆ.

(265.) πρός τι δὲ τυγχάνειν τὰ κατὰ τὴν ὡς πρὸς ἕτερον σχέσιν νοούμενα, οἷον δεξιὸν ἀριστερόν, ἄνω κάτω, διπλάσιον ἥμισυ· τό τε γὰρ δεξιὸν νοεῖται κατὰ τὴν ὡς πρὸς τὸ ἀριστερὸν σχέσιν καὶ τὸ ἀριστερὸν κατὰ τὴν ὡς πρὸς τὸ δεξιόν, τό τε κάτω κατὰ τὴν ὡς πρὸς τὸ ἄνω καὶ τὸ ἄνω κατὰ τὴν ὡς πρὸς τὸ κάτω· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων τὸ παραπλήσιον.

(266.) διαφέρειν δέ φασι τὰ κατὰ ἐναντίωσιν νοούμενα τῶν πρός τι. ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἐναντίων ἡ τοῦ ἑτέρου φθορὰ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῦ ἑτέρου, οἷον ἐπὶ ὑγιείας καὶ νόσου κινήσεώς τε καὶ ἠρεμίας· νόσου τε γὰρ γένεσις ἄρσις ἐστὶν ὑγιείας, ὑγιείας τε γένεσις ἄρσις ἐστὶ νόσου, καὶ κινήσεως μὲν ὑπόστασις φθορὰ στάσεως, γένεσις δὲ στάσεως ἄρσις κινήσεως. ὁ δ' αὐτὸς λόγος καὶ ἐπὶ λύπης καὶ ἀλυπίας ἀγαθοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ καὶ κοινῶς τῶν ἐναντίαν φύσιν ἐχόντων.

(267.) τὰ δὲ πρός τι συνύπαρξίν τε καὶ συναναίρεσιν ἀλλήλων περιεῖχεν· οὐδὲν γὰρ δεξιόν ἐστιν, ἐὰν μὴ καὶ ἀριστερὸν ὑπάρχῃ, οὐδὲ διπλάσιον, ἐὰν μὴ καὶ τὸ ἥμισυ προϋποκέηται οὗ διπλάσιόν ἐστιν.

(268.) πρὸς τούτοις ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ἐναντίων ὡς ἐπίπαν οὐδὲν θεωρεῖται μέσον, καθάπερ εὐθέως ἐπὶ ὑγιείας καὶ νόσου ζωῆς τε καὶ θανάτου κινήσεώς τε καὶ μονῆς· μεταξὺ γὰρ τοῦ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ νοσεῖν οὐδέν ἐστι, καὶ μεταξὺ τοῦ ζῆν καὶ τεθνάναι καὶ ἔτι τοῦ κινεῖσθαι καὶ μένειν. ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν πρός τί πως ἐχόντων ἔστι <τι> μέσον· τοῦ γὰρ μείζονος, εἰ τύχοι, καὶ τοῦ μικροτέρου τῶν πρός τί πως καθεστώτων μεταξὺ γένοιτ' ἂν τὸ ἴσον, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τοῦ πλείονος καὶ ἥττονος τὸ ἱκανόν, ὀξέος τε καὶ βαρέος τὸ σύμφωνον.

(269.) ἀλλὰ γὰρ τῶν τριῶν ὄντων γενῶν, τῶν τε καθ' ἑαυτὰ ὑφεστώτων καὶ τῶν κατ' ἐναντιότητα καὶ ἔτι τῶν πρός τι νοουμένων, ὀφείλει κατ' ἀνάγκην καὶ τούτων αὐτῶν ἐπάνω τι γένος τετάχθαι, καὶ πρῶτον ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὸ καὶ πᾶν γένος προϋπάρχειν τῶν ὑφ' αὑτὸ τεταγμένων εἰδῶν. ἀναιρουμένου γοῦν αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ εἴδη συναναιρεῖται, τοῦ δὲ εἴδους ἀναιρεθέντος οὐκέτ' ἀνασκευάζεται τὸ γένος· ἤρτηται γὰρ ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦτο, καὶ οὐκ ἀνάπαλιν.

(270.) καὶ δὴ τῶν μὲν καθ' αὑτὰ νοουμένων γένος ὑπεστήσαντο Πυθαγορικῶν παῖδες, ὡς ἐπαναβεβηκός, τὸ ἕν· καθὰ γὰρ τοῦτο καθ' αὑτὸ ἔστιν, οὕτω καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν κατὰ διαφορὰν ἕν τέ ἐστι καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸ θεωρεῖται.

(271.) τῶν δὲ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν ἔλεξαν ἄρχειν, γένους τάξιν ἐπέχον, τὸ ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἄνισον· ἐν τούτοις γὰρ ἡ πάντων τῶν ἐναντιουμένων θεωρεῖται φύσις, οἷον μονῆς μὲν ἐν ἰσότητι (οὐ γὰρ ἐπιδέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧσσον), κινήσεως δὲ ἐν ἀνισότητι (ἐπιδέχεται γὰρ τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧσσον).

(272.) ὡσαύτως δὲ τὸ μὲν κατὰ φύσιν ἐν ἰσότητι (ἀκρότης γὰρ ἦν ἀνεπίτατος), τὸ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν ἐν ἀνισότητι (ἐπεδέχετο γὰρ τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ ἧσσον). ὁ δ' αὐτὸς λόγος καὶ ἐπὶ ὑγιείας καὶ νόσου εὐθύτητός τε καὶ στρεβλότητος.

("Of existing things some, they [the Pythagoreans[[16]](#footnote-16)] say, are conceived absolutely, some by way of contrariety, some relatively. Absolute, then, are those which subsist of themselves and in complete independence, such as man, horse, plant, earth, water, air, fire; for each of these is regarded absolutely and not in respect of its relation to something else.

(264.) And contraries are all those which are regarded in respect of their contrariety one to another, such as good and evil, just and unjust, advantageous and disadvantageous, holy and unholy, pious and impious, in motion and at rest, and all other things similar to these.

(265.) And relatives are the things conceived as standing in a relation to something else, such as right and left, above and below, double and half; for right is conceived as standing in relation to left, and left also as standing in relation to right, and below as related to above, and above as related to below; and similarly in the other cases.

(266.) And they say that things conceived as contraries differ from relatives. For in the case of contraries the corruption of the one is the generation of the other, as in the case of health and disease, of motion and rest; for the generation of disease is the removal of health and the generation of health is the removal of disease, and the existence of motion is the corruption of rest and the generation of rest the removal of motion. And the same account holds also in the case of pain and painlessness, of good and evil, and in general of all things that are of opposite natures.

(267.) But relatives have the property both of co-existence and of co-destruction one with the other; for there is no right unless a left also exists, nor a double unless the half also, whereof it is the double, pre-exists.

(268.) Furthermore, in the case of contraries, as a universal rule, no intermediate state is conceived, as for instance in the cases of health and disease, life and death, motion and rest; for there is nothing between healthiness and illness, and between living and being dead, or again between moving and resting. But in the case of relatives there is a middle state; for the equal (let us say) will be between the greater and the smaller, these being relatives; and so likewise the adequate between the more and the less, and the harmonious between the high and the deep.

(269.) So then, as there are these three classes—the self-existent things, those conceived as in opposition, and also those conceived as relatives, above all these there must stand of necessity a certain genus, and it must exist first for the reason that every genus must exist before the particulars classed under it. When it, then, is abolished all the particulars are abolished along with it, but when the particular is abolished the genus is not also done away with; for the former depends on the latter, and not conversely.

(270.) Thus the disciples of the Pythagoreans postulated unity as the supreme genus of the things conceived as self-existent. For even as this is self-existent, so also each of the absolute things is one and is conceived by itself.

(271.) But of the contraries the equal and the unequal are, they said, the principles and hold the rank of genus; for in them is seen the nature of all the contraries,—that of rest, for instance, in equality (for it does not admit of the more and the less), and that of motion in inequality (for it does admit of the more and the less). (272.) So too the natural in equality (for they defined it a summit not to be surpassed), but the unnatural in inequality (for it admits, they said, of the more and less). The same account holds also in the case of health and disease, and of straightness and crookedness.")

These texts show such a degree of agreement that they must be attributed to a common (Academic) tradition. However, there is a contradiction between Alexander 56, 14-15 and Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos* 10.270-271. Also according to Hermodorus (in Simplicius, *In Physica* 248, 5-10) the καθ' αὑτά ["beings existing by themselves"] are on the side of the ἴσον ["equal"], the πρὸς ἕτερα ["beings existing in relation to others"] on the side of the ἄνισον ["unequal"] (=μέγα καὶ μικρόν ["great-and-small"]). Krämer (2014, p. 449) comments on this:

"The position of the ἴσον does not quite agree with Alexander and Sextus, however, Hermodorus seems to speak rather for Sextus. If the tradition is clouded somewhere, one will have to look for the mistake first with Alexander, not with Sextus."

Alexander's version immediately makes sense when we establish the equation: καθ' αὑτό ["existing by itself"] = οὐσία ["entity"] = ἀριθμός ["number"]. Then we have a dichotomy between the numbers and their constitutive properties equal and unequal. This fits in well with the tradition that Xenocrates both defended the Platonic dichotomy into absolute and relative (against the Aristotelian plurality of categories, see our volume 3, p. 81) and recognized (instead of the Ideas) the mathematical objects as the primary entities. Hermodorus and Sextus, on the other hand, ask rather the other way round: in which categories do the principles belong?

Academic ontology is based on a comparison of entities with numbers (starting with the two, see our vol. 3, pp. 60 and 62). Each particular number has in common with entities such as man and horse (these are the standard examples of absolute things, see volume 3, p. 132) that it has no contrary contraries and no more and less (cf. *Categoriae* 5b11-25). In this respect both belong to the *per se entia* (τὰ καθ' αὑτά). According to the classification of being attributed to Xenocrates, opposite to these stand the *relativa* (τὰ πρός τι) (see vol. 3, p. 81). These are coextensive with the contraries. One of the contraries is explained more closely: μονή-κίνησις (motion - rest, 10.271. According to *Topica* 142a19-20 the resting belongs to the determinate, the moved to the indeterminate.). Distinguishing features are that there are γένεσις καὶ φθορά ("generation and corruption") between them (10.266), but no μέσον ("intermediate") (10.268). The contraries differ among themselves in that motion accepts the more and less (10.271 ἐπιδέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧσσον), rest does not. Therefore they fall under the genus τὸ ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἄνισον ("equality and unequality") (10.271). In this kind of contraries only one member has the more and less (in our example motion), in the others (e. g. much - little) both parts of the contrariety accept the more and less (Simplicius 248, 1; 248, 5-6). This includes what Aristotle (*Metaphysica* M, 1085a12) calls "species of the Great and Small": broad-tight, heavy-light etc. (Simplicius 248, 7-8), much-less, deep-flat (Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos* 10.273). Between these contraries there is a μέσον (intermediate), the ἴσον (equality); the two extremes are opposed to it as τὸ ἄνισον (unequality). Their genus is ὑπεροχὴ καὶ ἔλλειψις ("excess and deficiency").[[17]](#footnote-17) The contraries of the first species fall under the genus equal - unequal (ἴσον - ἄνισον), those of the other species (e. g. the extremes foolhardiness and cowardice, whose intermediate is bravery: *Ethica Nicomachea* 1107a33-b4; see Krämer 1959, pp. 347-350) under μέγα καὶ μικρόν (great and small) or ὑπεροχὴ καὶ ἔλλειψις (excess and deficiency). Two as first number is the prototype of plurality; with it, indeterminacy (τὸ ἀόριστον) comes into play, which is why it is called (as an ideal number) ἀόριστος δυάς ["indeterminate dyad"]. In contrast, unity (τὸ ἕν) stands for determinacy (τὸ ὡρισμένον).

The Academic classification is a descending one:

1. καθ' αὑτά ("beings by themselves"), to whom nothing is contrary. their genus and principle is unity alone.

2. ἐναντία ["contraries"], which have no μέσον ("intermediate") and which are not "sublated together" (συναναιρεῖται).[[18]](#footnote-18) Their genus is ἴσον - ἄνισον.

3. ἐναντία ["contraries"], which have a μέσον ("intermediate") and are "sublated together" (συναναιρεῖται). Whose genus is μέγα - μικρόν ("great and small"). In the middle class unity is still present in the form of the equal, in the third class no longer at all; here only the pure opposite of unity prevails, it is the realm of indeterminacy and disorder, "the boundless sea of unlikeness" of Plato's *Politicus* (273d).

The apparent contradictions in tradition arise from the fact that one or the other meaning of relativity or contrariety is alternately presupposed as the only valid one.

Thus, in the *Divisiones Aristoteleae*, contrary to the rest of the tradition, a distinction is made between contraries that have an intermediate and those that have none (65, 24-66, 3 Mutschmann; cf. *Categoriae* 11b38-12a20); the example "greater -smaller," which Sextus cites in § 268 for the relative, is added to the former. Krämer (1959, p.283, n. 90, on p. 284) believes that the dissenting classification of Sextus is "factually wrong" and "obviously not based on different origins but on incomplete tradition". (Also crooked Gaiser 521: the classification in the Codex Marcianus is "more precise".). But what should Sextus have omitted? His classification is logically coherent in itself. The criteria of differentiation that Sextus gives in §§ 266-268 are conditional, as just the comparison with 65, 27-66, 3 Mutschmann shows: mutual exclusion of existence between motion and rest, life and death means immediate transition from one to the other, thus lack of an intermediate.

Cherniss (n. 192, p. 287) has taken offense that ἀγαθόν and κακόν are classified under πρὸς ἐναντία (Hermodorus) and κατ' ἐναντίωσιν (Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos* 10.264 and 266) respectively, which have no μέσον, in contradiction to unequicocal passages in Plato (*Gorgias* 467e, *Symposium* 202b), also to Xenocrates fr. 76 and *Divisiones Aristoteleae* § 68 (= p. 65, 26 Mutschmann). This undeniable contradiction is due to the fact that in the present tradition ἀγαθόν and κακόν are identified with ἴσον - ἄνισον.

A similarly abrupt contrariety was also assumed by the Stoics between φρόνησις (prudence) and ἀφροσύνη (imprudence) (Plutarch, *De communibus notitiis* c. 10, pp. 1062-1063 = SVF 3.167, 29-31; Simplicius, *In Categorias* 389, 3 = SVF 2.50, 11-12), ἀρετή (virtue) and κακία (vice) (Diogenes Laertius 7.127 = SVF 3.143, 15-16).

The characterization given by Sextus (10.266) ἡ τοῦ ἑτέρου φθορὰ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῦ ἑτέρου ["one will perish is another"] is identical in content with that of ὑγίεια - νόσος (health -illness) in *Gorgias* 495e-496b. The question is, however, in what way this characterization makes the examples suitable for their reduction on ἴσον and ἄνισον (§ 271), which it is intended to. We can place this kind of contrary opposition in the Academic system of derivation by using a sentence ascribed to Diogenes Laertius (8.35) of Pythagoras, but obviously of Academic origin:

ὑγίειαν τὴν τοῦ εἴδους διαμονήν, νόσον τὴν τούτου φθοράν.

("Health means permanence of the form, disease its destruction.")

Then health and illness are confronted with each other like rest and motion. These occur in § 271; there it is indirectly said that motion ἐπιδέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧσσον ["accepts the more and less"]. This is consistent with *Categoriae* 11b1-7, because the category "action and passion" (τὸ ποιεῖν καὶ τὸ πάσχειν) appears at others (*Metaphysica* 1029b24-25, *Ethica Eudemia* 1217b26-29) as "motion" (κίνησις).

The ontology depicted has left no discernible impression on Neoplatonism. Alexander of Aphrodisias was apparently the last one who knew the writing "On the Good" from his own reading, and already with Sextus Empiricus the tradition is clouded and mixed with Stoic terminology (κατὰ διαφοράν). But still the young Augustine, when he wrote his treatise about the beautiful, knew from hearsay the doctrine of the monad as the origin of determinacy and the dyad as the origin of indeterminacy, see *Confessiones* IV 15.

Augustine received the Academic doctrine of principles in the simplified form, in which the distinction between one and two as numbers and unity and indeterminate dyad as principles was no longer made, e. g. in Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae* 270 A-B:

ἀριθμοῦ δὲ θεῖον ἡ ἀρχή· μονὰς γάρ ἐστιν· ἡ δὲ μετ' αὐτὴν δυὰς ἀντίπαλος τῇ ἀρχῇ καὶ ἀρτίων πρώτη· τὸ δ' ἄρτιον ἐνδεὲς καὶ ἀτελὲς καὶ ἀόριστον, ὥσπερ αὖ τὸ περιττὸν ὥρισται καὶ περαίνει καὶ τέλειόν ἐστι.

("The principle of number is divine; for it is unit. The number next is two, opposite to the first, and is the first of even numbers. But an even number is defective, imperfect, and indeterminate; as again an odd number is determinate, completing, and perfect.")

## 4.2. Stoic monism

Among the Stoics there is the same dualism of active god and passive matter as in Platonism, but subordinated to the one Zeus, from whom in eternal change of expansion (= world emergence) and contraction (= world fire, ekpýrosis) the plurality of things emerges and into whom it returns (cf. the chapter "The cycle of nature") - a momentous thought that - detemporalized - lives on as próhodos ("procession" = emanation) and epistrophé ("return") in Neoplatonic metaphysics (cf. below, 5.2.2.). The logical schema of this monism is the Stoic pyramid of concepts.

### 4.2.1. Stoic ontology

Stoics and Epicureans belong in a history of metaphysics also because they (especially the Stoics) have developed an ontology (a "metaphysica generalis") (like later the materialist Hobbes).

What we can call "Stoic ontology" is a pyramid of concepts from the "primary genera" of being. It has been handed down relatively late and goes back at the most to Chrysippus. It has the same structure as the "tree of Porphyry" (see below, 6.2.3.).

The main source is Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Categorias* 66, 32-67, 2 (= SVF 2.124, 28-38; cf. Plotinus 6.1.25, 1-3 = SVF 2.125, 4-11):

Οἱ δέ γε Στωικοὶ εἰς ἐλάττονα συστέλλειν ἀξιοῦσιν τὸν τῶν πρώτων γενῶν ἀριθμὸν καί τινα ἐν τοῖς ἐλάττοσιν ὑπηλλαγμένα παραλαμβάνουσιν. ποιοῦνται γὰρ τὴν τομὴν εἰς τέσσαρα, εἰς ὑποκείμενα καὶ ποιὰ καὶ πῶς ἔχοντα καὶ πρός τί πως ἔχοντα.

("The Stoics see fit to reduce the number of the primary genera, and others they take over with minor changes. For they make their classification a fourfold one, into substrates, the qualified, the disposed, and the relatively disposed.")

As the Aristotelian "categories" are a description of the "sitting Socrates" (cf. our vol. 3, p. 353), the four Stoic "genera," put together, exhaust the common essence of the innerworldly beings. "This classification is not to be understood as if the four genera were associated with one another. The genera are subordinated to each other in such a way that the preceding remains in the following, but a new determination accedes." (Adolf Trendelenburg, p. 220) 'qualified' are qualified substances, 'disposed in a certain way' are qualified substances disposed in a certain way. This "addition" corresponds to the "addition" (πρόσθεσις), the opposite of the "abstraction" (ἀφαίρεσις), in the *via abstractionis* (cf. below, 5.3.1.).

By the "substrate" they understood the substance of things, apart from any quality[[19]](#footnote-19), and applied the term in the real sense to the primary matter as the substance on which all things are based.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Diogenes Laertius 7.150 (= SVF 1.25, 1):

Οὐσίαν δέ φασι τῶν ὄντων ἁπάντων τὴν πρώτην ὕλην, ὡς καὶ Χρύσιππος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν Φυσικῶν καὶ Ζήνων.

("The primary matter they make the substance of all things.")

If we substitute fire (taken over from Heraclitus) for substrate, we can derive the most important beings[[21]](#footnote-21) for the Stoics, the virtues (ἀρεταί) as follows:

By adding to fire the quality "artificial" (τεχνικόν SVF 1.34, 25; 2.217, 14 = artificiosum 1.44, 2) or "intellectual" (νοερόν SVF 2.146, 18; 223, 2 and 9) (as a new determination, see the above Trendelenburg quotation), the divine "spirit" (the *pneuma* thought of as a body; *pneuma* means "breath," like the Latin equivalent "spiritus," which is derived from spirare = "breathing"), which takes the place of the *hegemonikón* (the "leading") in the human soul (*psyché*, also to think of as a body, as is usual with Homer and all the times before Plato) and in the cosmos (SVF 2.307, 4-7). πὼς ἔχον (behaving in a certain way), it is virtue[[22]](#footnote-22), which is equated with science (ἐπιστήμη) in good Socratic terms.[[23]](#footnote-23) Since science is relative to an object (πρός τι), the individual virtues = sciences are πρός τι πὼς ἔχοντα ("relatives behaving in a certain way").[[24]](#footnote-24)

Virtue (ἀρετή) is "animus quodam modo se habens (= πνεῦμα πὼς ἔχον, cf. Alexander, *In Topica* 360, 10 = SVF 2.126, 27) in Seneca, *Epistulae Morales* 113.2 (= SVF 3.75, 19).

All individuals fall under the genus πρός τι πὼς ἔχον ("behaving in a certain way in relation to something"), see Chrysippus (in Plutarch, *De Stoicorum repugnantiis* 1054 E-F = SVF 2.173, 24-26):

τέλεον μὲν ὁ κόσμος σῶμά ἐστιν, οὐ τέλεα δὲ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου μέρη τῷ πρὸς τὸ ὅλον πως ἔχειν καὶ μὴ καθ' αὑτὰ εἶναι.

("The world is a perfect body whereas the parts of the world are not perfect, since they behave in a certain way to the whole and are not by themselves.")

"Artificial" or "intellectual" is fire as an active, demiurgical divine principle. The Stoics combined the definition of the beings (ὄντα) as δύναμις of ποιεῖν and παθεῖν ("faculty of action and passion") from Plato's *Sophista* (247d-e) with the two-causes-doctrine of the *Timaeus* as handed down in Platonic tradition: God (demiurge) and matter. With the demiurge, the Stoics adopted the idea of a θεία τέχνη ("divine art") (cf. our volume 3, p. 35); being a body, the demiurge turned into a πῦρ τεχνικόν ("artificial fire") (Diogenes Laertius 7.156 = SVF 1.44, 9-10).

But they did not stop at the dualism of active God - passive matter, but set at the beginning an original substance that embraces both principles (ἀρχαί) in itself. This original substance is identified with Heraclitus' fire (which is not yet differentiated into the qualities active - passive) and with the godfather Zeus. So we have to distinguish between the god as original substance and the derived god as active principle.

Physically, the emergence of a lower genus from the higher (by adding a new determination) means emanation, the preservation of the higher, more abstract genus participation (cf. above the Trendelenburg quotation).

According to Alexander (*In Aristotelis Topica* 301, 22-25 [= SVF 2.117, 5-8], cf. Plotinus 6.1.25, 6-7), the four "primary genera" fall within the genus "something" (τὶ), which embraces both bodies and incorporeals:

ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι [scilicet οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς] νομοθετήσαντες αὑτοῖς τὸ ὂν κατὰ σωμάτων μόνων λέγεσθαι διαφεύγοιεν ἂν τὸ ἠπορημένον· διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ τὶ γενικώτερον αὐτοῦ [scilicet τοῦ ὄντος] φασιν εἶναι, κατηγορούμενον οὐ κατὰ σωμάτων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ ἀσωμάτων.

("But they [the Stoics] would escape the difficulty by legislating for themselves that 'existent' is said only of bodies; for on this ground they say that 'something' is more generic than it, being predicated not only of bodies but also of incorporeals.")

"Four species of the incorporeals" are mentioned by Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos* 10.218 (= SVF 2.117, 9-12):

οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς φιλόσοφοι ἀσώματον αὐτὸν [scilicet τὸν χρόνον] ᾠήθησαν ὑπάρχειν· τῶν γὰρ τινῶν φασι τὰ μὲν εἶναι σώματα, τὰ δὲ ἀσώματα, τῶν δὲ ἀσωμάτων τέσσαρα εἴδη καταριθμοῦνται ὡς λεκτὸν καὶ κενὸν καὶ τόπον καὶ χρόνον.

("But the Stoic philosophers supposed it [time] to be incorporeal; for they assert that of the somethings some are bodies, others incorporeal, and they enumerate four species of the incorporeals, namely, sayable and void and place and time.")

"Something" is what has "subsistence" for the mind; this is indirectly said in Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 1.17 (= SVF 2.117, 16-17):

ἀνυπόστατα γάρ ἐστι τῇ διανοίᾳ ταῦτα [scilicet τὰ οὔτινα] κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς.

("For these [the nothings] have no subsistence for the mind according to the Stoics.")

### 4.2.2. Participation and emanation

Stoic "corporealism" (that is a more precise term than "materialism" for the equation of being with corporeality, for "materiality" as passivity is only the one, worse half of corporeality) offers the advantage of being able to think the idea of "participation" in the divine[[25]](#footnote-25): the cosmic intellect must literally be "divisible" in order to be able to be in the individual human being. (For Aristotle, Platonic "participation" was only a poetic metaphor, see *Metaphysica* A, 991a20-22).

"The individual soul bears the same relation to the soul of the universe that a part does to the whole. The human soul is not only a part and emanation, as are all other living powers, of the universal power of life, but, because of its rationality, it has a special relationship to the Divine Being[[26]](#footnote-26) — a relationship which becomes closer in proportion as we allow greater play to the divine element in ourselves, i. e. to reason." (Zeller III/1, pp. 203-204)

The same idea is expressed in the image of "emanation," which became later popular in Neoplatonic metaphysics. As Marcus Aurelius, 2.4:

δεῖ δὲ ἤδη ποτὲ αἰσθέσθαι τίνος κόσμου μέρος εἶ καὶ τίνος διοικοῦντος τὸν κόσμον ἀπόρροια ὑπέστης.

("Thou must now at last perceive of what universe thou art now a part, and of what administrator of the universe thy existence is an emanation.")

Ibidem, 12.26:

ἐπελάθου δὲ καὶ τοῦ, ὅτι ὁ ἑκάστου νοῦς θεὸς καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἐρρύηκεν.

("And thou hast forgotten this too, that every man's intelligence is a god and has flowed from there.")

The expression "emanation" indicates that the classification is not a state, but a process. The particular things develop from the primordial being (which bears the name of the supreme god Zeus; thought as a body, it is alternately called primary fire, aether or (corporeal see above) "spirit").

### 4.2.3. Stoic theology

As is known, Stoicism developed out of Cynism. Diogenes Laertius (7.3) reports how Zeno of Citium was won over to Cynism when a bookseller read the second book of Xenophon's *Memorabilia Socratis*. In Xenophon (*Memorabilia Socratis* 1.4; 4.3) everything essential to Stoic theology is included (1.4.6 providence, 1.4.7 demiurge, 1.4.15 divination). (Cf. Sextus 9.92-94 in connection with 9.101; Cicero, *De natura deorum* 2.18.) Divination presupposes omniscience (not in the Aristotelian sense as knowledge of the general, but of the individual), which in turn presupposes the predictability of all events. What seemed possible only for the events in heaven because of their regularity[[27]](#footnote-27) (Thales predicted a lunar eclipse), is now assumed to be possible for all world events (determinism). The distinction sublunary - superlunary is canceled (cf. below, p. 142).

The Zeus of the Stoics is a serious, responsible politician whose *polis* is the cosmos. (The Stoic sage is therefore "cosmopolitan".) His omniscience is completely different from that of the Aristotelian god: not science that goes to the general, but knowledge of the individual ("providence," "foreknowledge"). This must be surveyable, therefore finite. For the Greeks, knowledge of the infinite was impossible; therefore the Stoics assumed the spatial limitation of the universe and the circularity of the events.

#### 4.2.3.1. The cycle of nature

The concept of a cycle plays an important role in Aristotle's view of history (see volume 3, pp. 264-268); but the existence of the cosmos remains unaffected. Not so with the Stoics. "The particular things develop out of the Primary Being; as a plant or animal out of semen." (Zeller III/1, p. 152, cf. Diogenes Laertius 7.136) The primary being first differentiates into the active and the passive principle (cf. above, p. 80). As this opposition has its origin in time, so it will also have an end in time. At the end of every period, a general conflagration will reduce all things to the original state, in which everything derivative will have ceased to exist, and Deity, or primary fire, will alone remain in its original purity. (Cf. Zeller III/1, pp. 154-155.)

Zeus is the only immortal god,[[28]](#footnote-28) which effectively means a monotheism. The one god corresponds in Neoplatonism to the One, from which in the metaphysics of the Arabs again the one god becomes. This is favored by the fact that the Arabic does not distinguish between masculinum and neutrum.

Here too we see how the determination of the highest state attainable for man is theologically justified. Cf. above, p. 55, and below, p. 99. The systematic connection between ethics and physics becomes once again clear.

#### 4.2.3.2. Stoic fatalism

The Homeric Zeus was not omnipotent, but was under the higher power of fate, which only offered him a certain scope for decision. The scene with the scales is famous. Zeus is sorry that one of two fine men, Hector and Achilles, has to die; but he cannot do anything about it: "he acts in accordance with what is ordained" (Burkert, p. 129). Because the death of one is as bad as the death of the other, he lets a balance decide it (*Iliad* 22, 209-212):

καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐπίταινε τάλαντα, ἐν δ ἐτίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο, τὴν μὲν Ἀχιλλῆος, τὴν δ Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο. ἕλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβών· ῥέπε δ' Ἕκτορος αἴσιμον ἦμαρ.

("the father balanced his golden scales   
and placed a doom in each of them,   
one for Achilles and the other for Hector.   
As he held the scales by the middle,   
the destined day of Hector fell down.")

"It is here that the problem of *Moira* or *Aisa* appears, the problem of fate, as it was later understood." (Burkert, ibidem).

The Stoics were conservative and wanted to adhere to the (Homeric) popular religion; they nevertheless radically changed it by reinterpretation (whose methods only needed to be adopted by the Christian theologians). Following their monistic fundamental view, they put Zeus and fate into one. Thus Greek polytheism effectively became a monotheism whose concept of an omnipotent world ruler could be received by Christianity.

With the divine monarch, who takes care of everything and is thus responsible for everything, they of course landed themselves with the problems of freedom of will and theodicy, as Epicurus already clearly recognized. The tricks for their solution, which were employed since Chrysippus and culminated in the desperate measure to declare the world a mere appearance ("transcendental idealism"), are well known.

Stoic determinism brings with it a reinterpretation of the concept of causality that became the prevailing concept in modern times: determined sequence of events. Voltaire speaks of a "chain of events" (*Dictionnaire philosophique portatif*, London 1764, article ‹chaîne des événements›.). "Il y a long-tems qu'on a prétendu que tous les événemens sont enchaînés les uns aux autres , par une fatalité invincible; c'est le destin qui dans Homere est supérieur à Jupiter même." (p. 55) ("It has long been claimed that all events are linked to each other by an invincible fatality: it is Destiny which, in Homer, is above Jupiter.")

The said "chain" is that of causes and effects; "the real kernel of the Stoic fatalism is expressed in the maxim, that nothing can take place without a sufficient cause, nor, under given circumstances, can happen differently from what has happened.[[29]](#footnote-29) This were as impossible, according to the Stoics, as for something to come out of nothing." (Zeller III/1, p. 165)[[30]](#footnote-30)

The Stoics, who made every effort to provide the popular religion with a philosophical foundation, therefore postulated a deity that foresees the future with absolute certainty. For this, in turn, it required the assumption that future events were strictly determined, which Aristotle (in *De interpretatione*) had denied. The Stoics called this necessity heimarméne, Latin fatum.

Like many other philosophers, the Stoics had a predilection for etymological interpretations. So they connected εἱμαρμένη with εἱρμός (series) and spoke (SVF 2.266, 1 and 10) of εἱρμὸς αἰτιῶν (series causarum, SVF 2.268, 13).

This introduces a new concept of cause compared to Aristotle: "cause" is an event from which another event arises. The question of such a cause is already posed at the beginning of the *Iliad* (1, 6-7): from what did the "perishable anger" (1, 1-2) of Achilles arise? In Aristotle (*Metaphysica* Δ, 1023a29-31) this is a kind of "being out of something". "Abusive language" (λοιδορία) and "fight" (μάχη) are two successive events, of which the former is called the "principle that moved".[[31]](#footnote-31) Cf. *De generatione animalium* 778a35-b1.

Divination is replaced in modern science by observation in order to discover the rules of succession, the "laws of nature".

In Hume and Kant, the phrases "chain of events," "series of events," "chain of causes," "series of causes" are frequent, without reference to the theological background of fatalism.

## 4.3. The monistic turn of the Neopythagoreans

The equation Zeus = monad in Xenocrates (see below, p. 97) is perhaps the link between the monism of the Stoics and the monism of the Neopythagoreans. In any case, in the Neopythagorean system the monad takes the same place as the primordial body in the Stoic system, see Alexander Polyhistor in Diogenes Laertius 8.24-25:

Φησὶ δ' ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν Ταῖς τῶν φιλοσόφων διαδοχαῖς καὶ ταῦτα εὑρηκέναι ἐν Πυθαγορικοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν.

[25] ἀρχὴν μὲν τῶν ἁπάντων μονάδα· ἐκ δὲ τῆς μονάδος ἀόριστον δυάδα ὡς ἂν ὕλην τῇ μονάδι αἰτίῳ ὄντι ὑποστῆναι· ἐκ δὲ τῆς μονάδος καὶ τῆς ἀορίστου δυάδος τοὺς ἀριθμούς· ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἀριθμῶν τὰ σημεῖα· ἐκ δὲ τούτων τὰς γραμμάς, ἐξ ὧν τὰ ἐπίπεδα σχήματα· ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἐπιπέδων τὰ στερεὰ σχήματα· ἐκ δὲ τούτων τὰ αἰσθητὰ σώματα.

("Alexander in his Successions of Philosophers says that he found in the Pythagorean memoirs the following tenets as well. The principle of all things is the monad or unit; arising from this monad the indeterminate dyad or two serves as material substratum to the monad, which is cause; from the monad and the indeterminate dyad spring numbers; from numbers, points; from points, lines; from lines, plane figures; from plane figures, solid figures; from solid figures, sensible bodies.")

Also Sextus (*Adversus mathematicos* 10.261):

ἔνθεν κινηθεὶς ὁ Πυθαγόρας ἀρχὴν ἔφησεν εἶναι τῶν ὄντων τὴν μονάδα, ἧς κατὰ μετοχὴν ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων ἓν λέγεται· καὶ ταύτην κατ' αὐτότητα μὲν ἑαυτῆς νοουμένην μονάδα νοεῖσθαι, ἐπισυντεθεῖσαν δ' ἑαυτῇ καθ' ἑτερότητα ἀποτελεῖν τὴν καλουμένην ἀόριστον δυάδα διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν τῶν ἀριθμητῶν καὶ ὡρισμένων δυάδων εἶναι τὴν αὐτήν, πάσας δὲ κατὰ μετοχὴν αὐτῆς δυάδας νενοῆσθαι, καθὼς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς μονάδος ἐλέγχουσιν.

("Pythagoras, moved by these considerations, declared that unity is the principle of existing things, by participation in which each of the existing things is termed one; and this when conceived in its self-identity is conceived as One, but when, in its otherness, it is added to itself it creates the «Indeterminate Dyad,» so-called because it is not itself any one of the numbered and determinate dyads but they all are conceived as dyads through their participation in it, even as they try to prove in the case of the monad.")

A further evidence is afforded by Alexander of Aphrodisias who (*In Aristotelis Metaphysica*, pp. 58, 31-59, 8) reports that Eudorus and Euharmostus changed the text of *Metaphysica* A, 987b11 into τοῖς δὲ εἰδόσι τὸ ἓν καὶ τῇ ὕλῃ ("but in the view of those who know, unity is cause even for matter") - if we are not prepared to take, with Paul Moraux (*Eine Korrektur des Mittelplatonikers Eudorus zum Text der Metaphysik des Aristoteles*, in Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben, Berlin 1969, vol. II, p. 499), καὶ τῇ ὕλῃ as variant reading to καὶ τῇ κατὰ τὴν ὕλην in l. 10. Decisive arguments against Moraux are two facts already alleged by Heinrich Dörrie in 1944:

(1) "The most surprising thing about this change is the fact that Plato is attributed a special doctrine for initiates. Nothing could more clearly point out that this change of text is influenced from Pythagorean thinking." (Dörrie, p. 35)

(2) Dörrie (p. 36) points to Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Physica*, p. 181, 17-19. We prefer to reproduce the whole Eudorus passage (181, 7-30):

Καὶ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι δὲ οὐ τῶν φυσικῶν μόνων ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων ἁπλῶς μετὰ τὸ ἕν, ὃ πάντων ἀρχὴν ἔλεγον, ἀρχὰς δευτέρας καὶ στοιχειώδεις τὰ έναντία ἐτίθεσαν, αἷς καὶ τὰς δύο συστοιχίας ὑπέταττον οὐκέτι κυρίως ἀρχαῖς οὔσαις. γράφει δὲ περὶ τούτων ὁ Εὔδωρος τάδε· “κατὰ τὸν ἀνωτάτω (10) λόγον φατέον τοὺς Πυθαγορικοὺς τὸ ἓν ἀρχὴν τῶν πάντων λέγειν, κατὰ δὲ τὸν δεύτερον λόγον δύο ἀρχὰς τῶν ἀποτελουμένων εἶναι, τό τε ἓν καὶ τὴν ἐναντίαν τούτῳ φύσιν. ὑποτάσσεσθαι δὲ πάντων τῶν κατὰ ἐναντίωσιν ἐπινοουμένων τὸ μὲν ἀστεῖον τῷ ἑνί, τὸ δὲ φαῦλον τῇ πρὸς τοῦτο ἐναντιουμένῃ φύσει. διὸ μηδὲ εἶναι τὸ σύνολον ταύτας ἀρχὰς κατὰ τοὺς ἄνδρας. (15) εἰ γὰρ ἡ μὲν τῶνδε ἡ δὲ τῶνδέ ἐστιν ἀρχή, οὐκ εἰσὶ κοιναὶ πάντων ἀρχαὶ ὥσπερ τὸ ἕν”. καὶ πάλιν “διό, φησί, καὶ κατ' ἄλλον τρόπον ἀρχὴν ἔφασαν εἶναι τῶν πάντων τὸ ἕν, ὡς ἂν καὶ τῆς ὕλης καὶ τῶν ὄντων πάντων ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγενημένων. τοῦτο δὲ εἶναι καὶ τὸν ὑπεράνω θεόν”. καὶ λοιπὸν ἀκριβολογούμενος ὁ Εὔδωρος ἀρχὴν μὲν τὸ ἓν αὐτοὺς τίθεσθαι λέγει, (20) στοιχεῖα δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς γενέσθαι φησίν, ἃ πολλοῖς αὐτοὺς ὀνόμασιν προσαγορεύειν. λέγει γάρ· “φημὶ τοίνυν τοὺς περὶ τὸν Πυθαγόραν τὸ μὲν ἓν πάντων ἀρχὴν ἀπολιπεῖν, κατ' ἄλλον δὲ τρόπον δύο τὰ ἀνωτάτω στοιχεῖα παρεισάγειν. καλεῖν δὲ τὰ δύο ταῦτα στοιχεῖα πολλαῖς προσηγορίαις· τὸ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν ὀνομάζεσθαι τεταγμένον ὡρισμένον γνωστὸν ἄρρεν περιττὸν (25) δεξιὸν φῶς, τὸ δὲ ἐναντίον τούτῳ ἄτακτον ἀόριστον ἄγνωστον θῆλυ ἀριστερὸν ἄρτιον σκότος, ὥστε ὡς μὲν ἀρχὴ τὸ ἕν, ὡς δὲ στοιχεῖα τὸ ἓν καὶ ἡ ἀόριστος δυάς, ἀρχαὶ ἄμφω ἓν ὄντα πάλιν. καὶ δῆλον ὅτι ἄλλο μέν ἐστιν ἓν ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν πάντων, ἄλλο δὲ ἓν τὸ τῇ δυάδι ἀντικείμενον, ὃ καὶ μονάδα καλοῦσιν”.

("The Pythagoreans assumed that, after unity which they said to be the principle of all things, secondary and elementary principles were the contraries, not only of natural beings, but absolutely of all. To these they also subordinated the two columns [cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* A, 986a23-26], since they did not regard them as principles in the true sense. On this, Eudorus writes the following:

«It must be stated that according to the higher account the Pythagoreans call unity the principle of all things, but according to the other account there are two principles of things that are perfected—unity and the nature opposite to it. Out of everything that can be considered according to contrariety that which is noble is subordinated to unity; and that which is base, to the nature set in contrariety to it. Thus, these are in no way principles, by these men's account. For if there is one principle for these things, another for those, they are not common principles for all things, as is the case with unity.»

And again he says: «Wherefore they said that unity is the principle of all things in a different manner, in the sense that matter and all beings come into existence from it. And this unity, they said, is also the supreme god.»

Furthermore, Eudorus makes it clear that they accepted unity as a principle; the elements, which they name with multiple names, have sprung from unity. He says: «So I will say that the Pythagoreans bequeathed unity as the principle of all things, and in a different manner brought in a duality of supreme elements. They call these two elements by various names. For one of them is called ordered, determinate, knowable, male, odd, right, light; its contrary disordered, indeterminate, unknowable, female, even, left, darkness. Thus they suppose as principle unity, as elements unity and the indeterminate dyad, both being principles insofar they are one. And it is clear that we must distinguish between unity as principle of all beings, and unity as opposed to the dyad, which is called by them also monad.»")

The monistic interpretation of the Academic theory of principles leads to the problem, formulated by Plotinus (5.2.1, 3-9), how plurality can proceed from unity. This "procession" (πρόοδος) will, under the name of "emanation," still determine the understanding of "creation" among the Christian philosophers.

## 4.4. Plotinus' monistic transformation of the Academic ontology

In its self-understanding, Neoplatonism is the systematization of Platonic philosophy, whereby dialogues are binding and take precedence over the indirect tradition in Aristotle. Thus Plotinus is faced with the task of imposing the monism of the solar parable (Plato, *Res publica*) against the dualism of the doctrine of principles, to thematize "the emergence of the second [indeterminate dyad] from the first [unity]" (Szlezák, p. 112). The second principle loses its function of being the principle of bad (Slezák, p. 111), so that Neoplatonism faces the same theodicy problem as Stoicism ("where does the evil come from?," πόθεν τὰ κακά, see Enneás 1.8.). The "central question" (Szlezák 69) is, then, how does plurality arise from unity, see Enneás 5.1.6, 3-6:

ἐπιποθεῖ δὲ [ἡ ψυχὴ] τὸ θρυλλούμενον δὴ τοῦτο καὶ παρὰ τοῖς πάλαι σοφοῖς, πῶς ἐξ ἑνὸς τοιούτου ὄντος, οἷον λέγομεν τὸ ἓν εἶναι, ὑπόστασιν ἔσχεν ὁτιοῦν εἴτε πλῆθος εἴτε δυὰς εἴτε ἀριθμός.

("The soul … longs to answer the question repeatedly discussed also by the ancient philosophers, how from unity, if it is such as we say it is, anything else, whether a plurality or a dyad or a number, came into existence.")

Cf. 5.4.2, 12 and 5.5.4, 27-28.

Plotinus' response is (as with Stoics) emanation (see 5.2.2.).

# 5. Integrating Aristotelian metaphysics into the Neoplatonic system

The classicist attitude of the beginning imperial period (see above, 2.1.) expresses itself in philosophy as dogmatism: the truth has already been found (cf. Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoneae hypotyposes* 1.1-3); it is now necessary to interpret the existing classical literature, to arrange it systematically and thus make it subject to the education of the individual. Even in Cicero[[32]](#footnote-32), one can see that Plato and Aristotle have the highest esteem. The period of the so-called "Middle Platonism" begins, in which the reception and transformation of Aristotelian metaphysics, fundamental for subsequent periods, takes place.

"The rediscovery of Aristotle's esoteric writings played a decisive role in the reestablishment of dogmatic Platonism from the 1st century BC. Like Aristotle's texts, Plato's dialogues were also subjected to exegetical-hermeneutic treatment." (Opsomer 410a)

## 5.1. Platonism as an educational program

In his classic monograph "Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité," Henri-Irénée Marrou dedicates a chapter to philosophy (pp. 283-296). In the section "L'enseignement philosophique" (pp. 284-288) he presents the Hellenistic sects from the aspect of education (Greek: paideía). Among the Neoplatonists, the "actual program of philosophy" was preceded by a "propaedeutics based on mathematics," i. e. the Pythagorean *quadrivium*, which was rejected by Stoics and Epicureans (cf. above, p. 67).

"The actual study of philosophy begins with a fairly elementary initiation: whatever the school to which one belongs, one begins by acquiring some general notions of the history of philosophy: The Greek student, like today our own, learned that thought had begun his career in Ionia, with the great «physicists,» that the «principle of things» was water for Thales, the infinite for Anaximander, the air for Anaximenes and for Heraclitus fire; - and, like our young people, he did not know much more about it: These elements were transmitted to him through textbooks without originality, indefinitely copied one on the other; the modern erudition endeavors to reconstitute the history of this doxographic tradition [see Diels' *Doxographi Graeci*] which, begun with Theophrastus, had led to the collections of Arius Didymus and Aetius, whose remains we find in Plutarch, Stobaeus and the History of Philosophy transmitted under the name of Galen.

Then came a course, still exoteric, on the doctrine proper to the school: thanks, for example, to Apuleius (*De Platone et eius dogmate*) and Albinus (Eisagogé; Epitomé [= Alcinous, *Didascalicus*]), we can get an idea of how the scholarch Gaius initiated his students to Platonism in Athens, around 140 AD. The studious Apuleius has also redacted the course of Peripatetic philosophy which he listened to in parallel: this should not surprise; it is not necessary, to explain it, to invoke the general tendency to eclecticism which characterizes the Hellenistic and Roman era: it is always only an elementary initiation, which does not necessarily imply a profound adhesion, nor even a conversion to philosophy; to acquire some clarifications on the whole of the philosophical doctrines was a simple complement of general culture: as we note it in the case of Galen, it could seem normal to take successively contact with the four great traditions of Hellenistic philosophy [Academic, Peripatetic, Stoic, Epicurean].

The real teaching of the school only began afterwards. It also presented a double aspect: in the first place exegesis of the classics of the sect, and first of the works of the great ancestor, the founder: Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno of Citium or more often Chrysippus (among the Stoics). As the rhetorician explained the speakers registered in the canon, philosophers «read,» that is, explained and commented on classical texts" (pp. 285-286).

That Marrou speaks of "initiation" has a background: in the overview of the Neoplatonic educational process given by Theo of Smyrna (*Expositio rerum mathematicarum ad legendum Platonem utilium*, p. 15, 11-18 Hiller), it is actually parallelized with the stages of initiation:

ὁ δὲ Πλάτων ἀπὸ πέντε μαθημάτων δεῖν φησι ποιεῖσθαι τὴν κάθαρσιν· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ἀριθμητική, γεωμετρία, στερεομετρία, μουσική, ἀστρονομία. τῇ δὲ τελετῇ ἔοικεν ἡ τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν θεωρημάτων παράδοσις, τῶν τε λογικῶν καὶ πολιτικῶν καὶ φυσικῶν. ἐποπτείαν δὲ ὀνομάζει τὴν περὶ τὰ νοητὰ καὶ τὰ ὄντως ὄντα καὶ τὰ τῶν ἰδεῶν πραγματείαν.

("Plato says that one must seek purification in the five mathematical sciences, which are arithmetic, geometry, stereometry, music and astronomy. The tradition of philosophical, logical, political and natural principles responds to initiation. He calls vision the occupation of the mind to intelligible things, to true existences and to Ideas.")

In this overview, philosophy is divided into logic, politics, and physics. This is, slightly modified, the classification into logic, ethics, and physics attributed to Xenocrates (Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 7.16 = Xenocrates fr 1 Heinze). It must contain the entire philosophy of Plato, including the doctrine of Ideas, the "vision" (ἐποπτεία). That physics is last mentioned, has its reason: from the same Xenocrates, the definition of the Idea as "pattern of whatever is constituted by nature" (fr. 30 Heinze: ὁ Ξενοκράτης, εἶναι τὴν ἰδέαν θέμενος αἰτίαν παραδειγματικὴν τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἀεὶ συνεστώτων; cf. Diogenes Laertius 3.77 and Plato's *Parmenides* 132d) originates. It makes it possible to insert the doctrine of Ideas into physics, as its climax.

The Aristotelian variant of initiation occurs in a passage at Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride* 382d-e), which Ross (*Aristotelis Fragmenta Selecta*, p. 23) has placed among the fragments of Aristotle[[33]](#footnote-33):

ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ εἰλικρινοῦς καὶ ἁπλοῦ νόησις ὥσπερ ἀστραπὴ διαλάμψασα τῆς ψυχῆς ἅπαξ ποτὲ θιγεῖν καὶ προσιδεῖν παρέσχε. διὸ καὶ Πλάτων [*Symposium* 210a[]](http://www-1tlg-1uci-1edu-1tlg.emedia1.bsb-muenchen.de/help/BetaManual/online/SB1.html" \t "morph) καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐποπτικὸν τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τῆς φιλοσοφίας καλοῦσιν, καθ' ὅσον οἱ τὰ δοξαστὰ καὶ μικτὰ καὶ παντοδαπὰ ταῦτα παραμειψάμενοι τῷ λόγῳ πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἁπλοῦν καὶ ἄυλον ἐξάλλονται καὶ θιγόντες ἀληθῶς τῆς περὶ αὐτὸ καθαρᾶς ἀληθείας οἷον ἐν τελετῇ τέλος ἔχειν φιλοσοφίας νομίζουσι.

("The intellection of that which is intelligible, pure, and simple, flashing like lightning through the soul, grants it at times to touch and see. This is why Plato and Aristotle call this part of philosophy a mystic vision, inasmuch as those who forsake these confused and various objects of opinion leap in thought to that primary, simple, and immaterial object, and, gaining true contact with the pure truth about it, think that, as though by initiation into the mysteries, they have attained the end of philosophy.")

The simple substances of *Metaphysica* Θ 10 (1051b27) are clearly recognizable, along with the "contact" (1051b24-25).

In Plutarch's view, Plato understood geometry, which moves man from the obvious to "intelligible and eternal nature," as the beginning of that scientific path whose goal is the vision of this nature, "just as vision (epopteía) is the goal of consecration" (*Quaestiones convivales* 718 D):

ὑμνῶν γεωμετρίαν ὡς ἀποσπῶσαν ἡμᾶς προσισχομένους τῇ αἰσθήσει καὶ ἀποστρέφουσαν ἐπὶ τὴν νοητὴν καὶ ἀίδιον φύσιν, ἧς θέα τέλος ἐστὶ φιλοσοφίας οἷον ἐποπτεία τελετῆς;

("[Plato] praiseth geometry as a science that takes off men from sensible objects, and makes them apply themselves to the intelligible and eternal Nature, the contemplation of which is the end of philosophy, as vision is the end of initiation.")

In Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 1.28.176.1) we find "metaphysics" equated (or at least placed on the same level) with "the vision which is, as Plato says, vision of the really great mysteries":

ἡ ἐποπτεία, ἥν φησιν ὁ Πλάτων τῶν μεγάλων ὄντως εἶναι μυστηρίων, Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ τὸ εἶδος τοῦτο μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ καλεῖ.

Such a statement is nowhere to be found in Plato. Clement follows a tradition in which introduction into the Platonic philosophy was parallelized with initiation into the mysteries.

What the initiated could see, we learn from another passage (*Stromata* 5.11.71.2):

λάβοιμεν δ' ἂν τὸν μὲν καθαρτικὸν τρόπον ὁμολογίᾳ, τὸν δὲ ἐποπτικὸν ἀναλύσει ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην νόησιν προχωροῦντες, δι' ἀναλύσεως ἐκ τῶν ὑποκειμένων αὐτῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν ποιούμενοι, ἀφελόντες μὲν τοῦ σώματος τὰς φυσικὰς ποιότητας, περιελόντες δὲ τὴν εἰς τὸ βάθος διάστασιν, εἶτα τὴν εἰς τὸ πλάτος, καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις τὴν εἰς τὸ μῆκος· τὸ γὰρ ὑπολειφθὲν σημεῖόν ἐστι μονὰς ὡς εἰπεῖν θέσιν ἔχουσα, ἧς ἐὰν περιέλωμεν τὴν θέσιν, νοεῖται μονάς.

("We shall understand the mode of purification by confession, and that of contemplation by analysis, advancing by analysis to the first intellection, beginning with the properties underlying it; abstracting from the body its physical properties, taking away the dimension of depth, then that of breadth, and then that of length. For the point which remains is a unit, so to speak, having position; from which if we abstract position, there is the intellection of unit.")

It is striking that the vision remains entirely within the range of the mathematical. That could go back to Xenocrates, who equated the Ideas with the mathematical numbers. If we then, with Xenocrates, equate unit with intellect[[34]](#footnote-34), we obtain, as a result, intellection of intellection as in Aristotle. The other, the dark side of the dualistic Weltanschauung falls away; it is banished to a lower range.

Nevertheless, the Weltanschauung remains dualistic in so far the lower degree of being cannot be totally derived from the higher one; something new (position) must be added in order to constitute the point.

In late antique Platonism the study of Aristotle was preceded by the Platonic cursus. The Aristotelian part of the curriculum was called 'minor mysteries'. (See Opsomer 412b.)

### Classification of philosophy

As we have already seen (p. 95), the Neoplatonists maintained the classification of philosophy into logic, physics and ethics. "In principle, the complete teaching of a philosopher should deal with three parts: logic, physic, ethic. … This framework … was accepted without discussion by all schools." (Marrou, p. 287)

While the historical allocation of physics to the pre-Socratic and of ethics to Socrates is clear, as the creator of dialectic, alternatingly Socrates (Apuleius, *De Platone*, 1.3.187[[35]](#footnote-35)), Zeno of Elea (Diogenes Laertius 1.18) and Plato (Diogenes Laertius 3.56) are mentioned. The traditions about the founder of dialectic refer to two different kinds of it: the Sophistic (Eleatic, Megaric) and the Platonic one.

The Xenocratic tripartite classification of philosophy is applied to Plato in Cicero, *Academica* 1.19 and Diogenes Laertius 3.56; to Aristotle in Cicero, *De finibus* 5.4 and Diogenes Laertius 5.28. This systematizing way of exposition persisted until Hegel and Zeller.

Alcinous (*Didascalicus* 3, 4) incorporates the tripartition of philosophy into the tripartition of theoretical sciences (*Metaphysica* E 1); Eusebius (*Praeparatio evangelica* 11.7.1) and Bonaventura (*Itinerarium mentis in Deum* 3.6, *De reductione* 4) do it *vice versa*.

The Neoplatonists adhere to the above-mentioned classification of the theoretical sciences in physics, mathematics, and theology (Iamblichus, *De communi mathematica scientia*, p. 88, 18-19 Festa). The theological view of metaphysics prevails against the Peripatetic view of metaphysics of Alexander of Aphrodisias, who (*In Metaphysica*, p. 171, 6-7 Hayduck) comments on the Aristotelian term "sought science" (995a24):

ἣν καὶ Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ἐπιγράφει τῷ τῇ τάξει μετ' ἐκείνην εἶναι πρὸς ἡμᾶς.

("which he also entitles metaphysics because it comes after physics in the order relative to us".)

Alexander therefore explains the position "after the writings on nature" with the didactic consideration that "for us [men] the object of this science lies further." ("By its very nature," metaphysics would have to precede physics.) What is farthest for us, according to Aristotle, is "the most general". "But the most general science is that of being as such" (Alexander, p. 11, 7 Hayduck).

Alexander's view was suppressed by the interpretation as hyperphysics or theology, which is consistent with its role in "vision" (epopteía), the highest level of education.

This interpretation can be found in Simplicius, who, in his commentary on the *Physica* (p. 257, 25-26 Diels), interprets μετὰ τὰ φυσικά as ὑπὲρ τὰ φυσικά. τὰ φυσικά no longer refers to "writings about nature," but to "things of nature," i. e. the object of physics. The subject of metaphysics is "that which is above the things of nature". Instead of ὑπὲρ τὰ φυσικά on page 1, 20 (Diels) ἐπέκεινα τὴν φύσιν, "beyond the things of nature" (Latin: "trans"). The "theological science," of which Aristotle speaks in book E of the *Metaphysica* (1026a19), is thus considered "metaphysics" here.

Also Asclepius, *In Metaphysica* (1, 7-8 Hayduck):

σκοπὸς μὲν οὖν ἐστι τῆς παρούσης πραγματείας τὸ θεολογῆσαι.

("The purpose of this treatise is theologizing.")

The metaphysical conception of Asclepius corresponds to the title *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus, a system of metaphysics on a Neoplatonic basis; i. e. it is not intended to accommodate the entire content of Aristotle's metaphysics.

This agreement proves that Aristotle's *Metaphysica* was intended to be replaced as a textbook. With this radical reform, Proclus did not prevail; rather, within the framework of Aristotelian metaphysics, the doctrine of the *substantiae separatae* was modified by the threefold division god - intelligences - anima separata, which corresponds to the threefold division of the *Elementatio*.

## 5.2. The object of the divine intellect

The question about the object of the mystical vision (above, p. 96) leads us to the question about the object of the divine intellect; for the said vision can only mean that man, in a state of emergency, participates in a level of knowledge the permanent possession of which is the privilege of the divine intellect (cf. *Metaphysica* Λ, 1072b24-26). This is the measure of "assimilation to God" (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, Plato, *Theaetetus* 176b, cf. *Res publica* 500c; Plotinus 1.2.3, 5-6) achievable for man.

"The purpose of assimilation to God is the admission of man into the realm of the divine. This means both acceptance into the community of the gods and access to an immediate and unrestricted view of Ideas. This double goal is achieved by the fact that godlike man is also pleasing to the gods and that the assumption of the specific qualities of the divine makes entry into its realm possible in the first place. The purpose of this ascent is to escape the evils of the human world and to attain abjectness and lasting happiness; thus, the assimilation to God serves bliss." (Dietrich Roloff in HWPh 1, pp. 307-308)

Platonic theory of Ideas and Aristotelian theology are put into one, by interpreting the Ideas as thoughts of God.

In his criticism of Aristotle, Bonaventura (*Collationes in Hexaemeron* [*Conferences on the Work of the Six Days*], VI, 2) rejects the amalgam of Platonic doctrine of Ideas and Aristotelian theology: The fundamental error of Aristotle is his rejection of Plato's Ideas, so that the divine intellect is deprived of his proper object. This makes him say that God does only know himself ("quod Deus solum novit se et non indiget notitia alicuius alterius rei"). Thus he anticipates the view of modern philology since Zeller (see our volume 3, p. 270).

The view "quod Deus non cognoscat alia a se" can be found as thesis 3 (at Flasch, p. 101) among the doctrines condemned in 1277.

The doctrine that the Ideas are "in" the mind of the divine demiurge is mentioned by Seneca (*Epistulae morales* 65.7) along with the alternative that they are "outside" ("foris"). Atticus (fr. 9, 35-53 des Places, referring to Plato, *Timaeus* 41a and the Bible, *Sapientia Salomonis* 13, 1) and Alcinous (164, 27-31 Hermann) adopt it without discussion. The latter combines it with the Aristotelian doctrine of the divine intellect (*Didascalicus* 9.1, 4-7):

Ἔστι δὲ ἡ ἰδέα ὡς μὲν πρὸς θεὸν νόησις αὐτοῦ, ὡς δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς νοητὸν πρῶτον, ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὴν ὕλην μέτρον, ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὸν αἰσθητὸν κόσμον παράδειγμα, ὡς δὲ πρὸς αὑτὴν ἐξεταζομένη οὐσία.

("Form is considered in relation to God, his thinking; in relation to us, the primary object of thought; in relation to matter, measure; in relation to the sensible world, its paradigm; and in relation to itself, essence.")

9.3, 1-3:

Ὅτι δέ εἰσιν αἱ ἰδέαι, καὶ οὕτω παραμυθοῦνται· εἴτε γὰρ νοῦς ὁ θεὸς ὑπάρχει εἴτε νοερόν, ἔστιν αὐτῷ νοήματα, καὶ ταῦτα αἰώνιά τε καὶ ἄτρεπτα· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, εἰσὶν αἱ ἰδέαι.

("They justify the existence of forms in the following way also. Whether God is an intellect or is possessed of intellect, he has thoughts, and these are eternal and unchanging; and if this is the case, forms exist.")

*Didascalicus* 10.3, 1-4:

Ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ πρῶτος νοῦς κάλλιστος, δεῖ καὶ κάλλιστον αὐτῷ νοητὸν ὑποκεῖσθαι, οὐδὲν δὲ αὐτοῦ κάλλιον· ἑαυτὸν ἂν οὖν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ νοήματα ἀεὶ νοοίη, καὶ αὕτη ἡ ἐνέργεια αὐτοῦ ἰδέα ὑπάρχει.

("Since the primary intellect is the finest of things, it follows that the object of its intelligizing must also be supremely fine. But there is nothing finer than this intellect. Therefore it must be everlastingly engaged in thinking of itself and its own thoughts, and this activity of it is Form.")

Alcinous correctly reproduces the argument of *Metaphysica* Λ, 1074b21-35, except for the additional "and its own thoughts," which introduces the doctrine of the Ideas as thoughts of God.

In Alcinous's system the divine intellect stands at the top. Plotinus ascends higher because he considers the pluralism of Ideas and the dualism of intellect and intelligible to be unsatisfactory.

### 5.2.1. God knows the singularia

We are even further removed from Aristotle, when also the task of providence is imposed on the divine intellect. It was the Stoics who did so, and they were followed by the Neoplatonists (Plotinus and Proclus wrote special treatises on providence)[[36]](#footnote-36). But there remained doubts; otherwise the question of "whether God knows the *singularia*" ("utrum Deus cognoscat singularia") would not have so much occupied Thomas Aquinas (*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, distinctio 36, articulus 1; *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, quaestio 2, articulus 5; *Summa theologiae*, Prima pars, quaestio 24, articulus 11).

In the Bible, the omniscience of God means above all that the thoughts of man are not hidden from him, see 1 Kings 8, 39 (God knows "the hearts of all the children of men") and the whole Psalm 139.

The Koran warns that the divine judge knows even the "unseen":

"Never, say the unbelievers, will the Hour come upon us!

Say: Yea, by my Lord who knoweth the unseen, it will surely come upon you! not the weight of a mote either in the heavens or in the earth escapeth Him, nor is there aught less than this or aught greater, which is not in the clear Book." (Sura 34, 3)

Under these guidelines, the Aristotelian Spectator-God was tacitly substituted by the Jewish-Christian-Islamic Judge-God, who must know all the details of the individual case (cf. our volume 3, p. 32). Like Stoic theology, this means a return to the popular idea of a solicitous deity that takes care of the individual man, as we meet it in Xenophon (*Symposium* 4.48):

οὗτοι τοίνυν οἱ πάντα μὲν εἰδότες πάντα δὲ δυνάμενοι θεοὶ οὕτω μοι φίλοι εἰσὶν ὥστε διὰ τὸ ἐπιμελεῖσθαί μου οὔποτε λήθω αὐτοὺς οὔτε νυκτὸς οὔθ' ἡμέρας οὔθ' ὅποι ἂν ὁρμῶμαι οὔθ' ὅ τι ἂν μέλλω πράττειν.

("These gods, omniscient and omnipotent, feel so friendly toward me that their watchfulness over me never lets me out of their ken night or day, no matter where I am going or what business I have in view.")

That the knowledge of god is self-knowledge now means that god is all things (pantheism). The original form of philosophical monotheism is pantheism. The pantheist Spinoza can adopt his definition of god from the scholastics and refer (Letter 73) to Paul's Areopag speech (*Acta Apostolorum* 17, 28: "For in him we live and move and have our being"). See below, p. 124.

Aristotelian theology could only be adopted by Christianity because already in Neoplatonism the Aristotelian god was exchanged for the Stoic one.

A considerable role was played by the writing Περὶ κόσμου (= *De mundo* = *On the Universe)*, handed down in the *Corpus Aristotelicum* (pp. 391-401 Bekker), which "presents providence as pervasive throughout the entire universe and as affecting all entities within it, a view in conflict not only with the self-absorption of the unmoved mover but also with the belief in a circumscribed divine influence which the doxographical tradition, the Church Fathers, and Alexander of Aphrodisias attributed to Aristotle. Thus, the author of *De mundo* defines the world as «the ordering and arrangement of all things, preserved by and through God» (391b11-12) and states that «the old explanation that we have all inherited from our fathers is that all things are from God, and were framed by God, and no natural thing is of itself sufficient for itself, deprived of the permanence which it derives from him» (397b13-16)." (Kraye, p. 341)

"Progress in understanding the thought of an ancient philosopher has often been made not by analyzing what he did say but by establishing what he did not. Once *De mundo* was conclusively removed from the accepted canon of Aristotle's genuine works and the traditional interpretation of Aristotelian divine providence was finally abandoned, a less distorted, more clearly focused view of Aristotle's God became possible." (Kraye, p. 358)

The athetesis prevailed during the 17th-19th centuries (Kraye, pp. 348; 351-357). It is the basis for Aristotle (the favorite philosopher of Catholics) being accused of atheism by Brucker and other Protestant authors.

Brucker distinguishes two meanings of "godless" ("atheus") (p. 832): the word either denotes a philosopher "in whom the distance of God from the universe results directly from the logic of the system, and who recognizes as deity nothing than this manifold changed universe" ("qui directa systematis ratione Deum ex universo tollit, et nihil nisi universum hoc varie modificatum pro numine habet"), or one who "affirms the existence of God but forms such an idea of God that it destroys the true concept of God and makes God into a non-God" ("qui Deum quidem asserit, talem vero de Deo sibi effingit ideam, quae veram de Deo notionem evertit, Deumque facit quasi non Deum").

Aristotle is atheist in the second sense (p. 833); for his god, "devoted to the eternal contemplation of himself, cares for nothing in the whole universe" ("Aeternae enim suimet ipsius contemplationi deditus, nihil in tota universitate curat"). Relieved of the duty to make Aristotle a Christian, Brucker shares the correct understanding of *Metaphysica* Λ, 1074b33-34 with Bonaventura (see above, p. 100) and the modern philologists.

### 5.2.2. The Neoplatonic emanation system

Szlezák writes about Plotinus' position in relation to Aristotle (pp. 42-43):

"The statement that Aristotle described the spiritual world «differently from Plato» (5.1.9, 11) is perfectly clear: it means the irrevocable rejection of Aristotle's fundamental metaphysical position. Plotinus' criticism of the Aristotelian *nous*, which is based on Aristotle's own and Theophrast's objections, remains moderate in tone, especially in comparison with Atticus, for example; but it does not follow from this that the line of division would not have been drawn clearly by him.

More important for our question than the other mentions of Aristotle by name are the countless passages in which he is the unnamed opponent who determines the course of argumentation. At all levels of the hypostasis system it must be fought against: for Plotinus, his (clearly anti-Platonic) attempt in *Physica* A 9 to separate ὕλη as a neutral from στέρησις to be evaluated negatively also misses the picture he makes of the work of φύσις and its connection with the unmoved mover. The doctrine of the fifth element, which is essential for his cosmos piety, and the related explanation of heavenly motions must be rejected. His concept of the soul as the entelechy of the body stands in the way of the Platonic dogma of the immortality of the soul; it is refuted in detail. His doctrine of the *nous* is unacceptable in terms of equation with the supreme principle and afflicted with insurmountable difficulties in terms of the cosmological aspect (classification of motions and celestial spheres). And what Aristotle finally says about the good as the desirable misses the objective nature of the good in itself. All this, together with the succinct verdict ἄλλον τρόπον λέγει ἢ Πλάτων [5.1.9, 11], makes it certain that Plotinus did not accept the compatibility of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, which were repeatedly taught before and after him."

Plotinus describes the "procession" (próhodos, 4.8.5, 33) of plurality and its principle, the indeterminate dyad, from the absolute superabundance of unity itself by the metaphor of overflowing, the *emanation*, which circumscribes the relation of the originated reality to its overpowering origin in the similes of source and river, light and radiation, but also of root and tree, seeds and living beings, center and circle. (Halfwassen, p. 89)

In this context, Plotinus expressly contends against an understanding of the emanation metaphor, according to which the origin proceeds out of itself, thus really «flowing out,» abandoning its transcendence; rather the origin itself remains unchanged in the arising of its *principiata* (6.1.3, 8-12; 3.8.10, 5-19). (Halfwassen, p. 90)

The concept of emanation, modified in this way, which excludes pantheism, is suited to the interpretation of the idea of creation. To this end, it is used by Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae* I, quaestio 45, articulus 1, corpus) and Leibniz (*Discours de métaphysique* § 14; *Théodicée* § 385; *Monadology,* § 47).

Zeller points to the Stoic origin (III/2, p. 476):

"The so-called emanation system of the Neoplatonists is only a metamorphosis of the Stoic doctrine concerning the relation of the world and the deity".

In the Stoics, everything originates from the primordial body and returns to it again (conflagration). This is responded by the cycle of procession (πρόοδος) and return (ἐπιστροφή) in the Neoplatonists.

#### 5.2.2.1. Emanation and return in Avicenna

We give the following quotes for illustration.

1. Avicenna 4.3.7-11 (Wisnovsky 189-190):

"Having now brought [you] to this point, let us leave it behind, since we are not accustomed to talking about things such as this, which are based upon rhetorical conjectures and do not derive from the methods of scientific syllogisms. So we say instead: Philosophers have also extended «perfect» to cover the reality of existence. In one sense, they say, the perfect is that whose characteristic is not to lack anything by which its existence is perfected; on the contrary, everything such as this has come to be contained in it. In another sense they say that the perfect is that which has this characteristic but with the condition that its existence, in itself, is in the most perfect state it can possess; that it alone has it [this existence]; that there is no part of it which it does not have; that in the genus of existence nothing superior to it is related to it in any primary way; and that it is not on account of anything below it. «Above perfection» is whatever has the existence which it needs to have, and from which there is existence left over for other things. It is as if it has the existence which it needs to have as well as some extra existence which it does not need and which is left over for [other] things, this being something that comes from itself. They then posited that this rank - namely, being that which is above perfection - applies to the First Principle, given that in itself and not on account of anything else, a part of its existence is to emanate existence from its own existence to all things. They held that the rank of «perfect» belongs to a separate intellect which is untouched by anything potential at the origin of its existence in act, and which is not mindful of any other existence which exists as a result of it; for in fact everything other [than it] comes from the existence that issues from the First. They held that below the perfect were the sufficient and the deficient. The sufficient is what is given [the ability] to produce its own perfection. In a strict sense the deficient is what needs something else to extend one perfection after another to it. An example of the sufficient is the rational soul which belongs to the universe, I mean the heavens. For in itself it [the rational soul] performs the activities which pertain to it and causes the existence of the perfections it needs to possess in a piecemeal fashion, without all of them being brought together at once, and without their remaining in perpetuity; otherwise those perfections which are in its substance and form, would not be distinct from what is potential, even though they contain within themselves a principle which makes them emerge from potency into act, as you will learn later on. As for the deficient, it is like the things which are in the world of coming-to-be and passing-away."

2. Avicenna 8.6.1-3 (Wisnovsky 185):

"The Necessary of Existence is perfect of existence, because He is not deficient in any part of His existence or in any of the perfections of His existence, nor does any part of the genus of His existence fall outside His existence or exist on account of something else, as is the case with other things such as «human» (who is deficient in many of the perfections of his existence, not to mention the fact that his humanity exists on account of something other than him). In fact the Necessary of Existence is above perfection, because not only does He possess the existence which He alone possesses, but all [other] existence is an overflow that comes from His existence, and is on account of it, and emanates from it. The Necessary of Existence in itself is pure good, and good, on the whole, is what everything desires. Now what everything desires is existence, or rather, the perfection of existence of the type of existence [which the thing has]; non-existence, on the other hand, is not desired in so far as it is non-existence, but rather in so far as existence or the perfection of existence follows after it. So what is really desired is existence, and existence is a pure good and a pure perfection. On the whole, the good is that which each thing desires in respect of its definition and is that by which its existence is perfected; evil, on the other hand, has no essence but rather is either the non-existence of a substance or the non-existence of the substance's proper state. Existence is a [type of] goodness, and the perfection of existence is the goodness of existence. Existence which is accompanied by no non-existence (be it the non-existence of a substance, or the non-existence of something possessed by the substance) but which is instead perpetually in act, is a pure good. The possible of existence in itself is not a pure good, because in itself it does not necessarily entail its own existence, and in itself it allows for non-existence; and whatever allows for non-existence in any way will not be in every respect free from evil and deficiency. Therefore there is no pure good other than the Necessary of Existence in itself."

For the term "above perfection" Wisnovsky points to the propositio XXII of the *Liber de causis*, which he translates from the Arab version as follows (pp. 191-192):

"The first cause is above every name predicated of it. This is in view of the fact that deficiency is not worthy of it, nor even perfection alone. [This is] because what is deficient is not perfect, and since it is deficient it is unable to carry out a perfect act; and what is perfect <in our opinion> - although it is self-sufficient - is unable to originate anything else, nor to emanate from itself anything whatsoever. If this is so, we shall return and say that the first cause is not deficient, nor perfect alone; rather, it is above perfection <because it originates things and emanates goods to them in a perfect emanation> because it is an infinite and inexhaustible good."

Further to a passage of the pseudo-Aristotelian (cf. above, p. 45) *Theologia Aristotelis* (134,16-135,12), which is paralleled by Plotinus, Enneás 5.2.1, 4-8 (Wisnovsky 192-193):

"I say too that the absolute One is above perfection. The sensible world is defective because it is originated from the perfect thing, which is mind; mind is perfect because it is originated from the true absolute One, which is above perfection. It is not possible that the thing which is above perfection should originate the defective thing directly, nor is it possible for the perfect thing to originate anything complete like itself, because origination is deficiency, by which I mean that the originated is not of the rank of the originator but is beneath it. The proof the absolute One is perfect and above perfection is that it has no need of anything and does not seek to acquire anything, and because of the intensity of its perfection and superabundance another thing is produced from it. For the thing which is above perfection cannot produce unless the thing be perfect: otherwise it is not above perfection. For if the perfect thing produces anything, then a fortiori the thing which is above perfection produces perfection, because it produces the perfect thing than which none of the things produced can be more powerful, more splendid or more sublime. For when the true One which is above perfection originates the perfect thing, that perfect thing turns to its originator and casts its gaze on it and is filled with light and splendor from it and becomes mind."

3. Avicenna 8.7.2:

"He knows the manner in which the order of the good [takes place] in existence and that it [proceeds] from Him; and He knows that existence emanates from this act of knowing, according to the ranking that He intellectually apprehends as good and as order."

The Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation was known to the Arabs and Persians from the two sources already cited (cf. above, p. 45): the *Liber de causis* (§§ 19-23) and the *Theologia Aristotelis* (p. 137 Dieterici):

"The One, the Pure! He is the cause of all things, he is not like one of things, but he is the origin of the thing; he is not the things, but all things are in him, he is not in one of things, for all things spring out only from him, in him is their stability and to him goes their return. If someone asks: How is it possible that things are in the One, Simple (the primordial being), in which there is neither a duality nor in any way a plurality? we answer: Because he is pure One and simple, there is none of the things in him, but because he is pure One, all things flow out of him; for since he has no being, all beings flow out of him. Let me just say this for a moment: Because He is not one of those things, all things flow out of Him."

Here the sentences "all things are in Him" and "is in Him none of things" contradict each other. In the source, Plotinus 5.2.1, 1-6,[[37]](#footnote-37) they are marked (l. 5) by an "or" as alternative.

The return to the origin, which is possible to man after the separation of the soul from the body, is described by Avicenna (9.7.11, p. 350 Marmura) as follows:

"[In the case of] the rational soul, the perfection proper to it consists in its becoming an intellectual world in which there is impressed the form of the whole; the order in the whole that is intellectually apprehended; and the good that emanates on the whole, beginning with the Principle of the whole [and] proceeding then to the noble, spiritual, absolute substances [Aristotle's unmoved movers], then to the spiritual substances—[substances] that in some manner are connected to bodies —then to the exalted [= celestial] bodies with their configurations and powers, and so on until it completes within itself [the realization of] the structure of existence in its entirety. It thus becomes transformed into an intelligible world that parallels the existing world in its entirety, witnessing that which is absolute good, absolute beneficence, [and] true absolute beauty, becoming united with it, imprinted with its example and form, affiliated with it, and becoming of its substance."

The difference between creator and creature remains; man does not become one with God (as with the Stoics: return of all things into Zeus, see above, pp. 78 and 84), but with the *mundus intelligibilis*. The identity of intellect and intelligible ("becoming united with it," following the example of Aristotle, *Metaphysica* Λ, 1072b21) guarantees the effortlessness that belongs to happiness. It is the effortlessness of vision after the hidden has revealed itself. This self-revelation of God is the new thing in Christianity and Islam: man cannot "assimilate" himself to God by his own power, but the initiative must come from God.

#### 5.2.2.2. Visio beatifica

According to Thomas Aquinas[[38]](#footnote-38), the "desiderium naturale" ("natural desire") of man, of which Aristotle (*Metaphysica* 980a21 (Πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει, "All men by nature desire to know") speaks, only comes to his satisfaction in the *visio beatifica*.

The expression "visio beatifica" is based on a beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:8; quoted by Thomas in *Summa contra gentiles*, liber 3, caput 25, n. 15):

"beati mundo corde quia ipsi Deum videbunt."

("Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.")

This "vision" could easily be equated with the "vision" of pagan mysteries and Neoplatonists.

The difference to Aristotle is obvious.

For Aristotle, as the summit of education, metaphysics is both the most desirable science and the happiness goal of man (cf. our vol. 3, pp. 21-22). That this goal is achievable (albeit only temporarily, for short moments)[[39]](#footnote-39) in this world's life was held self-evident up to Plotinus. Now we have seen how the demands on the divine knowledge have been increased more and more (5.2.1); finally the demand that this knowledge must become permanent possession also for man, makes him completely in need of redemption.

Permanent possession would be possible in a life beyond on the Islands of the Blessed (cf. our volume 3, p. 171).

Translated into Neoplatonic terminology, "redemption" means that the initiative for "return" must come from God. Philosophical theology, as *theologia naturalis*, now needs to be supplemented by *theologia revelata*[[40]](#footnote-40), as already made clear in book 10 of Avicenna's *Metaphysics*.

## 5.3. Three ways to the knowledge of God

In the chapter "Platonism as an educational program," there has already been described a way: the educational path of an adept. With it must agree what is recommended by Neoplatonic authors (to which I also count Thomas Aquinas, cf. what has been said about the Neoplatonic influence on the "Aristotelianism" of the Middle Ages) as a way to the knowledge of God. After we have gained more clarity about the goal of the way in the previous chapter, now to the way itself.

The doctrine of the three ways is preserved by the "Middle Platonist" Alcinous and by Plotinus. To the Middle Ages it was known only from Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita.

Alcinous' report runs as follows (10.5-6):

Ἔσται δὴ πρώτη μὲν αὐτοῦ [intellige τοῦ πρώτου θεοῦ] νόησις ἡ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τούτων [scilicet γένος, εἶδος, διαφορά, συμβεβηκός, ποιότης, ὅλον-μέρος, κινεῖ-κινεῖται], ὅπως καὶ σημεῖον ἐνοήσαμεν κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ, ἐπιφάνειαν νοήσαντες, εἶτα γραμμήν, καὶ τελευταῖον τὸ σημεῖον.

Δευτέρα δέ ἐστιν αὐτοῦ νόησις ἡ κατὰ ἀναλογίαν· οὕτω πως· ὃν γὰρ ἔχει λόγον ὁ ἥλιος πρὸς τὴν ὅρασιν καὶ τὰ ὁρώμενα, οὐκ ὢν αὐτὸς ὄψις, παρέχων δὲ τῇ μὲν τὸ ὁρᾶν, τοῖς δὲ τὸ ὁρᾶσθαι, τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν λόγον ὁ πρῶτος νοῦς πρὸς τὴν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ νόησιν καὶ τὰ νοούμενα· οὐ γὰρ ὢν ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἡ νόησις, παρέχει αὐτῇ τὸ νοεῖν καὶ τοῖς νοητοῖς τὸ νοεῖσθαι, φωτίζων τὴν περὶ αὐτὰ ἀλήθειαν.

(6.) Τρίτη δὲ νόησις τοιαύτη τις ἂν εἴη· θεωρῶν γάρ τις τὸ ἐπὶ τοῖς σώμασι καλόν, μετὰ τοῦτο μέτεισιν ἐπὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κάλλος, εἶτα τὸ ἐν ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ νόμοις, εἶτα ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ, μεθ' ὃ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν νοεῖ καὶ τὸ ἐραστὸν καὶ ἐφετὸν ὥσπερ φῶς φανὲν καὶ οἷον ἐκλάμψαν τῇ οὕτως ἀνιούσῃ ψυχῇ· τούτῳ δὲ καὶ θεὸν συνεπινοεῖ διὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ τιμίῳ ὑπεροχήν.

("The first way of conceiving the primary God is by abstraction of these attributes [genus, species, difference, accidens, quality, whole - part, active and passive motion], just as we form the conception of a point by abstraction from the sensible, conceiving first a surface, then a line, and finally a point.

The second way of conceiving him is that of analogy, as follows: the sun is to vision and to visible objects (it is not itself sight, but provides vision to sight and visibility to its objects) as the primary intellect is to the power of intellection in the soul and to its objects; for it is not the power of intellection itself, but provides intellection to it and intelligibility to its objects, illuminating the truth contained in them.

The third way of conceiving him is the following: one contemplates first beauty in bodies, then after that turns to the beauty in soul, then to that in customs and laws, and then to the 'great sea of Beauty', after which one gains an intuition of the Good itself and the final object of love and striving, like a light appearing and, as it were, shining out to the soul which ascends in this way; and along with this one also intuits God, in virtue of his pre-eminence in what is noble.")

The second and third way are hinted at by Theophrastus, *Metaphysica* 4b11-15:

τίς δ' οὖν αὕτη καὶ τίνες, εἰ πλείους, πειρατέον ἐμφαίνειν ἀμῶς γέ πως εἴτε κατ' ἀναλογίαν εἴτε κατ' ἄλλην ὁμοίωσιν. ἀνάγκη δ' ἴσως δυνάμει τινὶ καὶ ὑπεροχῇ τῶν ἄλλων λαμβάνειν, ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ τὸν θεόν.

("What, at any rate, this [supranatural] reality is, or what these [supranatural] realities are, if they are more than one, we must try to indicate somehow or other, whether in virtue of an analogy or of some other comparison. It is necessary, presumably, to recognize them by some power and some pre-eminence over other things, as if it were God that we were apprehending.")

The source is of course Plato, *Res publica* 508d-509b. On the comparison of primary mind and sun there is also based the distinction between the active and passive intellects in Aristotle, *De anima* III 5.

According to Plotinus (Enneás 6.7.36, 6-8) we receive for the Good instruction through analogies, abstractions (ἀφαιρέσεις), knowledge of what comes from the good, and the gradation of being:

Διδάσκουσι μὲν οὖν ἀναλογίαι τε καὶ ἀφαιρέσεις καὶ γνώσεις τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀναβασμοί τινες.

("We are taught about it [the Good in Plato's Res publica, 505a2] by comparisons and negations and knowledge of the things which come from it and certain methods of ascent by degrees.")

ἀναβασμός means "stage" as usual. Assuming with Liddell/Scott especially for our position a meaning "progress, in learning" is not only unnecessary, but also ignores the allusion to Plato, *Symposium* 211c3 (ἐπαναβασμοῖς), which is noted by Henry/Schwyzer (Tomus III, p. 229).

Beutler and Theiler (Volume IIIb, p. 511) note the following:

"ἀναλογίαι, ἀφαιρέσεις; the *via analogiae* and *via negationis*, elaborated in the pre-Neoplatonic Gaius School, are indicated here. The third path, *via eminentiae*, is presented by ἀναβασμοί, for which Alcinous uses the ascent path of the Diotima speech more extensively than Plotinus".

They do not take into account the "knowledge of what comes from the Good". This is the *via causalitatis*, which is added as fourth way, and to the benefit of which the *via analogiae* is omitted later. In fact, the "proportion" is a proportion of causality relations.

To the Middle Ages, the doctrine of the three ways was mediated by Pseudo-Dionysius. Thomas Aquinas (*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, Liber 1, Distinctio 3, Quaestio 1, Prologus; Distinctio 35, Quaestio 1, Articulus 1, Corpus) refers to the following passage in *De divinis nominibus* (7.3):

Ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις ζητῆσαι χρή, πῶς ἡμεῖς θεὸν γινώσκομεν οὐδὲ νοητὸν οὐδὲ αἰσθητὸν οὐδέ τι καθόλου τῶν ὄντων ὄντα. Μήποτε οὖν ἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, ὅτι θεὸν γινώσκομεν οὐκ ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ φύσεως, ἄγνωστον γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ πάντα λόγον καὶ νοῦν ὑπεραῖρον, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς πάντων τῶν ὄντων διατάξεως ὡς ἐξ αὐτοῦ προβεβλημένης καὶ εἰκόνας τινὰς καὶ ὁμοιώματα τῶν θείων αὐτοῦ παραδειγμάτων ἐχούσης εἰς τὸ ἐπέκεινα πάντων ὁδῷ καὶ τάξει κατὰ δύναμιν ἄνιμεν ἐν τῇ πάντων ἀφαιρέσει καὶ ὑπεροχῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ πάντων αἰτίᾳ. Διὸ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ὁ θεὸς γινώσκεται καὶ χωρὶς πάντων. (197, 17-198, 3 Suchla)

("But here we have to ask, how do we recognize God? It is not intelligible, nor sensible, nor one of the beings at all. So should it not be true to say that we do not recognize God from His own nature - for this is something incomprehensible to us and exceeds all understanding and recognition - but from the order of the whole universe, from the institutions of His whole creation? For this is put before our eyes through Him, it contains certain replicas of His divine qualities, certain similarities, certain echoes. So perhaps we can ascend to the supreme being, according to our powers, by abstraction from everything, by pre-eminence over everything, and putting Him as the cause of everything? Thus God is recognized in everything and yet separate from everything.")

Since God cannot be recognized in his nature, we can only ascend to the transcendent "by virtue of the abstraction of everything, the pre-eminence above everything, and the cause of everything. (ἐν τῇ πάντων ἀφαιρέσει καὶ ὑπεροχῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ πάντων αἰτίᾳ).

About Kant's knowledge of the three ways see my commentary, pp. 365-366.

### 5.3.1. Via abstractionis

For *via abstractionis* in Aristotle see *Metaphysica* A, 982a25-28.

"The first insight" about God becomes possible, according to Alcinous, "by abstraction" (ἀφαίρεσις) (*Didascalicus* 10.5.); he is "inexpressible … He does not move and is not moved" (10.4.). Thus also the Aristotelian doctrine of the unmoved mover (*Metaphysica* Λ, 1072a24-26] is critically included in negative theology. (The *via abstractionis* is better known as "negative theology".)

The Stoics too have a *via abstractionis*; it leads to the primary substance, which is differentiated into its primary opposites activity - passivity.

#### Negative theology in Avicenna

God has no *quidditas*, see 8.4.3:

"The First has no quiddity other than His individual existence."

God has no *genus*, see 8.4.14:

"The First also has no genus. This is because the First has no quiddity. That which has no quiddity has no genus, since genus is spoken of in answer to the question, “What is it?”"

God is no substance, see 8.4.17-18:

"Someone may say, «Although you have avoided assigning the name 'substance' to the First, you do not avoid assigning Him its meaning. This is because He exists in no subject; and this is the meaning of substance, which you have rendered a genus.»

We answer: This is not the meaning of the substance we have made a genus. Rather, the meaning of [the latter] is that it is the thing having an established quiddity whose existence is not in a subject—for example, a body and a soul."

### 5.3.2. Via eminentiae

The idea of a gradation of being goes back to the Platonic description of the ideal being as "being in a higher degree" (μᾶλλον ὄν) (*Res publica*, 515d2), which presupposes the perfection of a supreme, "most" being. This is combined with the ascent to the "beautiful itself" described in the *Symposium* (210e-211c.).

The *via eminentiae* is prepared also in *Metaphysica* Λ, 1072a30-b1. The column of the Good (cf. our volume3, p. 53) offers the concepts that, in their highest increase, constitute the essence of the intelligible and thus of the intellect. According to *Ethica Eudemia* 1245a1-10 it is determinacy ("the nature of the determined") that constitutes both the essence of the good and of recognizability:

εἰ οὖν ἐστιν ἀεὶ τῆς τοιαύτης συστοιχίας ἡ ἑτέρα ἐν τῇ τοῦ αἱρετοῦ τάξει, καὶ τὸ γνωστὸν καὶ τὸ αἰσθητόν ἐστιν ὡς ὅλως εἰπεῖν τῷ κοινωνεῖν τῆς ὡρισμένης φύσεως· ὥστε τὸ αὑτοῦ βούλεσθαι αἰσθάνεσθαι τὸ αὐτὸν εἶναι τοιονδὶ βούλεσθαι ἐστίν. ἐπεὶ οὖν οὐ κατ' αὐτούς ἐσμεν ἕκαστον τούτων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μετάληψιν τῶν δυνάμεων ἐν τῷ αἰσθάνεσθαι ἢ γνωρίζειν (αἰσθανόμενος μὲν γὰρ αἰσθητὸς γίνεται ταύτῃ καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο, καθὰ πρότερον αἰσθάνεται, καὶ ᾗ καὶ οὗ, γνωστὸς δὲ γινώσκων)· ὥστε διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ζῆν ἀεὶ βούλεται, ὅτι βούλεται ἀεὶ γνωρίζειν, τοῦτο δὲ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶναι τὸ γνωστόν.

("If, therefore, of the pair of corresponding series of this kind one is always in the class of the desirable, and the known and the perceived are generally speaking constituted by their participation in the determined nature [= in the nature of the determined], so that to wish to perceive oneself is to wish oneself to be of a certain character.")

Further *Metaphysica* α: μάλιστα ὄντα ["being in highest degree"] = ἀίδια ["eternal"] (as in the gloss to *Metaphysica* Z, 1028b19, see our volume 1, pp. 172-173). "True" is as much as infallible (ἀληθές, "unhidden," is to be understood from his contradiction ψεῦδος = bore = intentional concealment). Truth of things means: not even so, sometimes so. Thus always so = eternal. This concept leads to the intellect that is separate from matter.

The increase ("more being," μᾶλλον ὄν) means: there are higher degrees of being than the mere presence of dead things, namely living, and as the highest level of life again the intellect. "Being" is understood here as quality, according to the pattern good - better - best. By analogy there is a "more being" (μᾶλλον ὄν) and a "most being" (μάλιστα ὄν).

*Ethica Nicomachea* 1170a16-21 is informative:

τὸ δὲ ζῆν ὁρίζονται τοῖς ζῴοις δυνάμει αἰσθήσεως, ἀνθρώποις δ' αἰσθήσεως ἢ νοήσεως· ἡ δὲ δύναμις εἰς τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἀνάγεται, τὸ δὲ κύριον ἐν τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ.·ἔοικε δὴ τὸ ζῆν εἶναι κυρίως τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ἢ νοεῖν. τὸ δὲ ζῆν τῶν καθ αὑτὸ ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἡδέων· ὡρισμένον γὰρ, τὸ δ' ὡρισμένον τῆς τἀγαθοῦ φύσεως.

("Now life is defined in the case of animals by the power of sensation, in that of man by the power of sensation or thought; and a power is referred to the corresponding activity, which is the essential thing; therefore life seems to be essentially sensing or thinking. And life is among the things that are good and pleasant in themselves, since it is determinate and the determinate is of the nature of the good.")

Here the gradation of animal life -human life, distinguished by the additional capacity of intelligence, is clearly recognizable; the Platonizing expression "nature of the Good" refers to the Academic doctrine of principles. Cf. our volume 3, pp. 281-282.

#### 5.3.2.1. The argumentum ex gradibus

The (by Thomas Aquinas so-called) "argumentum ex gradibus" can already be found in Cicero, *De natura deorum*, §§ 16 and 35.

A detailed version is handed down by Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus mathematicos* 9.88-91 = SVF 1.119, 32-120, 18):

Ὁ δὲ Κλεάνθης οὕτως συνηρώτα· εἰ φύσις φύσεώς ἐστι κρείττων, εἴη ἄν τις ἀρίστη φύσις·εἰ ψυχὴ ψυχῆς ἐστι κρείττων, εἴη ἄν τις ἀρίστη ψυχή· καὶ εἰ ζῷον τοίνυν κρεῖττόν ἐστι ζῴου, εἴη ἄν τι κράτιστον ζῷον· οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἄπειρον ἐκπίπτειν πέφυκε τὰ τοιαῦτα. ὡσπεροῦν οὐδὲ ἡ φύσις ἐπ' ἄπειρον ἐδύνατο αὔξεσθαι κατὰ τὸ κρεῖττον, οὔθ' ἡ ψυχὴ οὔτε τὸ ζῷον.

(89) ἀλλὰ μὴν ζῷον ζῴου κρεῖττόν ἐστιν, ὡς ἵππος χελώνης, εἰ τύχοι, καὶ ταῦρος ἵππου καὶ λέων ταύρου. πάντων δὲ σχεδὸν τῶν ἐπιγείων ζῴων καὶ σωματικῇ καὶ ψυχικῇ διαθέσει προέχει τε καὶ καὶ σωματικῇ καὶ ψυχικῇ διαθέσει προέχει τε καὶ κρατιστεύει ὁ ἄνθρωπος· τοίνυν κράτιστον ἂν εἴη ζῷον καὶ ἄριστον.

(90) καίτοι οὐ πάνυ τι ὁ ἄνθρωπος κράτιστον εἶναι δύναται ζῷον, οἷον εὐθέως ὅτι διὰ κακίας πορεύεται τὸν πάντα χρόνον, εἰ δὲ μή γε, τὸν πλεῖστον (καὶ γὰρ εἴ ποτε περιγένοιτο ἀρετῆς, ὀψὲ καὶ πρὸς ταῖς τοῦ βίου δυσμαῖς περιγίνεται), ἐπίκηρόν τ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἀσθενὲς καὶ μυρίων δεόμενον βοηθημάτων, καθάπερ τροφῆς καὶ σκεπασμάτων καὶ τῆς ἄλλης τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμελείας, πικροῦ τινος τυράννου τρόπον ἐφεστῶτος ἡμῖν καὶ τὸν πρὸς ἡμέραν δασμὸν ἀπαιτοῦντος, καὶ εἰ μὴ παρέχοιμεν ὥστε λούειν αὐτὸ καὶ ἀλείφειν καὶ περιβάλλειν καὶ τρέφειν, νόσους καὶ θάνατον ἀπειλοῦντος. ὥστε οὐ τέλειον ζῷον ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀτελὲς δὲ καὶ πολὺ κεχωρισμένον τοῦ τελείου.

(91) τὸ δὲ τέλειον καὶ ἄριστον κρεῖττον μὲν ἂν ὑπάρχοι ἀνθρώπου καὶ πάσαις ταῖς ἀρεταῖς συμπεπληρωμένον καὶ παντὸς κακοῦ ἀνεπίδεκτον· τοῦτο δὲ οὐ διοίσει θεοῦ. ἔστιν ἄρα θεός.

("Cleanthes argued thus: «If one nature is better than another, there will be some best nature; if one soul is better than another, there will be some best soul: if, then, one animal is better than another, there will be some best animal; for such things are not of a kind to proceed *ad infinitum*. So then, as nature is not capable of increasing to infinity in goodness, nor soul, neither is the animal capable. One animal, however, is better than another, as (say) the horse than the tortoise, and the bull than the ass, and the lion than the bull. And of all the terrestrial animals Man is the highest and best in respect of the disposition of both body and soul; therefore a certain best and most excellent animal will exist. Yet Man cannot be absolutely the best animal, because, for instance, he walks in wickedness all his life, or, if not, at least for the greater part of it (for if ever he attains virtue, he attains it late and at the setting of life's sun), and he is the victim of fate and feeble and in need of countless aids—such as food and coverings, and all the other requirements of the body, which stands over us like a rigorous tyrant and demands its daily tribute, and threatens us with disease and death unless we provide for its washing and anointing and clothing and feeding. So that Man is not a perfect animal, but imperfect and far removed from the perfect. But that which is perfect and best will be better than Man and fulfilled with all the virtues and not receptive of any evil; and this animal will not differ from God. God, therefore, exists.»")

For the gradations of qualities that are becoming more and less, the Stoics introduced the terms ἐπίτασις (intensio) and ἄνεσις (remissio)[[41]](#footnote-41), which reached the Middle Ages via the *Introductio* of Porphyry, translated and commented by Boethius.

In the Stoics we see that the *argumentum ex gradibus* is not sufficient to prove the existence of a transcendent (extramundane) god. The same applies to the "ontological" proof, which presupposes the Stoic concept of god. See below, p. 121.

The three paths of Alcinous lead to an understanding of the essence of God[[42]](#footnote-42), like the five paths of Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae*, 1. quaestio 2, articulus 3, corpus) to the certainty of existence.

Thomas Aquinas makes the *via eminentiae* his fourth way to prove the existence of God:

"quarta via sumitur ex gradibus qui in rebus inveniuntur. invenitur enim in rebus aliquid magis et minus bonum, et verum, et nobile, et sic de aliis huiusmodi. sed magis et minus dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est, sicut magis calidum est, quod magis appropinquat maxime calido. est igitur aliquid quod est verissimum, et optimum, et nobilissimum [= τὸ τιμιώτατον, cf. Metaphysica E, 1026a21, K, 1064b4, Λ, 1074b26], et per consequens maxime ens, nam quae sunt maxime vera, sunt maxime entia, ut dicitur ii Metaphysicorum. quod autem dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere, est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis, sicut ignis, qui est maxime calidus, est causa omnium calidorum, ut in eodem libro dicitur. ergo est aliquid quod omnibus entibus est causa esse, et bonitatis, et cuiuslibet perfectionis, et hoc dicimus deum."

("The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But "more" and "less" are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in *Metaphysica* α [993b30-31]. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum heat, is the cause of all hot things, as is said in the same book [993b24-26][[43]](#footnote-43). Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.")

In later versions of the argument the "magis et minus" is explained by the (probably Stoic, see above) terms "intensio" (=ἐπίτασις) and "remissio" (=ἄνεσις), the concept of "perfectio" by "realitas".

"Exodus-metaphysics"

The concept of God as being in the highest degree seemed to fit well as interpretation of the Septuagint text of Exodus 3, 14:

ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν.

("I am the one who is.")

Philo of Alexandria interprets it in Platonic terms (*Quod deterius potiori insidiari soleat*, sectio 160):

… ὁ θεὸς μόνος ἐν τῷ εἶναι ὑφέστηκεν· οὗ χάριν ἀναγκαίως ἐρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ· "ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν," ὡς τῶν μετ' αὐτὸν οὐκ ὄντων κατὰ τὸ εἶναι, δόξῃ δὲ μόνον ὑφεστάναι νομιζομένων.

("… God alone subsists in essence, on account of which fact, he speaks of necessity about himself, saying, "I am the one who is," as if what is posterior to him did not exist according to essence, but only were held to subsist in opinion.")

The opposite to "in opinion" (δόξῃ) is "in reality" (ὄντως); God is "the really real," see *De opificio mundi*, sectio 172:

… ὅτι εἷς ὁ ὢν ὄντως ἐστὶ.

("… that the really real is one.")

Thus God is conceived as Idea of being, and being created is conceived as participation in it (cf. Boethius, Tractatus III, propositio 3: "Quod est participare aliquo potest, sed ipsum esse nullo modo aliquo participat."). This conception became fundamental for medieval metaphysics, which is often called "Exodus-metaphysics". The stereotyped formula is "Deus est ipsum esse" ("God is being itself").

In two other passages, Philo emphasizes that being is superior to the good and unity:

… τὸ ὄν, ὃ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ κρεῖττόν ἐστι καὶ ἑνὸς εἰλικρινέστερον καὶ μονάδος ἀρχεγονώτερον. (*De vita contemplativa*, sectio 2)

("… being, which is superior to the good, and more simple than unity, and more ancient than the unit.")

ἐκεῖνο μὲν γάρ, ὃ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ κρεῖττον καὶ μονάδος πρεσβύτερον καὶ ἑνὸς εἱλικρινέστερον, ἀμήχανον ὑφ' ἑτέρου θεωρεῖσθαί τινος, διότι μόνῳ θέμις αὐτῷ ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ καταλαμβάνεσθαι. (*De praemiis et poenis*, sectio 40)

("For this [the divine "really real"], which is better than good, and more ancient than the unit, and more simple than one, cannot possibly be contemplated by any other being; because, in fact, it is not possible for God to be comprehended by any being but himself.")

This is evidently directed against thinkers like Speusippus, who, as later on the Neoplatonists Plotinus and Proclus, put the Good, equated with unity, above being (cf. our vol. 3, pp. 340-341).

There was also a turn from unity to being in some Neoplatonists, such as Asclepius and Syrianus. They have interpreted the "ὂν ἁπλῶς" of *Metaphysica* Z, 1028a21 as the pure (i. e., excluding all non-being), unlimited (because undetermined; contrary to "ὂν ἁπλῶς" is indeed ὄν τι, determinate being) divine being.

According to this, in Aristotle's philosophy being would take the same place as the good in Proclus (*Elementatio theologica*, pp. 10, 9-13, and 100, 10-12 Dodds). God, as that "beyond which there is nothing" (οὗ μηδέν ἐστιν ἐπέκεινα), would be the absolute being (as he is the absolute good in Proclus), of which one can only say that it "is," but not that it "is something," since one would lessen it (ἠλάττωσας) by such an "addition" (πρόσθεσις). See Syrianus, *In Aristotelis Metaphysica* 45, 24-30:

ὥσπερ γὰρ τῶν ἀγαθῶν τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀρχὴ μία τὸ ἀγαθόν, ὃ οὔτε τινός ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν οὔτ' ἄλλο τι παρὰ τἀγαθόν, … οὕτω τὰ μὲν ὄντα ᾗ ὄντα πρόεισιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος, ὃ οὐ τόδε ἐστὶ τὸ ὂν ἀλλ' αὐτοόν …

("As of the totality of goods the good is principle, which is neither the good of something, nor anything else but good, ... so the beings *qua* beings proceed from the being that is not this being, but being itself …"

The same parallelization of being and good occurs in Asclepius (*In Aristotelis Metaphysica*, 225, 14-17), who equates "being in the proper sense" (κυρίως ὂν) with the good "from which all other things proceed" (ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ ἄλλα προερχόμενα).

#### 5.3.2.2. The ontological proof of God's existence

From the proof *ex gradibus*, the "ontological" proof of God has developed, as the progress from Anselm's *Monologion* to the *Proslogion* shows. The difference is that the questioner now reflects on himself, his existence as a questioner, and thus involves himself in the totality of reality.

The first two chapters of the *Monologion* deal with the topic "Quod sit quiddam optimum et maximum et summum omnium quae sunt" ("There is a being which is best, and greatest, and highest of all existing beings"). In the second chapter we read:

"Quemadmodum autem inventum est aliquid esse summe bonum quoniam cuncta bona per unum aliquid sunt bona quod est bonum per seipsum; sic ex necessitate colligitur aliquid esse summe magnum quoniam quaecunque magna sunt per unum aliquid magna sunt quod magnum est per seipsum. Dico autem non magnum spatio ut est corpus aliquod; sed quod quanto maius tanto melius est aut dignius ut est sapientia. Et quoniam non potest esse summe magnum nisi id quod est summe bonum necesse est aliquid esse maximum et optimum id est summum omnium quae sunt."

("But, just as it has been proved that there is a being that is supremely good, since all goods are good through a single being, which is good through itself; so it is necessarily inferred that there is something supremely great, which is great through itself. But I do not mean physically great, as a body is great, but that which, the greater it is, is the better or the more worthy,--wisdom, for instance. And since there can be nothing supremely great except what is supremely good, there must be a being that is greatest and best, i.e., the highest of all existing beings.")

Anselm's formula "id quo majus cogitari non potest" ["that above which there cannot be thought anything greater"] (*Proslogion*, Chapter 2, cf. "aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari potest". Ibidem: "id quo nihil maius cogitari nequit". Finally ibidem, chapter14: "summum omnium, quo nihil melius cogitari potest") is of Stoic origin; it comes from Seneca (*Naturales quaestiones*, praefatio 13): "magnitudo … qua nihil maius cogitari potest" ["a greatness above which nothing greater can be thought"]. This is said of the cosmos. Of the cosmos it immediately becomes clear that we "live, move and have being in it" (*Acta Apostolorum*, 17.28). If we understand God's "greatness" as an intensive greatness in the sense of the *argumentum ex gradibus* (cf. my Kant-commentary, pp. 195-196), matters become more difficult.

God as the greatest is that in which everything is, thus fulfilling Spinoza's substance criterion of "in se" (= not ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ["in a substrate"]).

The ontological proof gained a widely undisputed validity thanks to the lasting influence of Descartes in the systems of the 17th and 18th centuries. In Descartes, it runs as follows (*Discours de la méthode*, pp. 34-37):

"Ensuite de quoi, faisant réflexion sur ce que je doutois, et que par conséquent mon être n'étoit pas tout parfait, car je voyois clairement que c'étoit une plus [35] grande perfection de connoître, que de douter, je m'avisai de chercher d'où j'avois appris à penser à quelque chose de plus parfait que je n'étois; et je connus évidemment que ce devoit être de quelque nature qui fût en effet plus parfaite. Pour ce qui est des pensées que j'avois de plusieurs autres choses hors de moi, comme du ciel, de la terre, de la lumière, de la chaleur, et de mille autres, je n'étois point tant en peine de savoir d'où elles venoient, à cause que, ne remarquant rien en elles qui me semblât les rendre supérieures à moi, je pouvois croire que, si elles étoient vraies, c'étoient des dépendances de ma nature, en tant qu'elle avoit quelque perfection, et, si elles ne l'étoient pas, que je les tenois du néant, c'est-à-dire qu'elles étoient en moi pour ce que j'avois du défaut. Mais ce ne pouvoit être le même de l'idée d'un être plus parfait que le mien: car, de la tenir du néant, c'étoit chose manifestement impossible: et pource qu'il n'y a pas moins de répugnance que le plus parfait soit une suite et une dépendance du moins parfait, qu'il y en a que de rien procède quelque chose, je ne la pouvois tenir non plus de moi-même: de façon qu'il restoit qu'elle eût été mise en moi par une nature qui fût véritablement plus parfaite que je n'étois, et même qui eût en soi toutes les perfections dont je pouvois avoir quelque idée, c'est à dire, pour m'expliquer en un mot, qui fût Dieu. A quoi j'ajoutai que, puisque je connoissois quelques perfections que je n'avois point, je n'étois pas le seul être qui existât (j'userai, s'il vous plaît, ici librement des mots de l'école); mais qu'il falloit de nécessité, qu'il y en eût quelque autre plus [36] parfait, duquel je dépendisse, et duquel j'eusse acquis tout ce que j'avois: car, si j'eusse été seul et indépendant de tout autre, en sorte que j'eusse eu de moi-même tout ce peu que je participois de l'être parfait, j'eusse pu avoir de moi, par même raison, tout le surplus que je connoissois me manquer, et ainsi être moi-même infini, éternel, immuable, tout connoissant, tout puissant, et enfin avoir toutes les perfections que je pouvois remarquer être en Dieu. Car, suivant les raisonnements que je viens de faire, pour connoître la nature de Dieu, autant que la mienne en étoit capable, je n'avois qu'à considérer, de toutes les choses dont je trouvois en moi quelque idée, si c'étoit perfection ou non de les posséder; et j'étois assuré qu'aucune de celles qui marquoient quelque imperfection n'étoit en lui, mais que toutes les autres y étoient: comme je voyois que le doute, l'inconstance, la tristesse, et choses semblables, n'y pouvoient être, vu que j'eusse été moi-même bien aisé d'en être exempt. Puis, outre cela, j'avois des idées de plusieurs choses sensibles et corporelles; car, quoique je supposasse que je revois, et que tout ce que je voyois ou imaginois étoit faux, je ne pouvois nier toutefois que les idées n'en fussent véritablement en ma pensée. Mais pource que j'avois déjà connu en moi très clairement que la nature intelligente est distincte de la corporelle; considérant que toute composition témoigne de la dépendance, et que la dépendance est manifestement un défaut, je jugeois de là que ce ne pouvoit être une perfection en Dieu d'être composé de ces deux natures, et que par conséquent il ne l'étoit pas; mais que s'il y avoit [37] quelques corps dans le monde, ou bien quelques intelligences ou autres natures qui ne fussent point toutes parfaites, leur être devoit dépendre de sa puissance, en telle sorte quelles ne pouvoient subsister sans lui un seul moment."

("In the next place, from reflecting on the circumstance that I doubted, and that consequently my being was not wholly perfect (for I clearly saw that it was a greater perfection to know than to doubt), I was led to inquire whence I had learned to think of something more perfect than myself; and I clearly recognized that I must hold this notion from some nature which in reality was more perfect. As for the thoughts of many other objects external to me, as of the sky, the earth, light, heat, and a thousand more, I was less at a loss to know whence these came; for since I remarked in them nothing which seemed to render them superior to myself, I could believe that, if these were true, they were dependencies on my own nature, in so far as it possessed a certain perfection, and, if they were false, that I held them from nothing, that is to say, that they were in me because of a certain imperfection of my nature. But this could not be the case with the idea of a nature more perfect than myself; for to receive it from nothing was a thing manifestly impossible; and, because it is not less repugnant that the more perfect should be an effect of, and dependence on the less perfect, than that something should proceed from nothing, it was equally impossible that I could hold it from myself: accordingly, it but remained that it had been placed in me by a nature which was in reality more perfect than mine, and which even possessed within itself all the perfections of which I could form any idea; that is to say, in a single word, which was God. And to this I added that, since I knew some perfections which I did not possess, I was not the only being in existence (I will here, with your permission, freely use the terms of the schools); but, on the contrary, that there was of necessity some other more perfect Being upon whom I was dependent, and from whom I had received all that I possessed; for if I had existed alone, and independently of every other being, so as to have had from myself all the perfection, however little, which I actually possessed, I should have been able, for the same reason, to have had from myself the whole remainder of perfection, of the want of which I was conscious, and thus could of myself have become infinite, eternal, immutable, omniscient, all-powerful, and, in fine, have possessed all the perfections which I could recognize in God. For in order to know the nature of God (whose existence has been established by the preceding reasonings), as far as my own nature permitted, I had only to consider in reference to all the properties of which I found in my mind some idea, whether their possession was a mark of perfection; and I was assured that no one which indicated any imperfection was in him, and that none of the rest was a wanting. Thus I perceived that doubt, inconstancy, sadness, and such like, could not be found in God, since I myself would have been happy to be free from them. Besides, I had ideas of many sensible and corporeal things; for although I might suppose that I was dreaming, and that all which I saw or imagined was false, I could not, nevertheless, deny that the ideas were in reality in my thoughts. But, because I had already very clearly recognized in myself that the intelligent nature is distinct from the corporeal, and as I observed that all composition is an evidence of dependency, and that a state of dependency is manifestly a state of imperfection, I therefore determined that it could not be a perfection in God to be compounded of these two natures and that consequently he was not so compounded; but that if there were any bodies in the world, or even any intelligences, or other natures that were not wholly perfect, their existence depended on his power in such a way that they could not subsist without him for a single moment.")

Already in Aristotle (*Metaphysica* Δ, 1055a10), the τέλειον [perfect] is the μέγιστον [greatest], the one outside of which there is nothing more. Applied to being, the concept of perfection among Stoics leads to the world as the perfect being (cf. above, p. 116). If now the Judeo-Christian God is to be thought on the one hand as the greatest, on the other hand as different from the world, the unsolvable question arises whether God + world is still more than God alone.

It should have become clear that the related proofs *ex gradibus* and from the concept of an *ens realissimum* do not necessarily lead to a creator god; the concept of an *ens perfectum* can also be interpreted in a Platonic-Aristotelian or Stoic way. Spinoza[[44]](#footnote-44) only returns the *ratio Anselmi* to its Stoic origin.

Cf. the following sections 5.3.2.3.1-2.

#### 5.3.2.3. Affirmative theology

Like negative theology on the *via abstractionis*, affirmative theology is based on the *via eminentiae* of Alcinous (factually, there need be no literary connection).

God is "pure being" (8.4.13), without any determination (cf. above, pp. 118-120). Yet he should have the attributes that are usually attributed to him. Avicenna agrees on both, understanding the latter as mere relations:

"After [the fact] of His individual existence, He is only described by means of negating all similarities of Him and affirming to Him all relations. For all things are from Him, and He shares nothing in common with what [proceeds] from Him." (8.5.14)

Positive attributes are goodness, truth and intellect, see 8.6.2:

"The Necessary Existent in Himself is pure good. The good in general is that which everything desires, and that which everything desires is existence or the perfection of existence in the category of existence. Nonexistence is not desired inasmuch as it is nonexistence but only inasmuch as existence or the perfection of existence follows it. Thus, what in reality is being desired is existence. Existence is thus a pure good and a pure perfection."

8.6.4: "And all that is a necessary existent is truth. [This is] because the truth of each thing is the particularity of its existence that is established for it. Hence, there is nothing more «true» than the Necessary Existent."

8.6.6: "The Necessary Existent is pure intellect because He is an essence dissociated from matter in every respect."

Among these attributes also beauty can be counted, see 8.7.15:

"There can be neither beauty nor splendor above the quiddity's being purely intellectual, pure goodness, free from each one of the facets of deficiency, one in every aspect. The Necessary Existent thus has pure beauty and splendor, and He is the principle of beauty of all things and the splendor of all things. His splendor consists in His being in accord with what ought to be His. How would the beauty be of Him who is in accord with what ought to be in necessary existence? All beauty, harmony, and apprehended good constitute an object of affection and love."

We are here at the source of the doctrine of the attributes of God intellect and will (see Suárez and Wolff).

To Avicenna, in God intellect and will are one, see 8.7.10:

"The First intellectually apprehends Himself and the manner in which the order of the existing in all [things] exists in this order because He intellectually apprehends it as [something] that is emanated, generated, existing. [Now,] everything whose existence is known (the manner in which it comes into being from its principle being [known] to its principle) and which is a good that is not incompatible [with the order of the good] (being a consequence of the goodness of the essence of the Principle and its perfection, both of which are loved for their own sake)—[such a thing] is willed."

and 8.7.12:

"Hence, the will of the Necessary Existent does not differ in essence from His knowledge, nor does it differ in meaning from His knowledge. For we have shown that the knowledge belonging to Him is identical with the will that belongs to Him."

##### 5.3.2.3.1. Perfectiones

The positive predicates that affirmative theology attributes to God are called "perfectiones," later also "realitates".

The plural "perfections" (unusual in ancient times among philosophers, and otherwise extremely rare) is used as *terminus technicus* in Avicenna, see p. 283 Marmura:

"That He is perfect—indeed, above perfection—good, bestower [of existence] on everything after Him; [that He is] truth and pure intellect; that He apprehends intellectually all things, and the manner of this; how He knows Himself; how He knows universals; how He knows particulars, and the manner in which it is not permitted to say that He apprehends them.

The Necessary Existent is thus perfect in existence because nothing belonging to His existence and the perfections of His existence is lacking in Him."

p. 284:

"«Good» is also said of that which bestows the perfections of things and their good [qualities]. [Now] it has become evident that the Necessary Existent must in Himself be the furnisher of all existence and every perfection of existence. Hence, in this respect also He is good, deficiency and evil being excluded from Him."

Likewise Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Pars 1, quaestio 4, articulus 2, corpus.

##### 5.3.2.3.2. Realitates

That the terms "res" ("thing") and "realitas" ("thinglyness") were added to the fundamental concept *ens*, according to Wisnowski has its origin in the idea of creation, as it is formulated in the Koran: "the mutakallimun had to contend with the implication of verses 16:40 and 36:82 that things were somehow there before God said «Be!» to them; for otherwise, what would God be saying «Be!» to? It seemed perfectly sensible to draw the conclusion, as most Mutazilites did, that «thing» applies not only to what exists but also to what does not exist; and that what does not exist in turn applies not only to what did not exist and now exists, such as the world, but also to what does not now exist but will exist, such as the Day of Resurrection." (Wisnowski, p. 148)

The early Arabic grammarians "held that "shay" ["thing"] was the most generally applicable of terms, applying to all that may be placed in relation to a predicate. That is, "shay" refers to every subject in relation to which one could place a predicate." (Wisnovsky, p. 147)

Avicenna is using the term "shayiyya" "in one of the two early *kalam* senses of «thing»: the notion that a «thing» (for example, the Day of Resurrection, or my great-great granddaughter) can subsist mentally in God's - or anyone's - mind, before it exists in the real world. Here is an example of how «thingness» thus conceived works in final causation." (Wisnovsky, p. 173)

See Avicenna, *Metaphysics* 6.5.27-32 (pp. 228-229 Marmura):

"As for the doubt that follows this one, it is resolved once it is. known that the teleological end is posited as a thing and is [also] posited as an existent. There is a difference between a thing and an existent (even though a thing can only be an existent) that is similar to the difference between something and its necessary concomitant. You have already known and ascertained this. Resume, then, reflecting on this as regards the human. For there belongs to the human a reality which is his definition and quiddity without the condition of [its having] particular or general existence (whether in outer reality or the soul), nothing of this being either in potency or in act.

(28) [Now,] every cause inasmuch as it is that [particular] cause has a reality and a «thingness.» Thus, the final cause in its «thingness» is a cause for the rest of the causes to exist in actuality as causes while, in its existence, the final cause is caused by the existence of the other causes as causes in actuality. It is as though the «thingness» with respect to the final cause is the cause of the cause of its existence, and its existence is the effect of the effect of its «thingness.» Its «thingness,» however, is not a cause unless it is realized as a concept in the soul or whatever plays a [similar] role. There is no cause for the final cause in terms of its «thingness» except another cause that is other than the one that moves [something] toward it or that is moved toward it.

(29) Know that a thing is caused in its «thingness» and is caused in its existence. That which is caused in its «thingness» is like «twoness.» For, within the definition of its being «twoness,» it is caused by unity. That which is caused in its existence is clear and obvious. Similarly, there may belong to the thing a realized state of affairs existing in its «thingness,» for example, as being numerical belongs to «twoness.» The state of affairs, however, may be additional for a reason additional to its «thingness,» as in the case of squareness in wood or stone. Natural bodies are the cause of the «thingness» of many forms and accidents - I mean, those that are only renewed by them - and the cause of the existence of some without their «thingness,» as it is supposed that the state of affairs governing mathematics is of this sort.

(30) It has thus become easy for you to understand that the final cause in terms of «thingness» is prior to the efficient and receptive causes, and, similarly, that it is prior to form inasmuch as form is a formal cause leading to it. Likewise, the final cause in its existence in the soul is prior to the other causes. As for its being in the soul of the agent, [this is the case] because it exists [there] first, [and] then - [along] with [the agent] - agency, the demand for a recipient, and the quality of the form are [thereafter] conceived. As for its being in the soul of something other than the agent, there is no necessary dependence in terms of the order of one [cause] on another. Thus, in considering «thingness» and considering existence in the mind, there is no cause that is prior to the teleological. Rather, it is a cause for the coming to be of the other causes as causes. But the existence of the other causes as causes in actuality is a cause for its existence. The teleological cause is not a cause in that it exists, but in that it is a thing. Thus, from the point of view that it is a cause, it is the cause of causes; from the other point of view, it is the effect of the [other] causes.

(31) This [is the case] if the final cause belongs to [the realm of] generated being. If it is not within [the realm of] generated being, but its existence is higher than [the realm of] generated being—as will become clear to your in its proper place—then nothing belonging to the other causes will be a cause of it, and [nothing] in the One who is realization and existence. The final cause [in the realm of generated being] would not be caused by the other causes, not because it is a final cause, but because it has being. If it were without being, it would [still] not be caused at all. If, on the other hand, you consider its being a final cause, you will find that it is a cause of the rest of the causes to be causes—for example, to be an efficient cause, a receptive cause, and a final cause— [but] not [a cause] for their having being and existence in themselves. Therefore, what belongs essentially to the final cause inasmuch as it is a final cause is that it is the cause of the rest of the causes. But it will happen to it accidentally, inasmuch as its meaning occurs in [the realm] of generated being, that it is caused with respect to generated being."

If we consider that the *causa finalis* was called ἐντελέχεια by Aristotle, and this expression was interpreted as "perfection" (τελειότης) (Wisnowski, pp. 21-141), we recognize from this text why "perfectio" and "realitas" became synonyms, as in Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, I, distinctio 3, quaestio 3, § 159:

"talis natura potest concipi secundum aliquid, hoc est secundum aliquam realitatem et perfectionem, et secundum aliquam ignorari, - et ideo talis naturae conceptus non est simpliciter simplex. Sed ultima realitas sive 'perfectio realis' talis naturae, a qua ultima realitate sumitur ultima differentia, est simpliciter simplex."

("such a nature can be understood in terms of something, that is in terms of some thing or perfection, and in terms of another, and therefore the concept of such a nature is not quite simple. But the last thing or 'real perfection' of such a nature, from which as the last thing the last difference is taken, is quite simple.")

With Aristotle, such a "last difference" is, for example, "bipedal" (cf. below, p. 188). This term cannot be further classified, so it is "quite simple". Duns Scotus wants to express with the term "thing" that the terms of which the definition (and thus the being) of a thing (res) is composed are not merely formed by our understanding (in the sense of conceptualism), but possess an existence independent of it; although they are not "things" (res), they are "things-like" (real).

In accordance with this Micraelius (column 1203):

"Realitas est aliquid in re. Ideoque in unaquaque re possunt multaerealitates poni. Realitates interim distinguendae sunt a re, in qua sunt. Sic in homine est realitas rationalitatis, animalitatis, substantialitatis."

"("Reality is something in the thing. Therefore many realities can be set in every thing. The realities, however, must be distinguished from the thing they are in. So in man is the reality of reasonableness, animality and substantiality.")

Spinoza equates *realitas* and *perfectio*: "I understand the same by reality and perfection" ("Per realitatem et perfectionem idem intelligo") (*Ethica* II, definitio 6). Elsewhere an equation of "perfectio" qua "realitas" and "essentia" is made ("per perfectionem in genere realitatem, uti dixi, intelligam, hoc est, rei cujuscunque essentiam, quatenus certo modo existit, et operatur") (*Ethica* IV, praefatio).

Leibniz (*Monadology*, § 41) defines:

"D'où il s'ensuit, que Dieu est absolument parfait, la perfection n'étant autre chose que la grandeur de la realité positive prise precisement, en mettant à part les limites ou bornes dans les choses qui en ont."

("Whence it follows that God is absolutely perfect, perfection being only the magnitude of positive reality taken in its strictest meaning, setting aside the limits or bounds in that which is limited.")

"Realitas" means being something and not nothing (cf. the concept of "something" among the Stoics, above, p. 81). The more perfect a thing is, the more "thingly" ("real") it is, the more it is something and not nothing.

##### 5.3.2.3.3. Transcendentia

For the proof *ex gradibus* those properties of being must be sought which are gradable and, thought to their highest degree, divine attributes. It appears to be Avicenna's theory of attributes, with the help of which Aristotle's doctrine of the convertibility of *ens* and *unum* was developed into the doctrine of the "transcendentals" unum, verum, bonum. Even Kant (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, B 113) mentions the sentence "quodlibet ens est unum verum bonum," "which is so popular among the scholastics".

Philip the Chancellor is considered the author of the doctrine of transcendentals:

"Communissima autem haec sunt: ens, unum, verum, bonum." (Prologus, p. 42 Pouillon)

("But the most common are these: being, one, true, good.")

In Quaestio I (pp. 44-45 Pouillon) Philip quotes the (Academic) definition of good as "what everything strives for" (οὗ πάντα ἐφίεται) and names Aristotle (*Ethica Nicomachea*, 1094a2-3) and Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita (*De divinis nominibus*, pp. 117, 16 and 152, 8 Suchla). Bonaventura too attributes the thesis of the convertibility of being and good to the authority of Dionysius (*In librum primum Sententiarum*, distinctio I, articulus I, quaestio II: "Item, ens et bonum convertuntur, sicut vult Dionysius."[).](https://de.pons.com/%C3%BCbersetzung/englisch-deutsch/).)

The basis of the doctrine are the statements of Aristotle about being and unity in *Metaphysica* Γ. Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Idea of the good (*Ethica Nicomachea*, 1096 a 19-29) was interpreted as an indication of the transcendental character of the good. A second important source was Avicenna's doctrine of the primary concepts among which ranks also unity (*Metaphysics* 1.5).

For the theological aspect of the doctrine of transcendentals - 'being', 'one','true' and 'good' as "names of God" - the writing *De divinis nominibus* (chapters 4, 5, 7, 13) of Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita was authoritative.

The doctrine of the "transcendentia" was known well into modern times. There is still a definition in the lexicon of Micraelius (columns 1346-1347):

"Transcendentia sunt termini, qui praedicamenta transcendunt, ita tamen, ut de singulis praedicamentis dici possint; et nihil aliud sunt, quam generales entis affectiones, sive conjunctae, ut Unum, Verum, Bonum; sive disjunctae, ut causa et effectus; simplex vel compositum."

("Transcendentals are terms that exceed the categories, but are such that they can be expressed by the individual categories; and they are nothing other than the general affections of being, either the unified, like unity, true, good, or the disjunctive, like cause and effect, simple or compound.").

"Transcendental philosophy" was originally nothing else than the doctrine of these transcendentals; this meaning is still preserved by Kant in an addition to the second edition of the *Critik der reinen Vernunft* (§ 12, B 113-116).

In his much-used *Encyclopaedia* (Herborn 1630, p.581) Alsted included the *pulchrum* among the transcendentals: "Nam omne ens, qua ens, pulchrum, et perfectum, et ordinatum, et numerabile est. Et omne pulchrum est unum, verum, bonum." ("For every being is, *qua* being, beautiful, perfect, orderly and countable. And everything that is beautiful is one, true, good.")

This extension of the doctrine of transcendentals is prefigured in Avicenna (see above, p. 121) and, in the Christian realm, by Pseudo-Dionysius (*De divinis nominibus* 4) and others. The predilection for the number three and the perplexity of the moderns over the Platonic "one" is probably the reason why (since Shaftesbury and Diderot) the quaternity was reduced to a trinity again: the trinity of true, good, beautiful.

According to Thomas Aquinas (*Super De divinis nominibus* 4.5, no. 356) there is the same ratio between "good" and "beautiful" as, according to Aristotle (*Metaphysica* Γ, 1003b22-25), between "being" and "one":

"Quamvis autem pulchrum et bonum sint idem subiecto, quia tam claritas quam consonantia sub ratione boni continentur, tamen ratione differunt: nam pulchrum addit supra bonum, ordinem ad vim cognoscitivam illud esse huiusmodi."

("Although the beautiful and the good are the same in reality - because both clarity and consonance are contained in the notion of the good, nevertheless, they differ in concept. For the beautiful adds to the good an ordering to the power that is able to know that a thing is of such a kind.")

From this one can draw the conclusion that the beautiful has the same right to be included under the transcendentals as unity.

### 5.3.3. Via causalitatis

The so-called "via causalitatis" we already encountered in Plotinus (see above, p. 112). It is the way from the effect (the things of the visible world) to the (invisible) cause (for the Neoplatonist this cause is the Good, due to Plato, *Res publica* 509b). Of course one must first be willing to interpret the *mundus sensibilis* known to us as an effect.

The *via causalitatis* is described by Pseudo-Dionysius in *De divinis nominibus*, p. 198, 15-18 Suchla:

Καίτοι καὶ ἐκ πάντων, ὅπερ ἔφην, αὐτὴν [scilicet τὴν σοφίαν] γνωστέον· αὕτη γάρ ἐστι κατὰ τὸ λόγιον ἡ πάντων ποιητικὴ […] αἰτία.

("Nevertheless, it is possible to recognize wisdom from all things; for this is - according to the saying [*Psalm* 103:24] - the all-causing cause").

The expression πάντων αἰτίᾳ in *De divinis nominibus*, p.198, 2 Suchla occurs in the same chapter already in 196, 13 and 197, 11:

Ὥστε ὁ θεῖος νοῦς πάντα συνέχει τῇ πάντων ἐξῃρημένῃ γνώσει κατὰ τὴν πάντων αἰτίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν πάντων εἴδησιν προειληφώς. (196, 12-14)

("So that the divine intellect holds everything together in his cognition detached from everything, by anticipating knowledge of everything, adhering to the cause of everything").

Αὐτὴ γὰρ ἑαυτὴν ἡ πάντων αἰτία γινώσκουσα σχολῇ που τὰ ἀφ' αὑτῆς καὶ ὧν ἐστιν αἰτία ἀγνοήσει. Ταύτῃ γοῦν ὁ θεὸς τὰ ὄντα γινώσκει οὐ τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ τῶν ὄντων, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ. (197, 11-14).

("The self-knowing cause of all things will not at all recognize that which arises from it and from which it is the cause. Under this condition, therefore, God recognizes that which is not by means of the knowledge of that which is, but by means of the knowledge of himself").

According to 129, 2 (τῆς πάντων αἰτίας ἀγαθότητος = "goodness, the cause of all"; cf. *De mystica theologia* 143, 11 Heil/Ritter: ἡ ἀγαθὴ πάντων αἰτία = "the good cause of all") it is the Good to which the title "cause of all" belongs, it is compared with the sun as in Plato (187, 17-188, 6 Suchla). That this is "beyond being" (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας in Plato, ὑπερούσιος in Pseudo-Dionysius), of course does not fit the God who says of himself: "I am the being".

The title "cause of all" was first applied to the (identified with Zeus, see above, p. 86) "Providence" of the Stoics (SVF 1.125, 1: πρόνοιαν, τὴν πάντων αἰτίαν). From this we see that the *via causalitatis* too does not necessarily lead to a extramundane, supernatural god.

#### The proof ex gubernatione rerum

From the concept of god of the *via causalitatis*, as Thomas Aquinas understands it (see above, p. 112), the fifth proof of existence (*Summa theologiae* 1.2.3 corpus) emerges, cf. the example of *sagitta* (arrow) and *sagittans* (arrow shooter), which appears in both texts.

"Gubernatio" is the Stoic διοίκησις, cf. Diogenes Laertius 7.88 (= SVF 1.43, 3 = 3.4, 4). This word originally describes the administration of a house (οἶκος); Zeus is imagined as a good housefather. Like the housefather to the house, Zeus belongs to the world. The Stoics attribute the function of the *demiourgós* (which in Greek simply means "craftsman") in Plato's *Timaeus* to the active element, the fire, and speak of πῦρ δημιουργικόν. So the proof does not necessarily lead to a transcendent god.

## 5.4. The first three ways of Thomas Aquinas

Of the five proofs of God' existence by Thomas Aquinas (cf. above, p. 117) we have shown for the fourth and fifth that the *via eminentiae* and the *via causalitatis* precede them. We are here on Stoic-Neoplatonic grounds. Now we ask for the concept of God, which is assumed for the first three proofs respectively.

The first way ("prima autem et manifestior via est, quae sumitur ex parte motus") is identical with the proof of an unmoved mover in Aristotle (*Physica* viii). If we think "unmoved" strictly "metaphysically" as the omission of the (= physical) predicates based on motion, we arrive at the concept of God that resulted from the unity of ontology and theology (see volume 3, pp. 174-175). So no intellect which contains the *mundus intelligibilis*, no source of emanation that contains all things in itself. As proof of the existence of God, however, it is useless since the geocentric model has been refuted (cf. below, 6.2.1.).

Coming from Aristotle, in the second proof ("Secunda via est ex ratione causae efficientis") we are initially confused that Thomas lists the first causa efficiens next to the first moving one of the first proof; because for Aristotle moving and causa efficiens are the same. We must go to Avicenna to understand the new concept of "causa efficiens" we are suddenly dealing with. In whose *Metaphysics* we read (8.3.6-7):

"It has become evident from this and from what we have previously explained that the Necessary Existent is numerically one. It has [also] become evident that everything other than Him, if considered in itself, [is found to be] possible in its existence and hence caused, and it is seen that, [in the chain of things] being caused, [the caused existents] necessarily terminate with Him. Therefore, everything, with the exception of the One who in His essence is one and the existent who in His essence is an existent, acquires existence from another, becoming through it an existent, being in itself a nonexistent. This is the meaning of a thing's being created - that is, attaining existence from another. It has absolute nonexistence which it deserves in terms of itself; it is deserving of nonexistence not only in terms of its form without its matter, or in terms of its matter without its form, but in its entirety. Hence, if its entirety is not connected with the necessitation of the being that brings about its existence, and it is reckoned as being dissociated from it, then in its entirety its nonexistence becomes necessary. Hence, its coming into being at the hands of what brings about its existence is in its entirety. No part of it, in relation to this meaning, is prior in existence—neither its matter nor its form, if it possesses matter and form.

Hence, the whole, in relation to the first cause, is created. Its act of bringing into being that which comes to be from it would entirely rule out nonexistence in the substances of things. Rather, it is an act of bringing into existence that absolutely prevents nonexistence in things that bear perpetualness. This, then, is absolute creation. Bringing into existence [in the] absolute [sense] is not any kind of bringing into existence. And everything is originated from that One, that One being the originator of it, since the originated is that which comes into being after not having been."

So with the "effect" of the first cause is meant the creation of the world. As far as this is thought to be contingent (only with the contingent one asks for the reason of existence), the second way forms a unit with the third.

The third way ("Tertia via est sumpta ex possibili et necessario") is based on the *prima divisio entis* in Avicenna (see below, 6.2.3.2.). Kant calls it the "cosmological proof of God". As Kant (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A604 = B 632) correctly recognizes, it is based on the same concept of God as the ontological one. Therefore Anselm's definition of God as "id quo majus cogitari non potest" could be replaced by that of "ens necessarium" (the being in which *essentia* includes *existentia*). God is the *ens summe perfectum*; since *existentia* is a *perfectio*, the non-existence of God would be a contradiction in itself. (Cf. Descartes, *Meditationes de prima philosophia*, p. 32.)

So of the five ways of Thomas Aquinas, two remain that actually lead to the concept of a creator god: the second and third that form a unit. Both are factually based on Leibniz' (*Principes de la nature et de la grâce fondés en raison*, § 7) question: "pourquoi il y a plus tôt quelque chose, que rien?" ("why is there something at all and not rather nothing?").

While we have looked at metaphysics from a Neoplatonic perspective up to now, we turn now to the development that begins with the change on the philosophical throne from Plato to Aristotle, which occurred with the Arabs (cf. above, 2.3.).

# 6. Systematization of metaphysics on Aristotelian ground

As set out in volume 2 (p. 17), there was early dissatisfaction with the disposition of the *Metaphysica*. Its confusion resulted in uncertainty about the *subjectum metaphysicae*. On top of this, there was unease about the combination of Aristotelian metaphysics with a cosmology that was difficult to reconcile with the belief in creation. In modern times it was even refuted by more precise astronomical observations. Since the Renaissance, a strong Platonizing tendency (taking in the immortality of the soul and the reminiscence from the *Phaedo*) and a Neostoicism, which put metaphysics on an anthropological basis, also changed the structure: the question was now: what belongs to the rational nature of man (man as *zóon logikón* = *animal rationale*)? This is the horizon in which Kant and Hegel move. Since it is about structure, we initially concentrate on the great systematists - Avicenna, Suárez, Wolff - of the (by Kant so-called) "dogmatic" metaphysics.

## 6.1. The discussion about the subjectum metaphysicae in Avicenna

According to Bertolacci (pp. 113-114), Avicenna "appears to be the first in the history of philosophy to have devoted … a separate and articulated treatment" to the issue of determining the subject matter of metaphysics ("subjectum metaphysicae"). The question is terminologically based on Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Metaphysica* 239, 24-25:

καὶ τοῦτο ὑποκείμενον ἔχουσα, ἄλλη ἂν ἐκείνων εἴη.

("and having this [being *qua* being] as its subject, it [ontology] would be different from those sciences [sciences like arithmetic or geometry].")

Aristotle himself speaks of the ὑποκειμένη ὕλη ("subject matter") of a science in *Ethica Nicomachea* 1094b12.

The main problem that has occupied philologists since Paul Natorp (see our volume 3, p. 126) is the relationship between ontology and theology.

"The first specific endeavour of clarifying the relationship between ontology and theology within the *Metaphysics* took place, as far as we know, in Arabic philosophy. In post-Aristotelian Greek philosophy, this relationship was not perceived as problematic … In Arabic philosophy the problem was determined by the «theologizing» interpretation of the *Metaphysics* offered by philosophers like Alkindi, which derives proximately from the classifications of sciences of Late Antiquity and depends ultimately on Aristotle's perspective (iii) ["theological science" in *Metaphysica* E] taken in isolation from the others. Alfarabi reacted to Alkindi's onesided view of the *Metaphysics*: connecting himself with the commentatorial tradition of Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius and Ammonius/Asclepius, he had a broader view of the *Metaphysics* and in the *Fi Agrad* he clarified that Aristotle's work contains not only a theology, but also an ontology." (Bertolacci 113)

Another candidate for the *subjectum metaphysicae* are the "first causes"; this follows from Alexander's remark that "wisdom" (σοφία) is one of the names of metaphysics (*In Metaphysica*, 171, 5-11):

Ἡ μὲν ἐπιζητουμένη ἐπιστήμη καὶ προκειμένη νῦν αὐτή ἐστιν ἡ σοφία τε καὶ ἡ θεολογική, ἣν καὶ Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ἐπιγράφει τῷ τῇ τάξει μετ' ἐκείνην εἶναι πρὸς ἡμᾶς. λέγει δὲ αὐτὴν καὶ πρώτην σοφίαν, ὅτι τῶν πρώτων καὶ τιμιωτάτων ἐστὶ θεωρητική, διὰ τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ θεολογική· περὶ γὰρ τοῦ αἰτίου καὶ εἴδους, ὃ πάντῃ ἄυλός ἐστιν ούσία κατ' αὐτόν, ἣν καὶ πρῶτον θεὸν καὶ νοῦν καλεῖ, ὁ λόγος ἐν τούτοις προηγουμένως αὐτῷ γίνεται.

("The science that is the object of the inquiry and that is proposed here is both wisdom and the theological science [1026a19] which Aristotle entitles metaphysics because it comes after physics in the order relative to us. He also calls it primary wisdom [1005b1-2], because it is able to consider the things which are primary and of highest dignity. For the same reason it is also theological, because Aristotle's discussion in these [books] is concerned first and foremost with the cause and form, which is on his view a totally immaterial substance, which he also calls the primary god and intellect[[45]](#footnote-45).")

Because according to *Metaphysica* A (981b28-9 and 982b19-20) wisdom is the knowledge of "the first principles and causes".

The two candidates "God" and "the first causes" are eliminated: God, "because the subject matter of every science is something whose existence is admitted in that science" (*Metaphysics* 1.1.11). Avicenna applies here to metaphysics something Aristotle says in *Metaphysica* E, 1025b16-18 (cf. our volume 3, p.166) about the individual sciences mentioned in line 8. Metaphysics "investigates [the things] that are basically separable from matter" (section 12); in this respect, theology belongs to it.

"The ultimate causes for all the existents - the four of them" (the four causes in book A) cannot be subject matter of metaphysics because notions "such as the universal and the particular, potency and act, possibility and necessity, and others" cannot be "accidents proper to causes inasmuch as they are causes" (section 15). These concepts are rather proper accidents of the "existent inasmuch as it is an existent" (*Metaphysics* 1.2.12-13); they take the place of the "attributes" (ὑπάρχοντα) of being as such listed in *Metaphysica* Γ, 1005a16-18.

After the decision for the *ens qua ens* is made, Avicenna uses the books Γ and E, the only ones in which this term appears. From the hints which he takes from them, he reconstructs the system that Aristotle must have imagined, but did not come to execution. The topics of metaphysics are the following:

1. According to 1003a31-32, 1025b3-4 and 1028a3-4 the causes and principles of *ens qua ens*.

2. According to 1003b21-22 the *species entis*.

3. According to 1004b5-6 the *passiones (affectiones) entis*. These are apparently identical with the "accidents" (συμβεβηκότα) in 1004b7-8, the "properties" (ἴδια) in 1004b15-16 and the "attributes" (ὑπάρχοντα) in 1005a15 and 1026a32.

4. From E, 1025b10 Avicenna concludes that metaphysics is fundamental science for the individual sciences. (See our volume 3, pp. 161-166).

5. From E, 1026a13-16, with the corrupt reading ἀχώριστα in line 14 (see our volume 1, p. 158), it was generally concluded that separability from matter is the distinguishing feature between objects of physics and metaphysics.

6. The θεολογική, designed in E, 1026a18-19, must take its place.

Point 6 is subsumed to point 1, then this to point 3. With regard to point 5, Avicenna (1.2.18-19) helps himself by broadening the concept of separability: "separable from matter in definition and existence" is not only what is "basically devoid of matter and that which attaches to matter," but also what "may be found with or without matter - for example, causality and unity".

In 1.2.13 Avicenna distinguishes between *species entis*, "as, for example, substance, quantity, and quality," and "proper accidents, such as the one and the many, the potential and the actual, the universal and the particular, and the possible and the necessary". This is the program of an ontology to which the first half of the inquiry is devoted, book 2-7. In book 2-3 the *species* are treated, in book 4--7 the *passiones* (see 4.1.1).

The "proper accidents" discussed in Avicenna's books 4-7 are the "passiones disjunctae entis "[[46]](#footnote-46), so called because they are based on disjunctive judgments about being: being is either substance or accident, cause or effect etc.

He is followed with less clear distinction by Suárez, who in *Disputationes* 3-11 treats *de passionibus entis unum verum verum bonum*, in order to proceed with *Disputatio* 28 to the *prima divisio in infinitum* and *finitum*, the transition to theology.

By the said distinction metaphysics falls into two parts corresponding to the later classification into *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis*.[[47]](#footnote-47)

The unity of the two parts is that God is the positive part of the disjunctions cause - effect and necessary - contingent. It is striking that the four-causes-theory is superfluous and annoying here; for in the sentence "omne ens est vel causa vel causatum "[[48]](#footnote-48) one may only think of the relationship between a *prima causa* in the sense of a creator god (or a source of emanation) and the world. It is thus also omitted in later systems; Kant, for example, only talks about "cause and effect".

Another disjunction is that between substance and accident. By dividing the term substance into corporeal - incorporeal, one reaches the objects of physics and metaphysics. Avicenna ties in here to the classification of Porphyry (on the popularity of Porphyry among Muslims see above, 2.2.3.). He adopts the first classification into corporeal - incorporeal, but then does not divide the term body (to get to the concept of man), but the term incorporeal (2.1.10, p. 48 Marmura):

"Each substance is either body or other than body. If [it is] other than body, then it is either part of a body or it is not part of a body but is something altogether separable from bodies. If it is part of a body, then either it is its form or it is its matter. If it is separable [and] not a part of a body, then either it has some administrative relation to bodies in terms of moving [them]—and this is called «soul» — or it is free from material things in all respects and is called «intellect.»"

This is an outline of what was later called "metaphysica specialis". Dividing "metaphysica *specialis*" from "metaphysica *generalis*" is the logical (albeit long delayed) consequence of starting from a classification of the *genus* substance into *species*.

By this method of classification Avicenna fulfils the requirement of metaphysics to define the fundamental concepts of the individual sciences (cf. 1.2.16-17).

## 6.2. The relation of ontology and theology

The position of theology throughout the history of metaphysics is determined by the classification of being (and, according to it, the theoretical sciences), which can be different.

Already at Aristotle himself we have two alternative classifications:

in Metaphysica E 1 into physics, mathematics, theology;

in Metaphysica Λ 1 into three "entities" (οὐσίαι), initially into moving - ("natural") and motionless; the natural one is divided into corruptible - eternal, which coincides with the separation of the superlunary area from the sublunary. The entities both moved and eternal are the stars (including sun and moon).

### 6.2.1. Cosmologic classification

The *Weltanschauung* based on the distinction between sublunary and superlunary was finally refuted only in the 19th century by the proof (by means of the spectral analysis developed by G. R. Kirchhoff and R. W. Bunsen in 1859) that the stars contain the same chemical elements as the earthly bodies and that an aether as translunar matter does not exist. This aether was introduced by Aristotle (in *De caelo*) as fifth element and supposed to be in eternal circular motion.

### 6.2.2. The classification according to Metaphysica E 1

The inclusion of the Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation in Avicenna (due to the pseudo-Aristotelian *Theologia Aristotelis*) prevented the unity of ontology and theology from being thought of as in *Metaphysica* E 1 (cf. our volume 3, pp. 174-175): the concept of God had changed (see above, 5.2.). Avicenna, who had based his system on *Metaphysica* Γ 1-2 (cf. p. 159), had to take a new path to accommodate the theology of E 1. In doing so, he benefited from an ontology developed on Platonic ground.

Avicenna's new approach means an emancipation of metaphysics from cosmology. "The problematic cosmological implications of the Aristotelian-Arabian metaphysics" are to be avoided "by reducing metaphysics to the status of a *scientia transcendens*" or, in other words, (p. 169) it is preferable to "dispense with starting from the causality of motion and to act from the beginning on the ground of metaphysics". (Honnefelder, p. xvii)

### 6.2.3. Ontologic classification

The classification of being authoritative for the following time comes from Plotinus' pupil Porphyry (iii AD), the author of an extremely influential "introduction" (εἰσαγωγή) into the *Categoriae* of Aristotle.

From Plato's *Sophista*, it seems, an ontology had developed, the purpose of which is a topic that allows to define every being. "The goal is the discovery of the system of natural species"; for "to recognize an Idea, one must be able to classify it into the natural system of all Ideas." (Platon-Handbuch, pp. 260b and 259b)

In this context belongs the view of Speusippus rejected by Aristotle (*Analytica posteriora* 97a6-22 = Speusippus, fr. 63a Tarán), "that the definition of one being requires the knowledge of all differences (διαφοραί) to everything else and therefore the knowledge of all beings" (Krämer 2004, p. 18). The possibility of such all-knowledge "presupposes a strict construction of the realm of *universalia* in the manner of a 'natural system' (Krämer ibidem).

At the beginning of this natural system stood the classification of being into absolute and relative in Plato, *Sophista*, 255c. This dichotomy was adopted by Xenocrates (and many others), cf. our volume 3, p. 61, 81, 132-134. The criticism of the plurality of Aristotelian categories (mentioned by us on page 81) was met by reducing it to the dichotomy *substantia* - *accidens* (based on the Aristotelian distinction *per se - per accidens*, cf. our volume 3, p. 179). This was then passed off as Aristotelian classification of being, see Galen, *Quod qualitates incorporeae sint*, vol. 19, p. 481, 8-10 Kühn:

τί δὲ πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλην, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς γενικὴν τῶν ὄντων διαίρεσιν ποιούμενος τὰ μὲν εἶναί φησιν οὐσίας, τὰ δὲ συμβεβηκότα;

("What about Aristotle, who, in making a general classification of the beings, himself says [for what Aristotle really says see *Categoriae* 1a20-b9; *Analytica priora* 43a25-32] that beings are partly substances, partly accidents?")

From Boethius, Tractatus 5.1-2 it appears that this "general classification" served the purpose of defining concepts by means of subdivision.

Approaches to this can already be found at Aristotle. In *De anima* 412a6, "entity" (οὐσία) is called "one genus of being" (γένος ἕν τι τῶν ὄντων, cf. *Analytica posteriora* 88b1-3). An example of definition by means of "entity" (οὐσία) as genus can be found in *Analytica posteriora* 87a36:

μονὰς οὐσία ἄθετος, στιγμὴ δὲ οὐσία θετός.

("a unit is a positionless entity, and a point an entity having position.")

The classification into *substantia - accidens* was combined with one mentioned by Philo of Alexandria (*De agricultura*, sectio 139) as something well-known:

καὶ τῶν φιλοσοφούντων χορὸς ἅπας τὰ εἰωθότα διεξιών, ὅτι τῶν ὄντων τὰ μέν ἐστι σώματα, τὰ δ' ἀσώματα· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄψυχα, τὰ δὲ ψυχὴν ἔχοντα· καὶ τὰ μὲν λογικά, τὰ δ' ἄλογα· καὶ τὰ μὲν θνητά, τὰ δὲ θεῖα.

("And the whole company of students of philosophy going through what he is accustomed to: that of all existing things some are corporeal, and some incorporeal; some again are inanimate, and some have vitality; some are endowed with, others destitute of reason; some are mortal, others divine.")

The result is the so-called *arbor Porphyriana* ("tree of Porphyry"; this name is only found in Petrus Hispanus, *Summulae logicales*, Tractatus II, caput 11) at Porphyry (*Introductio in Aristotelis Categorias*, pp. 4, 21-5, 5 Busse):

ἡ οὐσία ἔστι μὲν καὶ αὐτὴ γένος, ὑπὸ δὲ ταύτην ἐστὶν σῶμα, καὶ ὑπὸ τὸ σῶμα ἔμψυχον σῶμα, ὑφ' ὃ τὸ ζῷον, ὑπὸ δὲ τὸ ζῷον λογικὸν ζῷον, ὑφ' ὃ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὑπὸ δὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπον Σωκράτης καὶ Πλάτων καὶ οἱ κατὰ μέρος ἄνθρωποι. ἀλλὰ τούτων ἡ μὲν οὐσία τὸ γενικώτατον καὶ ὃ μόνον γένος, ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος τὸ εἰδικώτατον καὶ ὃ μόνον εἶδος, τὸ δὲ σῶμα εἶδος μὲν τῆς οὐσίας, γένος δὲ τοῦ ἐμψύχου σώματος. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἔμψυχον σῶμα εἶδος μὲν τοῦ σώματος, γένος δὲ τοῦ ζῴου, πάλιν δὲ τὸ ζῷον εἶδος μὲν τοῦ ἐμψύχου σώματος, γένος δὲ τοῦ λογικοῦ ζῴου, τὸ δὲ λογικὸν ζῷον εἶδος μὲν τοῦ ζῴου, γένος δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος εἶδος μὲν τοῦ λογικοῦ ζῴου, οὐκέτι δὲ καὶ γένος τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ μόνον εἶδος καὶ πᾶν τὸ πρὸ τῶν ἀτόμων προσεχῶς κατηγορούμενον εἶδος ἂν εἴη μόνον, οὐκέτι δὲ καὶ γένος. ὥσπερ οὖν ἡ οὐσία ἀνωτάτω οὖσα τῷ μηδὲν εἶναι πρὸ αὐτῆς γένος ἦν τὸ γενικώτατον, οὕτως καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶδος ὤν, μεθ' ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδος οὐδέ τι τῶν τέμνεσθαι δυναμένων εἰς εἴδη, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀτόμων [(](http://www-1tlg-1uci-1edu-100135frl2e1b.emedia1.bsb-muenchen.de/help/BetaManual/online/SB1.html)ἄτομον γὰρ Σωκράτης καὶ Πλάτων καὶ τουτὶ τὸ λευκόν[)](http://www-1tlg-1uci-1edu-100135frl2e1b.emedia1.bsb-muenchen.de/help/BetaManual/online/SB1.html" \t "morph) μόνον ἂν εἴη εἶδος καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον εἶδος καὶ ὡς ἔφαμεν τὸ εἰδικώτατον.

("Essence or substance, is indeed itself a genus. Under this is body. And under body is animated body; under which is animal. Under animal is rational animal; under which is man. And under man are Socrates and Plato, and the individuals of the human species. Of these however essence is the most general, and that which is alone genus; and man is most special, and that which is alone species. But body is a species of essence, and the genus of animated body. Animated body also is a species of body, but the genus of animal. Again, animal is a species indeed of animated body, but the genus of rational animal. And rational animal, is a species indeed of animal, but the genus of man. And man is a species indeed of rational animal, but is no longer the genus also of particular men, but is species alone. Every thing also prior to individuals which is proximately predicated of them, will be species only, and no longer genus also. Hence as essence which is in the highest place is most general, because there is no genus prior to it; thus also man being a species, after which there is no other species, nor any thing which is capable of being divided into species, but individuals, (for Socrates and Plato, and this particular white, are individuals) will be species alone, and the last species, and as we have said, the most special species.")

When Porphyry says that body "falls below" substance, he presupposes the dichotomy into corporeal - incorporeal.

Boethius, in his larger commentary on the *Isagoge*, brings this classification into a tree-like arrangement:

*substantia* branches out into *corporea* - *incorporea*; *corpus* branches into *animatum* - *inanimatum*; *animatum corpus* branches into *sensibile* (with senses = animal) - *insensibile* (plant); animal branches into rational - irrational; rational animal branches into mortal (human) - immortal (god); *homo* branches into the individuals (Plato, Cato, Cicero).

This classification is only logical if we, together with the Stoics, subsume God under the bodies.

Not to be forgotten is the dialectic of the Stoics, whose "classifications" (διαιρέσεις) were declared useless by Epicurus (cf. above, p. 66). The terms "general" and "special" as well as the classification of animals into "reasonable" and "unreasonable" originate from them.

The method becomes clear from Diocles Magnes (see section 7.48) in Diogenes Laertius 7.60-61 (= SVF 3.214, 23-215, 2):

γένος δέ ἐστι πλειόνων καὶ ἀναφαιρέτων ἐννοημάτων σύλληψις, οἷον Ζῷον· τοῦτο γὰρ περιείληφε τὰ κατὰ μέρος ζῷα.

ἐννόημα δέ ἐστι φάντασμα διανοίας, οὔτε τὶ ὂν οὔτε ποιόν, ὡσανεὶ δέ τι ὂν καὶ ὡσανεὶ ποιόν, οἷον γίνεται ἀνατύπωμα ἵππου καὶ μὴ παρόντος.

εἶδος δέ ἐστι τὸ ὑπὸ γένους περιεχόμενον, ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ ζῴου ὁ ἄνθρωπος περιέχεται.

γενικώτατον δέ ἐστιν ὃ γένος ὂν γένος οὐκ ἔχει, οἷον τὸ ὄν· εἰδικώτατον δέ ἐστιν ὃ εἶδος ὂν εἶδος οὐκ ἔχει, ὥσπερ ὁ Σωκράτης.

διαίρεσις δέ ἐστι γένους ἡ εἰς τὸ προσεχῆ εἴδη τομή, οἷον Τῶν ζῴων τὰ μέν ἐστι λογικά, τὰ δὲ ἄλογα.

("A genus is a collection of a plurality of inseparable concepts, such as animal. For this embraces all the particular animals.

A notion is a figment of the mind, which is neither something nor qualified, but a quasi-something and quasi-qualified, in the way that the pattern of horse arises even though none is present.

A species is that which is contained within a genus, as man is contained within animal.

Most generic is that which is a genus but has no genus, as being.

Most specific is that which is a species but has no species, for example Socrates.

A classification is the dissection of a genus into the proximate species: for example, 'Of animals, some are rational, some are non-rational.'")

In the Stoics we meet the same supposition of being as supreme genus as in *Metaphysica* Γ (cf. volume 3, p. 116). This points to Plato's *Sophista*, from which also originates the definition of being as action and passion (cf. above, p. 50).

#### 6.2.3.1. Being as fundamental concept

Aristotle had sketched two ways of proceeding, which he, however, nowhere did stick to: the way from "the more recognizable for us" to "the more recognizable per se," and vice versa from "the more recognizable per se" to "the more recognizable for us". Avicenna chooses the second way; therefore he asks first for the fundamental concepts.

*Metaphysics* 1.5.1:

"We say: The ideas of «the existent,» «the thing,» and «the necessary» are impressed in the soul in a primary way. This impression does not require better known things to bring it about."

Ibidem, 1.5.5:

"The things that have the highest claim to be conceived in themselves are those common to all matters—as, for example, «the existent,» «the one thing,» and others. For this reason, none of these things can be shown by a proof totally devoid of circularity or by the exposition of better known things. Hence, whoever attempts to place in them something as a [defining] constituent falters—as, for example, one who says: «It is of the existent's true nature to be either active or acted on.» This, while inescapably the case, belongs to the division of the existent, the existent being better known than the active and the passive."

The "better known things" in 1.5.1 and 5 are the γνωριμώτερα in Aristotle, cf. *Topica* 141a26-b9:

Πρῶτον μὲν εἰ μὴ διὰ προτέρων καὶ γνωριμωτέρων πεποίηται τὸν ὁρισμόν· ἐπεὶ γὰρ ὁ ὅρος ἀποδίδοται τοῦ γνωρίσαι χάριν τὸ λεχθέν, γνωρίζομεν δ' οὐκ ἐκ τῶν τυχόντων ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν προτέρων καὶ γνωριμωτέρων, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς ἀποδείξεσιν (οὕτω γὰρ πᾶσα διδασκαλία καὶ μάθησις ἔχει), φανερὸν ὅτι ὁ μὴ διὰ τοιούτων ὁριζόμενος οὐχ ὥρισται. εἰ δὲ φανερὸν ὅτι ὁ μὴ διὰ τοιούτων ὁριζόμενος οὐχ ὥρισται. εἰ δὲ μή, πλείους ἔσονται τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὁρισμοί· δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι καὶ ὁ διὰ προτέρων καὶ γνωριμωτέρων βέλτιον ὥρισται, ὥστε ἀμφότεροι ἂν εἴησαν ὅροι τοῦ αὐτοῦ. τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον οὐ δοκεῖ·· ἑκάστῳ γὰρ τῶν ὄντων ἕν ἐστι τὸ εἶναι ὅπερ ἐστίν. ὥστ' εἰ πλείους ἔσονται τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὁρισμοί, ταὐτὸν ἔσται τῷ ὁριζομένῳ τὸ εἶναι ὅπερ καθ' ἑκάτερον τῶν ὁρισμῶν δηλοῦται. ταῦτα δ' (141b) οὐ ταὐτά ἐστιν, ἐπειδὴ οἱ ὁρισμοὶ ἕτεροι. δῆλον οὖν ὅτι οὐχ ὥρισται ὁ μὴ διὰ προτέρων καὶ γνωριμωτέρων ὁρισάμενος. Τὸ μὲν οὖν μὴ διὰ γνωριμωτέρων εἰρῆσθαι τὸν ὅρον διχῶς ἔστιν ἐκλαβεῖν· ἢ γὰρ εἰ ἁπλῶς ἐξ ἀγνωστοτέρων ἢ ἡμῖν ἀγνωστοτέρων· ἐνδέχεται γὰρ ἀμφοτέρως. ἁπλῶς μὲν οὖν γνωριμώτερον τὸ πρότερον τοῦ ὑστέρου, οἷον στιγμὴ γραμμῆς καὶ γραμμὴ ἐπιπέδου καὶ ἐπίπεδον στερεοῦ, καθάπερ καὶ μονὰς ἀριθμοῦ· πρότερον γὰρ καὶ ἀρχὴ παντὸς ἀριθμοῦ. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ στοιχεῖον συλλαβῆς.

("First of all, see if he has failed to make the definition through terms that are prior and more recognizable. For a definition is rendered in order to come to know the term stated, and we come to know things by taking not any random terms, but such as are prior and more recognizable, as is done in demonstrations (for so it is with all teaching and learning); accordingly, it is clear that a man who does not define through terms of this kind has not defined at all. Otherwise, there will be more than one definition of the same thing; for clearly he who defines through terms that are prior and more recognizable has framed a better definition, so that both will then be definitions of the same object. This sort of thing, however, does not seem to be so; for of each entity there is a single essence; if, then, there are to be a number of definitions of the same thing, the object defined will be the same as the essences represented in each of the definitions; but these are not the same, inasmuch as the definitions are different. Clearly, then, any one who has not defined a thing through terms that are prior and more recognizable has not defined it at all.

The statement that a definition has not been made through more recognizable terms may be understood in two ways either supposing that its terms are without qualification less intelligible, or supposing that they are less intelligible to us; for either way is possible. Thus the prior without qualification is more recognizable than the posterior, a point, for instance, than a line, a line than a plane, and a plane than a solid; just as a unit is more intelligible than a number; for it is prior to and a principle of all number. Likewise, also, a letter is more recognizable than a syllable.")

One does not define at all, if one does not define from more recognizable and (ontologically) prior (for the concept of *prius* and *posterius*, which is also the basis of the expression "a priori," see *Metaphysica* Δ, 1019a1-4). One does not define from something more recognizable, if one does not define from something more recognizable to us. If it is only better known to us, the essence of what is defined is not explained.

*Ibidem*, 149a18:

πάντων δὲ γνωριμώτατον τὸ γένος.

("The genus is always the most recognizable of all.")

The term "precede" in 1.5.4 matches the πρότερον in Aristotle, cf. *Analytica posteriora* 71b33-72a5:

πρότερα δ' ἐστὶ καὶ γνωριμώτερα διχῶς· οὐ γὰρ ταὐτὸν πρότερον τῇ φύσει καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς πρότερον, οὐδὲ γνωριμώτερον καὶ ἡμῖν γνωριμώτερον. λέγω δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς μὲν πρότερα καὶ γνωριμώτερα τὰ ἐγγύτερον τῆς αἰσθήσεως, ἁπλῶς δὲ πρότερα καὶ γνωριμώτερα τὰ πορρώτερον. ἔστι δὲ πορρωτάτω μὲν τὰ καθόλου μάλιστα, ἐγγυτάτω δὲ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα· καὶ ἀντίκειται ταῦτ' ἀλλήλοις.

("Things are prior and more recognizable in two ways; for it is not the same to be prior by nature and prior in relation to us, nor to be more recognizable and more recognizable to us. I call prior and more recognizable in relation to us what is nearer to sensation, prior and more recognizable simpliciter what is further away. What is most universal is furthest away, and the particulars are nearest; and these are opposite to each other.")

*Physica* 184a16-b14:

πέφυκε δὲ ἐκ τῶν γνωριμωτέρων ἡμῖν ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ σαφεστέρων ἐπὶ τὰ σαφέστερα τῇ φύσει καὶ γνωριμώτερα· οὐ γὰρ ταὐτὰ ἡμῖν τε γνώριμα καὶ ἁπλῶς. διόπερ ἀνάγκη τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον προάγειν ἐκ τῶν ἀσαφεστέρων μὲν τῇ φύσει ἡμῖν δὲ σαφεστέρων ἐπὶ τὰ σαφέστερα τῇ φύσει καὶ γνωριμώτερα. ἔστι δ' ἡμῖν τὸ πρῶτον δῆλα καὶ σαφῆ τὰ συγκεχυμένα μᾶλλον· ὕστερον δ' ἐκ τούτων γίγνεται γνώριμα τὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ διαιροῦσι ταῦτα. διὸ ἐκ τῶν καθόλου ἐπὶ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα δεῖ προϊέναι· τὸ γὰρ ὅλον κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν γνωριμώτερον, τὸ δὲ καθόλου ὅλον τί ἐστι πολλὰ γὰρ περιλαμβάνει ὡς μέρη τὸ καθόλου. πέπονθε δὲ (184b) ταὐτὸ τοῦτο τρόπον τινὰ καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα πρὸς τὸν λόγον ὅλον γάρ τι καὶ ἀδιορίστως σημαίνει, οἷον ὁ κύκλος, ὁ δὲ ὁρισμὸς αὐτοῦ διαιρεῖ εἰς τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα. καὶ τὰ παιδία τὸ μὲν πρῶτον προσαγορεύει πάντας τοὺς ἄνδρας πατέρας καὶ μητέρας τὰς γυναῖκας, ὕστερον δὲ διορίζει τούτων ἑκάτερον.

("The natural way of doing this is to start from the things which are more knowable and clear to us and proceed towards those which are clearer and more knowable by nature; for the same things are not knowable relatively to us and knowable without qualification. So we must follow this method and advance from what is more obscure by nature, but clearer to us, towards what is more clear and more knowable by nature. Now what is to us plain and clear at first is rather confused masses, the elements and principles of which become known to us later by analysis. Thus we must advance from universals to particulars; for it is a whole that is more knowable to sensation, and a universal is a kind of whole, comprehending many things within it, like parts. Much the same thing happens in the relation of the name to the formula. A name, e.g. 'circle', means vaguely a sort of whole: its definition analyses this into particulars. Similarly a child begins by calling all men father, and all women mother, but later on distinguishes each of them.")

*Metaphysica* 1029b3-10:

πρὸ ἔργου γὰρ τὸ μεταβαίνειν εἰς τὸ γνωριμώτερον. ἡ γὰρ μάθησις οὕτω γίγνεται πᾶσι διὰ τῶν ἧττον γνωρίμων φύσει εἰς τὰ γνώριμα μᾶλλον· καὶ τοῦτο ἔργον ἐστίν, ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι τὸ ποιῆσαι ἐκ τῶν ἑκάστῳ ἀγαθῶν τὰ ὅλως ἀγαθὰ ἑκάστῳ ἀγαθά, οὕτως ἐκ τῶν αὐτῷ γνωριμωτέρων τὰ τῇ φύσει γνώριμα αὐτῷ γνώριμα. τὰ δ' ἑκάστοις γνώριμα καὶ πρῶτα πολλάκις ἠρέμα ἐστὶ γνώριμα, καὶ μικρὸν ἢ οὐθὲν ἔχει τοῦ ὄντος.

("For it is in an advantage to advance to that which is more intelligible. For learning proceeds for all in this way— through that which is less intelligible by nature to that which is more intelligible; and just as in conduct our work is to start from what is good for each and make what is good in itself good for each, so it is our work to start from what is more intelligible to oneself and make what is intelligible by nature intelligible to oneself. Now what is intelligible and primary for particular sets of people is often intelligible to a very small extent, and has little or nothing of reality.")

That, according to Avicenna, being is the fundamental concept means that it is the supreme concept, the one that is classified. Now it depends on how it goes on, which is the "first classification". For Porphyry and Boethius, it is the classification into *substantia* and *accidens*. It is easy to understand why Avicenna departs from it: the fundamental opposition created - uncreated is hardly to accommodate in the "tree of Porphyry". Avicenna puts it at the beginning.

#### 6.2.3.2. The prima divisio entis into ens contingens and ens necessarium

*Prima divisio entis* becomes the dichotomy into necessary and contingent being. Avicenna adopts it from Alfarabi (pp. 93-94 Dieterici):

"All that is existent is divided into two kinds. In the first kind, when you think about its nature, its being is not necessary, i. e. these things are of possible existence. But if one thinks about the nature of the second kind, the being of it is a necessary one and then one says: it is of necessary existence. If we suppose that which is of possible existence as non-existent, we are not necessarily saying something absurd, for it cannot do without a cause for its existence; but if it becomes the necessary existing, then it reaches the necessary existence through something other than itself. But if one supposes the necessary existing as not existent, then this is necessarily absurd. For the existence of it has no cause, nor can it have its existence through something else. It is rather the first cause for the being of things and must be necessarily its being be the first being."

According to Avicenna's own statement, Alfarabi's writing on metaphysics (Dieterici 54-60) gave him access to Aristotle's metaphysics.

In Aristotle, the concept of the *ens necessarium* is paralleled by that of the eternal (see *Physica* 203b30; *De generatione et corruptione* 337b35-338a2; *De generatione animalium* 731b24-25; *Metaphysica* 1088b23-25). But since Aristotle does not know the idea of creation from nothing, the distinction between eternal and corruptible does not coincide with that between divine and non-divine.

Already with Avicenna the later classification into *metapysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis* is apparent. (Cf. above, p. 141) This gives metaphysics a new structure that lasts until Wolff. Theology is now based on ontology in such a way that God is the ontologically and axiologically superior part of the *prima divisio*.

#### 6.2.3.3. The prima divisio entis into ens finitum and ens infinitum

In contrast to Avicenna, for Duns Scotus and Suárez the "prima divisio" is into *ens finitum* and *ens infinitum* (*Ordinatio* I, distinctio 8, pars 1, quaestio 3).

Suárez sets the disjunction of finiteness and infinity at the beginning of the second part, as *prima divisio*. As with Avicenna, the task consists in pointing out, by a proof starting from the imperfect member of the disjunction, the perfect member as belonging to being as such. See Honnefelder, p. xv:

"Only in the form of proof that to the determination «being» there belong disjunctively the determinations «finite - infinite,» the existence of an infinite being can be proven."

The concept of God meant by *ens infinitum* is that of the *argumentum ex gradibus* and of the ontological proof; "infinite" means: not topped by a higher degree.

#### 6.2.3.4. The classification into metaphysica generalis and metaphysica specialis

We saw (p. 141) that a separation between *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis* was already apparent at Avicenna. It is expressly carried out by Benedictus Pererius (*De communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis et affectionibus* (1595) I, c. 7, p. 23):

"Necesse est esse duas scientias distinctas inter se. Unam quae agat de transcendentibus et universalissimis rebus: Alteram, quae de intelligentiis. Illa dicetur prima Philosophia et scientia universalis; haec vocabitur proprie Metaphysica, Theologia, Sapientia, Divina scientia."

("There are necessarily two sciences different from each other. One that deals with transcendental and most general things; a second that deals with intelligences. That should be called primary philosophy and general science; this should be called in the true sense metaphysics, theology, wisdom, divine science.")

Pererius had a long unknown precursor in an anonymous medieval thinker whose thoughts on the *subjectum metaphysicae* Albert Zimmermann excavated in 1965. The manuscript he published even contains the later technical terms *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis*; the author refers to Aristotle, *Metaphysica* Γ, 1003b21-22:

"Ecce plane dicit, quod est metaphysica generalis et specialis." (Zimmermann, p. 60)

This interpretation is indeed inevitable if we adhere to the traditional text (cf. our volume 2, pp. 64-65).

The separation is *de facto* carried out with Bacon and Descartes.

With Bacon, *prima philosophia* as *scientia universalis* is the mother of all sciences; it deals with the common axioms of the other sciences as well as with the fundamental determinations of being, such as identity and diversity, possibility and impossibility (*De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* III, 1). It is to be distinguished from metaphysics, which, as part of natural philosophy, deals with the formal and final causes (loc. cit. III, 4).

Descartes no longer recognizes a science of being as such, but uses the expression 'prima philosophia', synonymous with 'metaphysics', for the science of God and the soul (*Meditationes de prima philosophia*, title and *praefatio*). In the *prima philosophia* he deals with the principles of knowledge (*De principiis cognitionis humanae*, the first part of *Principia philosophiae*).

#### 6.2.3.5. The title "ontology" comes into use

As the oldest evidence is considered the *Lexicon Philosophicum*, opera et studio Rodolphi Goclenii (1613), p. 16 (article 'Abstractio'):

"ὀντολογικὴ [scilicet abstractio], id est, Philosophiae de ente seu Transcendentibus."

("ontological [abstraction], that is the abstraction made by the philosophy of being or the transcendentals.")

### 6.2.4. Neoplatonic influence on the structure of metaphysics

So far we have considered the structure of metaphysics as, determined by Aristotle (*Metaphysica* E 1), onto-theological. We already mentioned (pp. 45 and 99) that the content of the Neoplatonic *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus was received. In Avicenna this is done, so to speak, in the manner of an appendix (9th book). The *Elementatio* with its three-part structure god - intelligences - souls (cf. above, 5.1., p. 99) has a structure-forming effect only in modern times, when we repeatedly come across traces of direct use (see pp. 26 and 155).

#### 6.2.4.1. Metaphysica specialis as science of the immaterial

Even for Pererius the angels (= intelligences) belong to the *metaphysica specialis*, but not yet the immortal soul of man. In this respect he remains on Aristotelian ground. That is changing with Alsted.

In the then widely used *Encyclopaedia* by Alsted, the content of conventional metaphysics is divided into two different volumes (11 and 12). The term "metaphysics" is restricted to ontology (p. 573); a special science *pneumatica* (p. 631), which deals with God, the angels and the soul, is separated from it.

Johannes Micraelius has this concept in mind when he reports on "some" who do not regard the doctrine of God, the angels and the "separated soul" ("separated" from the body) as parts of metaphysics, but spread them over three disciplines, different both among themselves and from ontology. The whole article 'Metaphysica' in his *Lexicon philosophicum* (1653), column 654 reads as follows:

"*Metaphysica*, quasi scientia post vel supra Physicam, ea considerat quae sunt supra corpora naturalia. Aristoteles eam vocat *sapientiam* et *philosophiam κατ' ἐξοχήν*. Item *Рrimam Рhilosophiam*; item *Theologiam*, quia omnes Entis species in illa ideo explicantur cum suis affectionibus generalibus, ut deveniatur tandem ad Ens primum et summum.

Metaphysicae objectum est Ens quatenus Еns est. Unde etiam vocatur aliquibus ὀντολογία: Ubi notetur, quod Ens hic intelligatur in communi sub ratione indifferentiae in summa abstractione.

Меtaphysica dividitur in *Generalem*‚ qua Ens in abstractissima ratione et omnimoda indifferentia consideratur, cum quoad naturam tum quoad affectiones tam conjunctas quam dissolutas: et in *specialem*, qua Ens consideratur in illis speciebus substantiarum, quae ab omni materia sunt absolutae, сеu sunt DEUS, Angeli et anima sерагаtа: quanquam aliqui Theologiam, Angelographiam et Psychologiam, in quibus agitur de Deo, Angelis et Anima separata, non habent pro partibus Metaphysicae, sed illas сепsent peculiares esse disciplinas."

("Metaphysics, so to speak a science «after» or «above physics», considers what is above natural bodies. Aristotle calls it «wisdom» and «philosophy par excellence». Also «primary philosophy;» likewise «theology," because in it all kinds of being, together with their general determinations, are explained with the goal of finally reaching the primary and supreme being.

Object of metaphysics is being, insofar it is being. That is why it is also called by some «ontology»: on this it should be noted that 'being' is understood in its common meaning, from the point of view of indifference in highest abstraction.

Metaphysics is divided into a general one, in which being is viewed from the most abstract point of view and in total indifference, both in relation to its nature and in relation to its determinations, the united as well as the disjunct [cf. above, p. 140, note]. And a special one in which being is considered in those kinds of substances which are free of any matter, such as GOD, angels and separate souls: although some do not regard theology, angelography and psychology, in which God, the angels and the separate soul are dealt with, as parts of metaphysics, but as disciplines of their own.").

Cf. the article ONTOLOGIA (ibidem, column 928):

"Ὀντολογία а nonnullis ponitur tanquam peculiaris disciplina Philosophica, quae tradat de Ente: quod tamen ab аliis statuitur objectum ipsius Меtaphysicae."

("Some consider ontology to be a philosophical discipline of its own, which is about being; the latter, however, is declared by others to be the object of metaphysics itself.").

Likewise in column 1056:

"*Pneumatica, Pneumatologia*, doctrina de spiritibus; et dividitur in theologiam, angelographiam, et psychologiam."

("Pneumatics or pneumatology, doctrine of spirits; it is divided into theology, angelography and psychology.")

The following passage (ibidem, column 124) is informative for the acceptance of psychology:

"Anima humana sola est immortalis, quia absque organis corporis suas actiones ambire potest, et est αὐτοκίνητος seque ipsam movet, nec a corpore quoad essentiam aut quoad operationem dependet, quum sit αὐτοτελής seipsam perficiens, et propterea extra corpus subsistere possit. Hoc autem non possunt animae brutorum et plantarum. Tractatur de his omnibus in ψυχολογίᾳ."

("The human soul alone is immortal, since it can take care of its actions without the organs of the body, and it is αὐτοκίνητος («self-moving»), and it does not depend on the body, neither in relation to its essence nor in relation to its action, since it is αὐτοτελής («self-completing»), and therefore can exist outside the body. But the souls of animals and plants cannot. All of this is traded in psychology.")

The Greek technical terms αὐτοκίνητος and αὐτοτελής reveal the origin of this psychology: they come from the *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus (see the index at Dodds, p. 325b), as well as the triadic schema God - intelligences - souls; only that God has taken the place of unity, as usual since the times of the Platonizing Aristotelians (Avicenna and his precursors). Except the modern Aristotelians had direct access to the Greek texts. As the quotations show, they were visibly proud of their knowledge of Greek.

Cf. also Goclenius, p. 104a:

"Qui Incorporeum [supple: considerarunt], spiritum immortalem et χωριστὸν, ut Plato."

("Those who considered the aspect of incorporeality considered it [human soul] an immortal spirit and separable from the body, like Plato.")

#### 6.2.4.2. Metaphysica specialis as fundamental knowledge

It is with Wolff that metaphysics reaches its greatest extent. He takes in cosmology that had previously belonged to physics[[49]](#footnote-49), and empirical psychology, a new science that is unknown to Micraelius. On "Psychologia," the latter succinctly notes (column 1165): "doctrina de anima". For Kant (*Critik der reinenVernunft*, A 848-849 = B 876-877) its incorporation into metaphysics is only an emergency solution.

What is Wolff's criterion for whether something belongs to metaphysics or not?

For Wolff, metaphysics is not an original science resulting from the classification of the species of being as the objects of philosophical knowledge, but a traditional, discredited name for a summary of four of the most important sciences. These are, if one wants to treat them "methodo demonstrativa," strictly ordered among themselves. Ontology comes first, i. e. it does not receive its principles from any other science, which is why the other name 'Philosophia prima' is also well-founded. *Cosmologia generalis*, *Psychologia* and as last *Theologia naturalis* follow, which must draw its principles from the three others (*Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere*, §§ 96-99). Only incidentally, not in the title of the works, Wolff calls the representation of these four sciences once "integrum Metaphysicae opus" (*Theologia naturalis* 2, Praefatio).

The new form that Wolff gives to metaphysics is determined by the mathematical method. Wolff reports that his teachers Pohle and Neumann whet his "Lust zu Cartesii Philosophie und der Mathematik" ("appetite for Descartes' philosophy and for mathematics") (Wuttke 114). Mathematics was only the means to the end of theology. He was "begierig, die Mathematik *methodi gratia* zu erlernen, um mich zu befleissigen, die Theologie auf unwiedersprechliche Gewisheit zu bringen" ("eager to learn mathematics *methodi gratia* for devoting myself to the task of bringing theology to undeniable certainty") (Wuttke 121). His "main intention" was theology (Wuttke 127).

It is this main intention alone that lends unity to the new metaphysics; for by taking up cosmology, Wolff has put the criterion of abstraction from matter out of effect. According to the new concept, cosmology and psychology are needed to shew the *a posteriori* proofs of God's existence (first volume of the *Theologia naturalis*); these are (according to Kant's terminology) the cosmological proof *e contingentia mundi*, the physico-theological and the Cartesian, in which from the existence of the imperfect me the existence of a perfect spirit is concluded, using the (by Thomas Aquinas) so-called *argumentum ex gradibus*.

For the proof *a priori* in the second volume of the *Theologia naturalis*, from the preceding volumes (*Ontologia, Cosmologia generalis, Psychologia empirica, Psychologia rationalis*) only the term *perfectio* (*Ontologia*, § 503) is needed.

After the traditional criterion of abstraction from matter was suspended by the incorporation of cosmology and empirical psychology, the criterion for the ranking of sciences is priority in the sense of Aristotle (*Metaphysica* Δ, 1019a1-14): prior is what can be without the other, but not *vice versa*. Hereby, however, the boundary between metaphysics and its subsequent (subordinate) sciences remains arbitrary; why should not logic and ethics, which are subordinate to psychology in Wolff, also belong to it? Kant emphasizes this point in *Critik der reinen Vernunft* A 843-844 = B 871-872.

A sharp separation, on the other hand, is made possible by a second criterion that Wolff does not highlight as system-forming: the classification into *substantia simplex* and *composita*. It makes the acceptance of cosmology understandable: the elements of the bodies are simple substances (Wolff leaves open the nature of their modifications, which in Leibniz are ideas without consciousness). From them, the inquiry ascends to the simple substances with consciousness, the "spirits," some of which are finite (*Psychologia rationalis*), the other infinite (*Theologia*).

This *metaphysica specialis* is inflated to the monstrous extent of five volumes by the fact that Wolff, following the first criterion, makes it the fundamental knowledge for all sciences and arts.

##### Ontologia and theologia in Wolff

How does Wolff's system idea relate to that of his predecessors Avicenna and Suárez with regard to our guiding question about the relationship between ontology and theology?

With Wolff, the alternatives *contingens* - *necessarium* and *finitum* - *infinitum* are replaced by the alternative *simplex* - *compositum*. Hereby Wolff takes account of the change through Descartes and Leibniz with their Platonizing tendency; the origin of metaphysics is, so to speak, transferred to Plato's *Phaedo*, where the immortality of the soul is backed up by its indivisibility (78b-c).

Wolff achieves the concept of God only through the further classification of *ens simplex* into *finitum* and *infinitum*. As with Duns Scotus and Suárez, the *passio disjuncta finitum - infinitum* is the link between ontology and theology also with Wolff.

In the *Theologia naturalis*, however, Wolff does not refer to the classification of the *Ontologia*. Here he wants to derive the existence and the attributes of God (intellect and will, from them the others follow). For this he only needs the concepts of existence and *ens necessarium* from ontology; for the attributes he even has to fall back on the *Psychologia empirica*.

In the first part, God's essence and existence are derived *a posteriori*, from the empirical fact of the Cartesian *cogito, ergo* *sum*, in the second part *a priori*, from the concept of God as *ens perfectissimum* (§ 14). However, like the former, the latter derivation is dependent on empirical psychology; with the *a priori* proof of existence it is only connected by the fact that the empirically found attributes intellect and will are subsumed under the concept of *realitas*.

Systematic method would require that *ens perfectum* and *ens imperfectum* occur as *passiones disjunctae* (or "*species entis*" according to Wolff's terminology) in the *Ontologia*. Instead, *ens compositum* and *ens simplex* are treated. *Perfectio* occurs among the transcendentals, as *bonitas transcendentalis* (§ 503), together with *verum*.

This gives the overall impression that with all the "mathematical" accuracy (which makes Wolff's books virtually unreadable; every small thoughtstep is divided into even smaller ones) the system as a whole is less strictly thought through than the systems of Wolff's scholastic predecessors.

The next important systematist is Kant. What lies in between are either unimportant systematists (the Wolffians) or important but unsystematic thinkers (like Rousseau).

### 6.2.5. The contents of the most influential textbooks

Aristotle's *Metaphysica*, like the other "acroamatic writings," was already determined by its author for academic teaching. It retained this function in the Neoplatonic curriculum and at the universities of the Middle Ages. In the Orient it was replaced by the *Metaphysics* of Avicenna, in the West first by the *Disputationes metaphysicae* of Suárez, later by Christian Wolffs relevant works. These monumental works were much too extensive for direct use; their effect on academic teaching was that they were processed into shorter, more manageable textbooks.

#### 6.2.5.1. Avicenna

Bertolacci (VIII) writes about Avicenna's *Metaphysics*: "Within the Peripatetic tradition it constitutes the first concrete replacement of this work [the *Metaphysica* of Aristotle] with an original treatment on metaphysics". "Whereas in the East the substantial progress represented by Avicenna's *Metaphysics* in comparison to Aristotle's homonymous writing was immediately perceived, and the former somehow substituted the latter (either to be accepted and commented upon, or to be criticized), in the West Aristotle's *Metaphysics* kept on being the textbook on metaphysics for a few centuries" (Bertolacci, ibidem).

Until Suárez, the Christian West was content to continue commenting on Aristotle's *Metaphysica*, enriched by *quaestiones* that emerged from the operation of the school (the *disputationes*) (Duns Scotus, Fonseca). They followed Averroes, who had defended the traditional order of the *Metaphysica* as completely satisfactory (see our volume 2, pp. 17-24).

"Avicenna recasts the structure of metaphysics in a systematic way, by dismissing the rather inconsequential order of books of the *Metaphysics*, and arranging this discipline according to a precise epistemological pattern (given by the species, properties and principles of «existent»), only adumbrated in Aristotle [in *Metaphysica* Γ]." (Bertolacci, p. 107) "An analysis of the subject matter and goal of metaphysics is performed in the main part of chapters I, 1-2. The structure of metaphysics is briefly outlined in chapter I, 2, and described in detail in chapter I, 4." (Bertolacci, p. 108)

In detail, the contents are (Marmura, pp. ix-xiv):

Book One

Consisting of eight chapters

Chapter [One]: On beginning to seek the subject of first philosophy

so that its individual quiddity among the sciences becomes evident

Chapter [Two]: On attaining the subject matter of this science

Chapter [Three]: On the benefit of this science, the order [in which it is studied], and its name

Chapter [Four]: On the totality of matters discussed in this science

Chapter [Five]: On indicating the existent, the thing, and their first division, wherewith attention is directed to the objective [sought]

Chapter [Six]: On commencing a discourse on the Necessary Existent and the possible existent; that the Necessary Existent has no cause; that the possible existent is caused; that the Necessary Existent has no equivalent in existence and is not dependent [in existence] on another

Chapter [Seven]: That the Necessary Existent is one

Chapter [Eight]: On clarifying [the meaning] of “truth” and “veracity”; defense of the primary statements in true premises

Book Two

Consisting of four chapters

Chapter [One]: On making known substance and its divisions in a universal way

Chapter [Two]: On ascertaining corporeal substance and what is composed from it

Chapter [Three]: That corporeal matter is not devoid of form

Chapter [Four]: On placing form prior to matter in the rank of existence

Book Three

Consisting of ten chapters

Chapter [One]: On indicating what ought to be investigated regarding the state of the nine categories and about their accidental [nature]

Chapter [Two]: On discussing the one

Chapter [Three]: On ascertaining the one and the many and showing that number is an accident

Chapter [Four]: That measures are accidents

Chapter [Five]: On ascertaining the nature of number, defining its species, and showing its beginnings

Chapter [Six]: On the opposition of the one and the many

Chapter [Seven]: That qualities are accidents

Chapter [Eight]: On knowledge, that it is an accident

Chapter [Nine]: On qualities that are in quantities; proof of [their existence]

Chapter [Ten]: On the relative

Book Four

Consisting of three chapters

Chapter [One]: On the prior and posterior, and on origination

Chapter [Two]: On potency, act, power, and impotence, and on proving [the existence] of matter for every generated thing

Chapter [Three]: On the complete, the incomplete, and what is above completion; on the whole and on the total

Book Five

Consisting of nine chapters

Chapter [One]: On general things and the manner of their existence

Chapter [Two]: On the manner in which universality comes to belong to universal natures; completing the discussion of this [topic]; and on the difference between the whole and the part, the universal and the particular

Chapter [Three]: On differentiating between genus and matter

Chapter [Four]: On the manner in which ideas extraneous to genus enter its nature

Chapter [Five]: On the species

Chapter [Six]: On making differentia known and ascertaining [its nature]

Chapter [Seven]: On making known the proper relationship between definition and the thing defined

Chapter [Eight]: On definition

Chapter [Nine]: On the appropriate relation between definition and its parts

Book Six

Consisting of five chapters

Chapter [One]: On the division of causes and their states

Chapter [Two]: On resolving doubts directed against what the adherents of true doctrine hold, to the effect that every cause coexists with its effect; and on ascertaining the true statements about the efficient cause

Chapter [Three]: On the compatibility between the efficient causes and their effects

Chapter [Four]: Concerning the other causes—the elemental, the formal, and the final

Chapter [Five]: On establishing purpose and resolving skeptical doubts uttered in refuting it; the difference between purpose and necessity; making known the manner in which purpose is prior to the rest of the causes and the manner in which it is posterior

Book Seven

Consisting of three chapters

Chapter [One]: On the appendages of unity by way of haecceity and its divisions; the appendages of plurality by way of otherness, difference, and the well-known kinds of opposition

Chapter [Two]: On relating the doctrine of the ancient philosophers regarding the exemplars and the principles of mathematics and the reason calling for this; revealing the origin of the ignorance that befell them, by reason of which they deviated [from the truth]

Chapter [Three]: On refuting the doctrine [of the separate existence] of mathematical [objects] and exemplars

Book Eight

On knowing the First Principle of all existence and on knowing His attributes; [consisting of] seven chapters

Chapter [One]: On the finitude of the efficient and the receptive causes

Chapter [Two]: Concerning doubts adhering to what has been said, and the resolution thereof

Chapter [Three]: On showing the finitude of the final and formal causes; on proving [the existence of] the first principle in an absolute manner; on making decisive the statement on the first cause absolutely and on the first cause restrictedly, showing that what is absolutely a first cause is a cause for the rest of the causes

Chapter [Four]: On the primary attributes of the principle that is necessary in its existence

Chapter [Five]: As though a confirmation and a recapitulation of what has been previously discussed concerning the unity of the Necessary Existent and all His attributes, by way of conclusion

Chapter [Six]: That He is perfect—indeed, above perfection—good, bestower [of existence] on everything after Him; [that He is] truth and pure intellect; that He apprehends intellectually all things, and the manner of this; how He knows Himself how He knows universals; how He knows particulars, and the manner in which it is not permitted to say that He apprehends them

Chapter [Seven]: On the relation of the intelligibles to Him; on making it clear that His positive and negative attributes do not necessitate plurality in His essence; that to Him belongs supreme splendor, the loftiest majesty, and infinite glory; on explaining in detail the state of intellectual pleasure

Book Nine

On the emanation of things from the first governance and the return to Him; [consisting of] seven chapters

Chapter [One]: On the attribute of the efficacy of the First Principle

Chapter [Two]: That the proximate mover of the heavens is neither a nature nor an intellect but a soul, and that the remote principle is an intellect

Chapter [Three]: On the manner in which acts proceedfrom the lofty principles so that, from this, one would know what one ought to know concerning the separate movers that are intellectually apprehended in themselves and are loved

Chapter [Four]: On the ordering of the existence of the intellect, celestial souls, and celestial bodies [that proceed] from the First Principle

Chapter [Five]: On the state of the generation of the elements by the first causes

Chapter [Six]: On providence, showing the manner of the entry of evil in divine predetermination

Chapter [Seven]: Concerning “the return,” [the hereafter]

Book Ten

Consisting of five chapters

Chapter [One]: A brief statement on the beginning and “the return”; on inspirations, dreams, and prayers that are answered, and celestial punishments; on the state ofprophecy and of astrological predictions

Chapter [Two]: On the proof ofprophecy; the manner of the prophet's call to God, exalted be He; and the “return” to Him

Chapter [Three]: On acts of worship: their benefits in this world and the next

Chapter [Four]: On establishing the city, the household—that is, marriage—and the universal laws pertaining to [these matters]

Chapter [Five]: Concerning the caliph and the imam: the necessity of obeying them; remarks on politics, transactions, and morals

The individual books fit into the plan of the system as follows:

book 1. 5-6 on the *prima divisio* necessary and possible existent.

book 2 on substance,

book 3 on the other nine categories,

book 4 on prior and posterior (cf. *Metaphysica* Γ, 1005a16),

book 5 on genus and species (cf. *Metaphysica* Γ, 1005a17),

book 6 on cause and effect,

book 7 on unity and plurality.

With book 8 follows a second, special part about the necessary existing. Book 9 brings the Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation and the return of things. Book 10 is an appendix that interprets the Islamic religion as return (which corresponds to the later *theologia revelata* of the Christians).

#### 6.2.5.2. Suárez

Avicenna only found successors in the systematic treatment of metaphysical questions in Suárez and Wolff. Suárez' independence from Aristotle is characterized by Gilson (p. 145) as follows:

"To set oneself thus on the very objects of metaphysics, and no longer on Aristotle's letter, to know in what order and how to speak about them, was to commit oneself to writing about metaphysics instead of writing about Aristotle. There was certainly some boldness in doing so, and, although Suárez was not entirely without predecessor, an undeniable novelty. Not only, in fact, Suárez seems to have been the first to treat all metaphysics, and no longer only such and such of its parts, in this objective and systematic form, but he found himself, by doing so, to specify the philosophical vocabulary received in the School, with a rigor and a clarity that do not meet to the same degree in his predecessors."

Suárez himself expresses himself as follows (*Disputationes metaphysicae* II, prooemium):

"Ut enim maiori compendio ac brevitate utamur, et convenienti methodo universa tractemus, a textus aristotelici prolixa explicatione abstinendum duximus, resque ipsas, in quibus haec sapientia versatur, eo doctrinae ordine ac dicendi ratione quae ipsis magis consentanea sit, contemplari. Nam, quod spectat ad Philosophi textum in his *Metaphysicae* libris, nonnullae partes eius parum habent utilitatis, vel quod varias quaestiones ac dubitationes proponat, easque insolutas relinquat, ut in toto tertio libro, vel quod in antiquorum placitis referendis et refutandis immoretur, ut ex primo fere libro, et ex magna parte aliorum constare facile potest, vel denique quod eadem quae in prioribus libris dicta fuerant, vel repetat, vel in summam redigat, ut patet ex libro XI et aliis."

("In order to use a more brief and appropriate way, we believed we had to abstain from a detailed explanation of the Aristotelian text, but rather to consider the things themselves with which this wisdom deals, in the order of doctrine and in the linguistic manner that are more appropriate to them. For, as far as the philosopher's text in these books of *Metaphysica* is concerned, some of his parts have too little useful, be it that he raises various problems and then leaves them unsolved, as in the whole third book [B], be it that he dwells in presenting and disproving the opinions of the ancients, as in the first book [A] almost entirely and in others to a large extent; be it finally that he repeats or summarizes what had been said in earlier books, as in the eleventh book [K1, see our volume 2] and others [think for the doublets A 9 and M 4-5].")

We give the following table of contents untranslated, assuming that it will only be of use to those who want to deal with the original text anyway. I cannot imagine that anyone should take a pleasure to translate it.

Disputatio 1 De natura primae philosophiae seu metaphysicae

Disputatio 2 De ratione essentiali seu conceptu entis

Disputatio 3 De passionibus entis in communi et principiis eius

Disputatio 4 De unitate transcendentali in communi

Disputatio 5 De unitate individuali eiusque principio

Disputatio 6 De unitate formali et universali

Disputatio 7 De variis distinctionum generibus

Disputatio 8 De veritate seu vero, quod est passio entis

Disputatio 9 De falsitate seu falso

Disputatio 10 De bono, seu bonitate trancendentali

Disputatio 11 De malo

Disputatio 12 De causis entis in genere

Disputatio 13 De materiali causa substantiae

Disputatio 14 De causa materiali accidentium

Disputatio 15 De causa formali substantiali

Disputatio 16 De formali causa accidentali

Disputatio 17 De causa efficienti in communi

Disputatio 18 De causa proxima efficienti eiusque causalitate, et omnibus quae ad causandum requirit

Disputatio 19 De causis necessario et libere seu contingenter agentibus; ubi enim de fato, fortuna et casu

Disputatio 20 De prima causa efficienti primaque eius actione, quae est creatio

Disputatio 21 De prima causa efficienti et altera eius actione, quae est conservatio

Disputatio 22 De prima causa et alia eius actione, quae est cooperatio seu concursus cum causis secundis

Disputatio 23 De causa finali in communi

Disputatio 24 De ultima finali causa, seu ultimo fine

Disputatio 25 De causa exemplari

Disputatio 26 De comparatione causarum ad sua effecta

Disputatio 27 De comparatione causarum inter se

Disputatio 28 De prima divisione entis in infinitum simpliciter et finitum et aliis divisionibus quae huic aequivalent

Disputatio 29 De Deo primo ente et substantia increata, quatenus ipsum esse ratione naturali cognosci potest

Disputatio 30 De primo ente, quatenus ratione naturali cognosci potest quid et quale sit

Disputatio 31 De essentia entis finiti ut tale est et de illius esse eorumque distinctione

Disputatio 32 De divisione entis creati in substantiam et accidens

Disputatio 33 De substantia creata in communi

Disputatio 34 De prima substantia seu supposito eiusque a natura distinctione

Disputatio 35 De immateriali substantia creata

Disputatio 36 De substantia materiali in communi

Disputatio 37 De ratione essentiali accidentis in communi

Disputatio 38 De comparatione accidentis ad substantiam

Disputatio 39 De divisione accidentis in novem summa genera

Disputatio 40 De quantitate continua

Disputatio 41 De quantitate discreta et coordinatione praedicamenti quantitatis et proprietatibus eius

Disputatio 42 De qualitate et speciebus eius in communi

Disputatio 43 De potentia et actu

Disputatio 44 De habitibus

Disputatio 45 De contrarietate qualitatum

Disputatio 46 De intensione qualitatum

Disputatio 47 De relatione reali in communi

Disputatio 48 De actione

Disputatio 49 De passione

Disputatio 50 De praedicamento quando, et in universum de durationibus rerum

Disputatio 51 De Ubi

Disputatio 52 De situ

Disputatio 53 De habitu, ut quoddam genus accidentis constituit

Disputatio 54 De entibus rationis

An overview of the whole shows the following systematic order: *disputatio* 1: the *subjectum metaphysicae*,

2: the concept of being,

3-11: the transcendentals unum, verum, bonum,

12-27: the four causes.

This is how far ontology goes (according to later terminology).

Then follows the *metaphysica specialis*, which first - in the *disputationes* 28-31 - deals with the *ens infinitum* (theology), then - in the disputationes 32-51 - with the *ens finitum*, namely in 32-36 substance, in 37-53 *accidens* = the other 9 categories.

*Disputatio* 54 brings an appendix about the *entia rationis* ("things of thought"), which actually do not belong into metaphysics. It is about what according to Aristotle (*Metaphysica* E, 1027b30-31) is only ἐν διανοίᾳ, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι ("in thinking, but not in things").

#### 6.2.5.3. Wolff

According to Hegel (*Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Dritter Band, p. 473), Wolff's philosophy "actually consists in being a systematization of the Leibnizian, hence it is called the Leibniz-Wolffian". Wolff himself was angry about the title "philosophia Leibnitio-Wolfiana".[[50]](#footnote-50) Not unjustly. The changes compared to Leibniz are considerable and have brought Wolff the accusation of "trivialization". This is how Falckenberg (p. 260) judges:

"The changes he made with Leibniz' doctrine are nothing less than improvements, and what he has eliminated are precisely their most peculiar and profound components. The two leading ideas, monadology and pre-established harmony, were hit hardest by the fate of weakening. Wolff weakens the latter to the point that although he makes the bodies be composed of simple beings and the latter be gifted with a (not specified) force, he ascribes perception only to the real souls capable of consciousness. The validity of the pre-established harmony is limited to the relationship between body and soul, which with Leibniz was only one of the most favorable cases to illustrate the hypothesis. With such trivialization, the true meaning of both thoughts is abandoned."

In the end, Cartesian dualism carried the victory over idealistic monism (to be = to perceive), the idea of the qualitative uniformity of the world elements.

People were anxious not to be associated with the infamous "idealism" of a Berkeley or Arthur Collier, from which also Kant tried to distinguish himself (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, B 274-279). (Cf. Bréhier, p. 249.)

Wolff first depicted his metaphysics in German ("Vernünfftige Gedancken von GOTT, Der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, Auch allen Dingen überhaupt". 1st edition 1719. 7th edition 1738), then -much more detailed - in Latin. The Latin version comprises 6 volumes: *Ontologia, Cosmologia generalis, Psychologia empirica, Psychologia rationalis, Theologia naturalis* in two parts. (Cf. above, 6.2.4.2.)

We give the tables of contents of these 6 volumes; for the same reason as with Suárez we leave them untranslated.

*Ontologia*

Pars I.

De Notione Entis in genere et proprietatibus, quae inde consequuntur.

Sectio I

De Principiis philosophiae primae.

Caput 1

De Principio contradictionis

Caput 2

De Principio rationis sufficientis

Sectio II

De Essentia et Existentia Entis, agnatisque nonnullis notionibus.

Caput 1.

De Possibili et impossibili

Caput 2

De Determinato et indeterminato

Caput 3.

De Notione Entis

Sectio III.

De generalibus entis affectionibus.

Caput 1.

De Identitate et Similitudine

Caput 2.

De Ente singulari et universali

Caput 3

De Necessario et contingente

Caput 4.

De Quantitate et agnatis notionibus

Caput 5

De Qualitate et agnatis notionibus

Caput 6

De Ordine, veritate et perfectione

Pars II.

De speciebus entium et eorum ad se invicem respectu.

Sectio I.

De Ente composito

Caput 1

De Essentia Entis compositi

Caput 2

De Extensione, Continuitate, Spatio et Tempore

Caput 3

De Qualitatibus et magnitudine; Entis compositi

Caput 4

De Motu

Sectio II.

De Ente simplici.

Caput 1.

De Differentia Entis simplicis et compositi

Caput 2.

De Modificationibus rerum, praesertim simplicium

Caput 3.

De Finito et infinito

Sectio III

De Respectu Entium, ad se invicem.

Caput 1

De Dependentia rerum earumque relatione

Caput 2

De Causis

Caput 3

De Signo

*Cosmologia generalis*

SECTIO I.

De Notione Mundi seu universi.

CAPUT I.

De rerum nexu quomodo inde universum resultet

CAPUT II.

De Essentia mundi et ejus attributis

SECTIO II.

De Notione Corporum, ex quibus mundus componitur.

Caput I.

De Essentia et natura corporum

CAPUT II.

De Elementis corporum

CAPUT III.

De Ortu corporum ex Elementis

CAPUT IV.

De Legibus motus

SECTIO ΙII.

De Natura universa et Perfectione mundi

CAPUT I.

De Natura universa in genere, itemque Naturali et Supernaturali

CAPUT II.

De Perfectione mundi

CAPUT III.

De Ordine mundi atque naturae

*Psychologia empirica*

PARS I.

De Anima in genere et Facultate cognoscendi in specie.

SECTlO I.

De Anima in genere.

Caput I.

De existentia animae humanae

Caput 2

De modo cognoscendi animam

SECTIO II.

De Facultatis cognoscendi parte inferiori.

Caput 1.

De differentia perceptionum formali

Caput 2.

De sensu

Caput 3.

De imaginatione

Caput 4.

Da facultate fingendi

Caput 5

De Memoria, Oblivione et Reminiscentia

SECTIO III.

De Facultatis cognoscendi parte superiori

Caput 1.

De Attentione et Reflexione

Caput 2.

De Intellectu in genere et differentia cognitionis

Caput 3.

De tribus Intellectus operationibus in specie

Caput 4.

De Dispositionibus naturalibus et Habitibus intellectus

PARS II.

De Facultate appetendi in specie et Commercio inter Mentem et Corpus.

SECTIO 1.

De Facultatis appetendi parte inferiori.

Caput 1.

De Voluptate ac Taedio, nec non Notione boni ac mali

Caput 2.

De appetitu sensitivo et aversatione sensitiva

Caput 3

De affectibus

SECTIO II.

De Facultatis appetendi parte superiori et Commercio Mentis cum Corpore.

Caput 1.

De Voluntate et Noluntate

Caput 2

De Libertate

Caput 3.

De Commercio inter Mentem et Cotpus

*Psychologia rationalis*

Sectio I.

De anima in genere et Facultate cognoscendi in specie.

Caput 1.

De Natura et Essentia animae

Caput 2.

De Facultate sentiendi, sive sensu

Caput 3.

De Imaginatione et Memoria

Caput 4.

De Attentione et Intellectu

Sectio II.

De Facultate appetendi.

Caput 1.

De Appetitu sensitivo et Aversatione sensitiva atque Affectibus

Caput 2.

De Appetitu et Aversatione rationali, seu de Voluntate et Noluntate

Sectio III.

De Commercio inter mentem et corpus

Caput 1.

De Systematis explicandi commercium inter mentem et corpus in genere

Caput 2.

De Systemate influxus physici

Caput 3.

De Systemate causarum occasionalium

Caput 4.

De Harmonia praestabilita

Sectio IV.

De Variis Animae Attributis; Spiritu in genere et Animabus brutorum.

Caput 1.

De Spiritu in genere et spiritualitate animae in specie

Caput 2

De Animae ortu, unione cum corpore et Immortalitate

Caput 3.

De Animabus Brutorum

*Theologia naturalis 1*

PARS I.

Qua existentia et attributa divina a posteriori demonstrantur

CAPUT I.

De existentia Dei et Attributis inde pendentibus

CAPUT II.

De Intellectu Dei, et Attributis inde pendentibus

CAPUT III.

De Potentia et Voluntate Dei

CAPUT IV.

De Sapientia et Bonitate Dei

CAPUT V.

De Creatione et Providentia divina.

CAPUT VI.

De Jure Dei in creaturas

CAPUT VII.

De Attributis divinis, quae per anteriora demonstrantur.

*Theologia naturalis 2*

SECTIO I.

Qua Existentia et Attributa divina a priori demonstrantur.

CAPUT I.

De Notione entis perfectissimi et ejus existentia

CAPUT II.

De Intellectu Dei

CAPUT III.

De Voluntate Dei

CAPUT IV.

De Creatione et Potentia Dei

CAPUT V.

De Providentia et aliis nonnullis attributis divinis

SECTIO II.

De Atheismo aliisque agnatis erroribus.

CAPUT I.

De Atheismo

CAPUT II.

De Fatalismo, Deismo et Naturalismo

CAPUT III.

De Anthropomorphismo, Materialismo et Idealismo

CAPUT IV.

De Paganismo, Manichaeismo, Spinosismo et Epicuraeismo.

Given the total of 3712 pages (compared to 114 Bekker pages of Aristotle's *Metaphysica*), the Greek bonmot (Callimachus) comes to mind: μέγα βιβλίον, μέγα κακόν ("Big book, big evil"). Wuttke (p. 88) speaks of "unbearable verbosity"; it made Wolff's work unusable for lectures. For this reason, shorter versions were produced; one of them was Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*, which Kant based his lectures on.

# 7. Kant's project: Metaphysics on an anthropological basis

In the preface to the second edition of his *Critik der reinen Vernunft* (B XXII), Kant speaks of a "revolution" that he wants to carry out with metaphysics. It consists of a thought experiment (B XVI) reminiscent of Copernicus:

"Bisher nahm man an, alle unsere Erkenntniß müsse sich nach den Gegenständen richten; aber alle Versuche über sie *a priori* etwas durch Begriffe auszumachen, wodurch unsere Erkenntniß erweitert würde, gingen unter dieser Voraussetzung zu nichte. Man versuche es daher einmal, ob wir nicht in den Aufgaben der Metaphysik damit besser fortkommen, daß wir annehmen, die Gegenstände müssen sich nach unserem Erkenntniß richten, welches so schon besser mit der verlangten Möglichkeit einer Erkenntniß derselben *a priori* zusammenstimmt, die über Gegenstände, ehe sie uns gegeben werden, etwas festsetzen soll."

("Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. This would agree better with what is desired, namely, that it should be possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori*, determining something in regard to them prior to their being given.")

Kant assumes here what he considers to be his discovery: that metaphysics consists entirely of "synthetic judgments *a priori*". First we look for the preliminary of the synthetic judgments in the field of metaphysics (7.1.), then the two preliminaries of the cognition *a priori* (7.2.1. and 7.2.3.).

## 7.1. Hume's blow to "dogmatism"

When Kant tells us that Hume's criticism of the principle of causality has awakened him from his "dogmatic slumber"[[51]](#footnote-51), he understands "dogmatism" to mean the assumption that this principle applies to "things in general and by themselves" - that is, the fundamental assumption that he overrides in his revolutionary thought experiment. Because Hume sticks to this fundamental assumption, his skepticism is directed against the *a priori* validity of the principle.

Kant overlooks (as most historians of philosophy have overlooked) that Hume does not claim for himself what supposedly constitutes his great discovery: it is rather the unintelligibleness of the causal relationship between successive natural events (to which Malebranche draws attention) that has brought "many philosophers" to the theory of occassionalism or the sole-efficiency of God, see p. 114:

"But Philosophers, who carry their Scrutiny a little farther, immediately perceive, that, even in the most familiar Events, the Energy of the Cause is as unintelligible as in the most extraordinary and unusual, and that we only learn by Experience the frequent Conjunction of one Object with another, without being ever able to comprehend any thing like Connexion betwixt them. Here then many Philosophers think themselves oblig'd by Reason to have recourse, on all Occasions, to the same Principle, which the Vulgar never appeal to but in Cases, that appear miraculous and Supernatural. They acknowledge Mind and Intelligence to be, not only the ultimate and original Cause of all Things, but the immediate and sole Cause of every Event, that appears in Nature. They pretend, that those Objects, which are commonly denominated Causes, are in Reality nothing but *Occasions*; and that the true and direct Principle of every Effect is not any Power or Force in Nature, but a Volition of the supreme Being, who wills, that such particular Objects should be for ever conjoin'd with each other."

It is Malebranche who brings the concept of "necessary connection" ("liaison necessaire") into play. According to him (2, p. 333), causality is only exercised by God as the first cause:

"Cause véritable est une cause entre laquelle et son effet l'esprit apperçoit une liaison necessaire, c'est ainsi que je l'entens. Mais il n'y a que l'estre infiniment parfait, entre la volonté duquel et les effets l'esprit apperçoive une liaison necessaire."

("True cause is a cause between which and its effect the mind perceives a necessary connection, that is how I understand it. But there is only the infinitely perfect being, between whose will and effects the mind perceives a necessary connection.")

A perfect illustration for Malebranche's concept of causality is *Genesis* 1:3: "dixitque Deus fiat lux et facta est lux". (In the Septuaginta: καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός Γενηθήτω φῶς. καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς.)

("And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.")

What Malebranche was thinking of is the causality of an omnipotent cause. It is evident that the connection between "Let there be light" and "there was light" is a necessary one. Of course, cause, understood in this sense, does not fit Kant's (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 189) "Grundsatz der Erzeugung" ("Principle of Production: Everything that happens, that is, begins to be, presupposes something upon which it follows according to a rule.") Hume and Kant replace Malebranche's metaphysical concept of causality with the concept of the law of nature, of regular succession. If we think of a creator god or a source of emanation as the cause, then of course the consequence is a necessary one.

Kant explains the synthetic judgment *a priori* using causality as an example:

"Man nehme den Satz: Alles, was geschieht, hat seine Ursache. In dem Begriff von Etwas, das geschieht, denke ich zwar ein Daseyn, vor welchem eine Zeit vorhergehet etc. und daraus lassen sich analytische Urtheile ziehen. Aber der Begriff einer Ursache zeigt Etwas von dem, was geschieht, verschiedenes an, und ist in dieser lezteren Vorstellung gar nicht mit enthalten." (A 9 = B 13)

("Let us take the proposition, 'Everything which happens has its cause'. In the concept of 'something which happens', I do indeed think an existence which is preceded by a time, etc., and from this concept analytic judgments may be obtained. But the concept of a 'cause' lies entirely outside the other concept, and signifies something different from 'that which happens', and is not therefore in any way contained in this latter representation.")

In A 189 the expression "geschieht" ("happens") is explained with "anhebt zu seyn" ("begins to be"). Both expressions are translations for the Latin "fit". The reinterpretation of causality includes the reinterpretation of "fit" in the sense of "event".

Preliminary of the synthetic judgment *a priori* is the *additio ad ens* in Thomas Aquinas, see *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, quaestio 1, articulus 1, corpus:

"Illud autem quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quod conceptiones omnes resolvit, est ens, ut Avicenna dicit in principio suae *Metaphysicae*. unde oportet quod omnes aliae conceptiones intellectus accipiantur ex additione ad ens. sed enti non possunt addi aliqua quasi extranea per modum quo differentia additur generi, vel accidens subiecto, quia quaelibet natura est essentialiter ens; unde probat etiam philosophus in iii *Metaphysicorum*, quod ens non potest esse genus, sed secundum hoc aliqua dicuntur addere super ens, in quantum exprimunt modum ipsius entis qui nomine entis non exprimitur."

("Now, as Avicenna says, that which the intellect first conceives as, in a way, the most evident, and to which it reduces all its concepts, is being. Consequently, all the other conceptions of the intellect are derived by additions to being. But nothing can be added to being as though it were something not included in being - in the way that a difference is added to a genus or an accident to a subject - for every reality is essentially a being. The Philosopher [= Aristotle], in *Metaphysica* B [998b22], has shown this by proving that being cannot be a genus. Yet, in this sense, some predicates may be said to add to being inasmuch as they express a mode of being not expressed by the term being.")

What is "added" are the categories and the later so-called "transcendentals" *res, unum, aliquid, bonum, verum* (*Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, quaestio 1, articulus 1, corpus). In the *passiones disjunctae* (cf. above, pp. 131 and 140) this means: each *ens* is either *causa* or *effectus*, *substantia* or *accidens*, *perfectum* or *imperfectum*, *necessarium* or *contingens*.

Kant has nothing to do with the transcendentals (*passiones unitae*) *unum verum bonum*; he dedicates an appendix to them in the second edition (§ 12) out of embarrassment. What we find in the table of categories are the *passiones disjunctae entis*: *universale - particulare, substantia - accidens, causa - effectus, necessarium - contingens*. The limitation in the class of quality is the one member of the disjunction *limitatum - illimitatum*, which is synonymous with *finitum - infinitum* or *imperfectum - perfectum*.

Kant was the first to explicitly ask the question as to the justification for this "adding". However, his answer cannot satisfy.

In my commentary (p. 267), I ask what the deduction of the categories is worth if the ontological fundamental concepts have to be reinterpreted in order to prove their indispensability for natural science. An example for such reinterpretation is there the concept of substance. It is no better with the concept of causality. What does Hume's and Kant's definition as a regular succession have in common with the "Fiat lux"? Correctly (in the traditional sense) posed, the question must be: what entitles us to understand being (the world) as effect and to ask for a cause; in other words, to assume a *passio disjuncta entis* called *causa - effectus* in the manner of Duns Scotus. The answer of tradition is the physico-theological proof of God's existence.

Hegel justifies the universality and necessity of synthetic judgments *a priori* in another way: not as a condition of the possibility of experience (which is to be presupposed as a necessary connection, cf. my commentary, pp. 178-179), but by showing the *passiones disjunctae* as necessary members of a system. Disjunction, classification is the method of systematics according to Kant. If we read Hegel's *Logik* backwards, we get to the beginning through disjunctions. The first is the division of the absolute into the subjective and the objective, whose unity it is. The doctrine of the objective coincides with Kant's system of categories (the last form of ontology), except that the principle of inclusion requires a different sequence: quality - quantity - modality - relation, the later always including the preceding one.

## 7.2. Going back to the "kinds of cognition"

What sets Kant apart not only from Wolff, but also from the Aristotelian concept of a "primary philosophy," nowhere is more evident than in the aforementioned passage of the *Critik der reinen Vernunft* A 843-844 = B 871-872. There he criticizes that the "real idea" of metaphysics remains unclear when defined as "the science of the first principles of human knowledge". "De principiis cognitionis humanae" is the title of the first part of Descartes' *Principia philosophiae*; even closer to Kant's formulation is the *Dedicatio* of Wolff's *Ontologia*: "… omnis cognitionis humanae principia prima, in Systema … coegi" ("I have brought together all the first principles of human knowledge into system"). Why is the idea unclear? By that definition one noticed "nicht eine ganz besondere Art, sondern nur einen Rang in Ansehung der Allgemeinheit, dadurch sie also vom Empirischen nicht kenntlich unterschieden werden konnte; denn auch unter empirischen Principien sind einige allgemeiner und darum höher als andere; und in der Reihe einer solchen Unterordnung (da man das, was völlig a priori, von dem, was nur a posteriori erkannt wird, nicht unterscheidet): wo soll man den Abschnitt machen, der den ersten Theil und die obersten Glieder von dem letzten und den untergeordneten unterschiede? Was würde man dazu sagen, wenn die Zeitrechnung die Epochen der Welt nur so bezeichnen könnte, daß sie sie in die ersten Jahrhunderte und in die darauf folgenden eintheilte? Gehört das fünfte, das zehnte etc. Jahrhundert auch zu den ersten? würde man fragen; eben so frage ich: Gehört der Begriff des Ausgedehnten zur Metaphysik? Ihr antwortet: Ja! Ei, aber auch der des Körpers? Ja! Und der des flüssigen Körpers? Ihr werdet stutzig, denn wenn es so weiter fortgeht, so wird alles in die Metaphysik gehören. Hieraus sieht man, daß der bloße Grad der Unterordnung (das Besondere unter dem Allgemeinen) keine Grenzen einer Wissenschaft bestimmen könne, sondern in unserem Falle die gänzliche Ungleichartigkeit und Verschiedenheit des Ursprungs."

("not a quite special kind of knowledge, but only a certain precedence in respect of generality, which was not sufficient to distinguish such knowledge from the empirical. For among empirical principles we can distinguish some that are more general, and so higher in rank than others; but where in such a series of subordinated members—a series in which we do not distinguish what is completely *a priori* from what is known only *a posteriori*—are we to draw the line which distinguishes the highest or first members from the lower subordinate members? What should we say,, if in the reckoning of time we could distinguish the epochs of the world only by dividing them into the first centuries and those that follow? We should ask: Does the fifth, the tenth century, etc., belong with the first centuries? So in like manner I ask: Does the concept of the extended belong to metaphysics? You answer, Yes. Then, that of body too? Yes. And that of fluid body? You now become perplexed; for at this rate everything will belong to metaphysics. It is evident, therefore, that the mere degree of subordination (of the particular under the general) cannot determine the limits of a science; in the case under consideration, only complete difference of kind and of origin will suffice**.**")

This poses the Lockean question of the origin of those ideas that make up the content of metaphysics. Unlike Locke, Kant assumes an origin of his own for them.

### 7.2.1. Ideae innatae

It is characteristic of modern metaphysics that Aristotle is increasingly being ousted by Plato; thus, even for Kant and then for Nietzsche, metaphysics becomes almost synonymous with Platonism. Aristotle is regarded as an empirist and in contrast to Plato's doctrine of reminiscence. So it is explained in detail by Leibniz, *Nouveaux Essais*, V 42 Gerhardt:

"Nos Differens sont sur des sujets de quelque importance. Il s'agit de savoir, si l'Ame en elle même est vuide entierement comme des Tablettes, où l'on n'a encor rien écrit (*Tabula Rasa*) suivant Aristote [*De anima*, 429b31-430a2] et l'Auteur de l'Essay [2.1.2], et si tout ce qui y est tracé vient uniquement des sens et de l'experience, ou si l'ame contient originairement les principes de plusieurs notions et doctrines que les objets externes reveillent seulement dans les occasions, comme je le crois avec Platon et même avec l'Ecole et avec tous ceux qui prennent dans cette signification le passage de S. Paul (Rom. 2, 15) où il marque que la loy de Dieu est écrite dans les coeurs. Les Stoiciens appelloient ces Principes Prolepses, c'est à dire des assumtions fondamentales, ou ce qu'on prend pour accordé par avance. Les Mathematiciens les appellent Notions communes (κοινὰς ἐννοίας)."

("Our differences are on subjects of some importance. The question is to know whether the soul in itself is entirely void like the tablet on which nothing has yet been written (*tabula rasa*)according to Aristotle and the author of the *Essay*, and whether all that is traced thereon comes solely from the senses and from experience, or whether the soul contains originally the principles of several notions and doctrines which external objects merely awaken on occasions, as I believe with Plato and even with the schoolmen and with all those who take with this meaning the passage of St. Paul (*Romans*, 2, 15) where he remarks that the law of God is written in the heart. The Stoics called these principles *prolepses* ["anticipations," see above, 3.4.], that is to say, fundamental assumptions, or what is taken for granted in advance. The mathematicians call them common notions (κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι).")

The same view is already encountered at Micraelius, column 631:

[Intellectus] non est tabulae rasae similis, ut dixit philosophus; sed in se aliquas habet notitias naturales seu quasdam προλήψεις [corrected by me from ὑπολήψεις, cf. columns 81; 136; 1129] seu praenotiones seu anticipationes, animo sine doctrina anteceptas; nempe principia theoretica et practica nobis connata, seu κοινὰς ἐννοίας seu communes quasdam notiones de DEO et aliis principiis.

("Understanding is not like an undescribed table, as Aristotle said [*De anima* 430a1]; but it contains some natural notions or certain anticipations that are anticipated by the mind without instruction; namely innate theoretical and practical principles, or certain 'common notions' of GOD and others.").

The sentence "nihil est in intellectu, quod non antea fuerit in sensu" ("nothing is in the mind that was not previously in the senses") becomes the popular formula for Aristotle's "empirism," which can only be found in Thomas Aquinas (*Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, quaestio 2, articulus 3, ag 19 and ra 19). See also my Kant-commentary, pp. 455-456.

Leibniz makes a sharp distinction between two kinds of ideas and truths (*Essais*, V 73 Gerhardt): he opposes the verités necessaires ou de raison to the verités de fait. For the fact that the former are innate, he finds an illustration in Plato's *Meno* (82b-84a), "où il introduit Socrate menant un enfant à des verités abstruses par les seules interrogations sans luy rien apprendre" ("where he introduces Socrates leading a child to abstract truths by mere questions, without telling him anything").

Descartes had already made a sharp distinction between innate and acquired ideas (*ideae innatae -ideae adventitiae*), see *Meditationes*, p. 17 (cf. p.70).

To be added is the Stoic definition of man as an *animal rationale* (ζῷον λογικόν), which has become generally accepted since late antiquity. Reason as the unchanging nature of man is now the subject area of metaphysics. Logic as "Vernunftlehre" ("doctrine of reason") comes so close to metaphysics that its distinction becomes problematic and is finally abandoned by Hegel. This is already under way when chairs for logic and metaphysics were created in the 18th century. Kant held one of these (see my commentary, p. 18).

Kant took Rousseau's sentence (*Émile* III, pp. 132-133) "Les plus grandes idées de la Divinité, nous viennent par la raison seule" ("The greatest ideas of Divinity come to us by reason alone") literally: he derives the concept of God from the disjunctive judgment, as in general the entire content of metaphysics from logic, the "theory of reason".

Kant rejects the doctrine of innate ideas that he ascribes to Plato (*Critik der practischen Vernunft*, p. 254):

"Aus diesen Erinnerungen wird der Leser der Critik der reinen speculativen Vernunft sich vollkommen überzeugen: wie höchstnöthig, wie ersprießlich für Theologie und Moral, jene mühsame Deduction der Categorien war. Denn dadurch allein kann verhütet werden, sie, wenn man sie im reinen Verstande setzt, mit Plato für angebohren zu halten, und darauf überschwengliche Anmaaßungen mit Theorien des Uebersinnlichen, wovon man kein Ende absieht, zu gründen, dadurch aber die Theologie zur Zauberlaterne von Hirngespenstern zu machen; wenn man sie aber für erworben hält, zu verhüten, daß man nicht, mit Epicur, allen und jeden Gebrauch derselben, selbst den in practischer Absicht, blos auf Gegenstände und Bestimmungsgründe der Sinne einschränke."

("From these remarks the reader of the *Critique of Pure speculative Reason* will be thoroughly convinced how highly necessary that laborious deduction of the categories was, and how fruitful for theology and morals. For if on the one hand we place them in the pure understanding, it is by this deduction alone that we can be prevented from regarding them, with Plato, as innate, and founding on them extravagant pretensions to theories of the supersensible, to which we can see no end, and by which we should make theology a magic lantern of cerebral ghosts; on the other hand, if we regard them as acquired, this deduction saves us from restricting with Epicurus all and every use of them, even for practical purposes, to the objects and motives of the senses.")

As far as the scope of metaphysics is concerned, however, it makes no difference whether nature endows man with innate ideas or with an innate ability (called "reason") that produces these very ideas reliably and uniformly in all men. According to Kant's Dissertation (Section III, § 15, D, Corollarium), the concepts of space and time are acquired, but in the sense that the mind abstracts them from their own act of coordinating according to eternal laws:

"Tandem quasi sponte cuilibet oboritur quaestio, utrum conceptus uterque sit connatus, an acquisitus. Posterius quidem per demonstrata iam videtur refutatum, prius autem, quia viam sternit philosophiae pigrorum, ulteriorem quamlibet indagationem per citationem causae primae irritam declaranti, non ita temere admittendum est. Verum conceptus uterque procul dubio acquisitus est, non a sensu quidem obiectorum (sensatio enim materiam dat, non formam cognitionis humanae) abstractus, sed ab ipsa mentis actione, secundum perpetuas leges sensa sua coordinante, quasi typus immutabilis, ideoque intuitive cognoscendus."

("The question finally arises here, as it were, of its own accord in everyone as to whether both terms are innate or acquired. The latter seems to have already been refuted by the evidence; the former alone must not be admitted so easily, because it paves the way for the philosophy of the lazy[[52]](#footnote-52), which declares any further investigation by naming the first cause superfluous. However, both concepts are undoubtedly acquired, as abstracted not from the sensual perception of objects (for sensation gives only the material, but not the form of human knowledge), but from the action of the mind, which coordinates what it has perceived according to eternal laws, so to speak as a typus which is immutable and therefore intuitively recognizable.")

#### Natural religion

"Natural religion" means religion based on an innate idea of God (as supposed by Descartes and Spinoza), religion that belongs to human nature. This is nothing more than a renewal of the Stoic philosophy of religion (see above, p. 86).

The most radical position, the assertion of the superfluousness of revealed religion due to the universality and sufficiency of natural religion, was already expressed at the end of the 16th century in Pseudo-Jean Bodin's dialogue *Colloquium heptaplomeres*:

"Si naturae lex et naturalis religio, mentibus hominum insita, sufficit ad salutem adipiscendam, non video, cur Mosis ritus, ceremoniae necessariae sint." (p. 143)

("If the law of nature and natural religion, implanted to the minds of men, is enough to attain salvation, then I do not see why the rites and ceremonies of Moses should be necessary.")

"Si vera religio naturalis eaque perspicuis demonstrationibus explicatur, […] quid Jove, quid Christo, quid Muhammede, quid mortalibus et fictilibus Diis opus est?" (p. 192)

("If the natural religion is true, and if it is developed with clear proofs, […] then what do we need a Jupiter, a Christ, a Mohammed, what do we need mortal and clay gods?")

Divine "revelation" is the fundamental assumption of the "book religions" of Judaism, Christianity, Islam. Although this assumption cannot be refuted, it is superfluous for modern philology. As modern science must and can do without the assumption of supernatural causes (cf. Laplace with regard to the supposition of God's existence: "Je n' ai pas besoin de cette hypothèse."), in the humanities the methodological principle that the "sacred writings" must be examined philologically like all other books is gaining ground. One pioneer is Spinoza with his *Tractatus theologico-politicus*.

The epistemological turn of modern philosophy, which begins with Descartes and comes to a full breakthrough with Locke, in whom the objects of metaphysics become a certain kind of "ideas," finds its expression in Kant's reinterpretation of the title "transcendental philosophy".

### 7.2.2 Reinterpretation of the title "transcendental philosophy"

Kant replaces "ontology" with "transcendental philosophy". This was originally only another name for "ontology," the doctrine of the most general predicates of being (cf. above, p. 131, and my Kant-commentary, p. 67). In Wolff's German metaphysics it is the doctrine of "things in general" ("Dinge überhaupt"); the turn to subjectivity triggered by Locke[[53]](#footnote-53) makes this designation unacceptable to Kant:

"der stolze Name einer Ontologie, welche sich anmaßt, von Dingen überhaupt synthetische Erkenntnisse *a priori* in einer systematischen Doctrin zu geben (z.E. den Grundsatz der Causalität), muß dem bescheidenen einer bloßen Analytik des reinen Verstandes Platz machen." (A 247 = B 303)

("the proud name of an Ontology that presumptuously claims to supply, in systematic doctrinal form, synthetic *a priori* knowledge of things in general (for instance, the principle of causality) must, therefore, give place to the modest title of a mere Analytic of pure understanding.")

"Transcendental" becomes the opposite concept to "empirical" in that Kant interprets the Wolffian expression "things in general" with "things in themselves," see *Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 238-239 = B 298:

"Der transscendentale Gebrauch eines Begriffs in irgend einem Grundsatze ist dieser: daß er auf Dinge überhaupt und an sich selbst, der empirische aber, wenn er blos auf Erscheinungen, d. i. Gegenstände einer möglichen Erfahrung, bezogen wird."

("The transcendental employment of a concept in any principle is its application to things in general and in themselves; the empirical employment is its application merely to appearances; that is, to objects of a possible experience.")

Here the original identity of transcendental philosophy and ontology still has an effect.

Kant takes a further step in *Critik der reinen Vernunft* A 11-12 and B 25:

"Ich nenne alle Erkentniß transscendental, die sich nicht so wohl mit Gegenständen, sondern mit unsern Begriffen *a priori* von Gegenständen überhaupt beschäftigt."

("I entitle transcendental all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with our *a priori* concepts of objects in general.")

This difficult passage is discussed in detail in my commentary (pp. 62-66).

"Ich nenne alle Erkenntniß transscendental, die sich nicht so wol mit Gegenständen, sondern mit unserer Erkenntnißart von Gegenständen, so fern diese a priori möglich seyn soll, überhaupt beschäftigt."

("I entitle transcendental all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this knowledge is to be possible *a priori*.")

"nicht so wohl" means polite rejection of the common view, with "sondern" Kant's own view is juxtaposed. In "knowledge that deals … with objects in general" we recognize Wolff's doctrine about "things in general". Since these are not accessible to us "in themselves," "transcendental philosophy" becomes a preoccupation with "our concepts *a priori*" (first edition, A 11-12), i. e. ontological concepts, then (in B) with "our mode of knowledge," which also includes "pure intuitions" of space and time.

At other places (A 342 = B 400 and A 835 = B 863) instead of "a priori" Kant says "rational" (cf. my Kant-commentary, p. 49). This leads us to the origin. The original opposite to "empirical" was "rational".

### 7.2.3 The opposition empirical – rational

Kant knew the difference between "empirical" and"rational" from Wolff ("Psychologia empirica - rationalis"). Consciously following the older use of "transcendental," Kant assigns the content of traditional ontology (which he adopts) to a certain type of knowledge.

We have to clarify what is the step that Kant takes beyond the previous understanding of the difference between "empirical" and "rational".

The distinction between empirical and rational knowledge goes back to Aristotle, *Metaphysica* A (prepared by Plato, see our volume 3, pp. 22-23). Every science worthy of the name is rational in the sense that the scientist can "give account" (λόγον διδόναι, rationem reddere). It is what Socrates encourages his speakers to do. Presupposed is the justification of complete induction (*Analytica posteriora* B 19, 100b3-5). Only from it a definition or a general theorem results, which can be adduced as a "reason". This in turn is based on realism about universals, see *Analytica posteriora* B 19, 100a6-8 and 14-b3 (cf. also our volume 3, pp. 22-23): the general, as "human" and "living being," exists *in rebus* and detaches itself completely from the particular when we ascend to the highest level of knowledge, "intellect" (cf. 100b5-17).

What does "intellect" (νοῦς) mean? In Aristotle: understanding who or what is meant, recognizing as identifying. Not in the sense of "explaining," understanding how something works. The title *L'homme machine* expresses this latter goal of knowledge. Mechanics, which in antiquity served only technical purposes, becomes the paradigm of a "mechanistic" *Weltanschauung*.

The Socratic method of definition serves to answer the question: "how do I recognize …?," e. g. a just man. This question, extended to nature, leads to such naive-looking definitions as: "man is a bipedal creature without wings" (ζῷον δίπουν ἄπτερον, *Metaphysica* Z, 1037b33). But it completely fulfils its purpose to distinguish a man from a horse and a bird. "What is that which is running around?" Answer: a man. No more is required of a "knowledge of essence". There is no question of how a living being functions; nor of whether the arms of man and the wings of the bird could not have developed from the two legs missing in relation to the horse.

This dissatisfaction of the modern philosopher with the Platonic-Aristotelian-scholastic theory of nature is what prevents Kant from following Plato in extending the theory of Ideas to nature (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 314 = B 371, note). It is more precisely articulated by the distinction between "logical" and "real essence" (see the quotations in my commentary, pp. 403-406).

The expression *essentia logica* is already found in Richard Lynch (Lynceus), p. 259b: in man, for example, it is common to be distinguished "duplex essentia, altera logica, per quam sit animal rationale, altera physica, per quam corpore et animo constet" ("a double essence, the one logical, through which he is a rational being, the other physical, through which he consists of body and spirit").

In Aristotelian terms, the human body consists of the four elements, the number of which is fixed once and for all by their correspondence to the four qualities of the sense of touch: dry - moist, warm -cold: Fire = warm and dry; Air = warm and humid; Water = cold and damp; Earth = cold and dry (*De generatione et corruptione* 330b3ff.).

The new at Kant lies in a new concept of matter:

"Wenn ich Wörter ausspreche, und mit denenselben einen gewissen Begriff verbinde so ist das, was ich bey diesem Worte, und Ausdruck hier denke, das logische Wesen. Z. E. wenn ich das Wort Materie ausspreche, so ist alles das, was unzertrennlich ist von dem Begriffe, welchen ich mit dem Ausdruck Materie verbinde, das logische Wesen von der Materie. Das logische Wesen kann man sich allemal vor sich allein vorstellen, und denken. Also z. E. bey der Materie denke ich mir allemal eines Ausdehnung, eine Undurchdringlichkeit, eine gewisse beständige Trägheit, und Leblosigkeit, so daß sie ihren Ort zu veränderen, oder vor sich zu bewegen nicht im Stande ist, sonderen nur durch das Zuthuen einer anderen fremden Kraft.

Dieses alles sind die Essentialia des Worts Materie, und machen folglich zusammengenommen das logische Wesen derselben aus. […]

Das logische Wesen aber muß mit dem Realwesen nicht vermischt werden. Denn in meinem Begriff, den ich von der Sache habe, denke ich mir noch nicht alles, was in der Sache liegt, und ihr zukommt, oder in ihr liegen, und zukommen kann. Z. E. wenn wir den Begriff von der Materie nehmen, so haben neuere *Philosophi* entdecket, daß in dem Wesen der Materie noch die Kraft der Anziehung liege; diese Eigenschaft würde ich mir gewiß niemals bey dem Wort Materie sogleich gedacht haben, und es können der Materie noch vielleicht weit mehr Merkmale zukommen, die noch nicht entdecket sind, und nur ein Philosoph erkennen wird." (*Logik Blomberg* in Akademie-Ausgabe xxiv 116-117; cited in my commentary, p. 404)

("When I pronounce words and associate them with a certain concept, what I think of this word and expression is the logical essence. E. g. when I utter the word matter, all that is inseparable from the concept I associate with the term matter, is the logical essence of matter. The logical essence can always be imagined and thought by itself. So e. g. in the case of matter I always think of an extension, an impenetrability, a certain constant inertia, and lifelessness, so that it is unable to change its place, or to move by itself, but only by the assumption of an alien force.

These are all the essentials of the word matter, and consequently together they constitute the logical essence of matter. [...]

But the logical essence does not have to be confused with the real essence. Because in my concept, which I have of the thing, I still do not think everything that lies in the thing, and belongs to it, or can lie in it and belong to it. If, for example, we take the concept of matter, modern philosophers have discovered that the essence of matter still implies the power of attraction; I certainly would never have thought of this property in the very word of matter, and perhaps there may be far more features for matter that have not yet been discovered, and only a philosopher will know.")

The exploration of *essentia realis* is what constitutes physics in the modern sense. Its certainty always remains an empirical one. But Kant shares Aristotle's understanding of science, which only allows theorems of strict general universality and necessity. Therefore physics can only become science by using metaphysics.

"Kant had to write this book [*Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft*] because he was convinced that science required apodictic certainty. Empirical certainty alone is not enough, but apodictic certainty can only be *a priori*. That is why we have natural science «nur alsdann, wenn die Naturgesetze, die in ihr zum Grunde liegen, *a priori* erkannt werden» («only then, when the laws of nature, which are the basis of it, are recognized *a priori*»), and that means: «Alle eigentliche Naturwissenschaft bedarf also einen reinen Teil, auf dem sich die apodiktische Gewißheit, die die Vernunft in ihr sucht, gründen könne.» («All actual natural science therefore needs a pure part, on which the apodictic certainty, which reason seeks in it, can be based»). This pure part can only come from the general laws of thought, which are ultimately based on the categories." (Kühn, p. 348)

Kant agrees with Galilei (p. 101) that it is not up to the human mind to "speculatively seek to penetrate the true and inner essence of natural substances" ("specolando tentar di penetrar l'essenza vera ed intrinseca delle sustanze naturali"). Cf. my Kant-commentary, pp. 93-94 and 242-243.

This short remark by Galilei contains the two essential distinguishing features of modern science:

1. Refrain from "speculation". In Christian terms, "speculation" means a certain stage and way of looking at God, which is distinguished from others (*cognitio, contemplatio, visio*). The starting point is the Paul word: "Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem" ("For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face") (1Co 13:12). Augustine (*De Trinitate* 15.8.14) uses this passage to interpret the expression "speculantes" in 2Co 3, 18: "Speculantes dixit, per speculum videntes, non de specula prospicientes" ("by speculantes he means: looking in a mirror, not: looking from a waiting [what is the right etymology]").

2. Refrain from the "penetrating" view into the "inner of nature". That the divine "spirit" (spiritus, πνεῦμα) "penetrates" the whole of nature (penetrat, διήκει) is a Stoic conception.[[54]](#footnote-54) Insofar as man participates in divine reason (λόγος, identical with the "spirit"), he also penetrates into the inner of nature.

The changed view of nature depicted is the reason why transcendental philosophy is given absolute priority over (merely empirical) science. There is a gap between the demand of the mind for "general universality and necessity" and what experience has to offer, in contrast to the sequence of sciences at Wolff, where the priority is only relative: the priority of ontology over psychology is none other than that of psychology over logic and ethics (cf. above, p. 156). For Wolff, "priority" does not mean a borderline between empirical and rational.

## 7.3. Kant's projected system

Kant distinguishes between criticism and the system, which he has repeatedly announced but not delivered. With regard to the latter, he is committed to the dogmatic method, see the preface to the second edition of the *Critik der reinen Vernunft* (B XXXVI-XXXVII):

"vielmehr ist die Critik die nothwendige vorläufige Veranstaltung zur Beförderung einer gründlichen Metaphysik als Wissenschaft, die nothwendig dogmatisch und nach der strengsten Foderung systematisch, mithin schulgerecht (nicht populär) ausgeführt werden muß, denn diese Foderung an sie, da sie sich anheischig macht, gänzlich a priori, mithin zu völliger Befriedigung der speculativen Vernunft ihr Geschäffte auszuführen, ist unnachlaßlich. In der Ausführung also des Plans, den die Critik vorschreibt, d.i. im künftigen System der Metaphysik, müssen wir dereinst der strengen Methode des berühmten Wolf, des größten unter allen dogmatischen Philosophen, folgen, der zuerst das Beyspiel gab (und durch dies Beyspiel der Urheber des bisher noch nicht erloschenen Geistes der Gründlichkeit in Deutschland wurde), wie durch gesetzmäßige Feststellung der Principien, deutliche Bestimmung der Begriffe, versuchte Strenge der Beweise, Verhütung kühner Sprünge in Folgerungen der sichere Gang einer Wissenschaft zu nehmen sey, der auch eben darum eine solche, als Metaphysik ist, in diesen Stand zu versetzen vorzüglich geschickt war, wenn es ihm beygefallen wäre, durch Critik des Organs, nämlich der reinen Vernunft [B XXXVII] selbst, sich das Feld vorher zu bereiten: ein Mangel, der nicht sowol ihm, als vielmehr der dogmatischen Denkungsart seines Zeitalters beyzumessen ist, und darüber die Philosophen, seiner sowol als aller vorigen Zeiten, einander nichts vorzuwerfen haben. Diejenigen, welche seine Lehrart und doch zugleich auch das Verfahren der Critik der reinen Vernunft verwerfen, können nichts andres im Sinne haben, als die Fesseln der Wissenschaft gar abzuwerfen, Arbeit in Spiel, Gewißheit in Meynung und Philosophie in Philodoxie zu verwandeln."

("On the contrary, such criticism is the necessary preparation for a thoroughly grounded metaphysics, which, as science, must necessarily be developed dogmatically, according to the strictest demands of system, in such manner as to satisfy not the general public but the requirements of the Schools. For that is a demand to which it stands pledged, and which it may not neglect, namely, that it carry out its work entirely a priori, to the complete satisfaction of speculative reason. In the execution of the plan prescribed by the critique, that is, in the future system of metaphysics, we have therefore to follow the strict method of the celebrated Wolff, the greatest of all the dogmatic philosophers. He was the first to show by example (and by his example he awakened that spirit of thoroughness which is not extinct in Germany) how the secure progress of a science is to be attained only through orderly establishment of principles, clear determination of concepts, insistence upon strictness of proof, and avoidance of venturesome, non-consecutive steps in our inferences. He was thus peculiarly well fitted to raise metaphysics to the dignity of a science, if only it had occurred to him to prepare the ground beforehand by a critique of the organ, that is, of pure reason itself. The blame for his having failed to do so lies not so much with himself as with the dogmatic way of thinking prevalent in his day, and with which the philosophers of his time, and of all previous times, have no right to reproach one another. Those who reject both the method of Wolff and the procedure of a critique of pure reason can have no other aim than to shake off the fetters of science altogether, and thus to change work into play, certainty into opinion, philosophy into philodoxy.")

In the preface to the *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Kant agrees with the classification of philosophy into logic, physics and ethics:

"Die alte griechische Philosophie theilte sich in drey Wissenschaften ab: Die Physik, die Ethik und die Logik. Diese Eintheilung ist der Natur der Sache vollkommen angemessen und man hat an ihr nichts zu verbessern, als etwa nur das Prinzip derselben hinzu zu thun, um sich auf solche Art theils ihrer Vollständigkeit zu versichern, theils die nothwendigen Unterabtheilungen richtig bestimmen zu können.

Alle Vernunfterkenntniß ist entweder material und betrachtet irgend ein Objekt; oder formal und beschäftigt sich blos mit der Form des Verstandes und der Vernunft selbst und den allgemeinen Regeln des Denkens überhaupt, ohne Unterschied der Objekte. Die formale Philosophie heißt Logik, die materiale aber, welche es mit bestimmten Gegenständen und den Gesetzen zu thun hat, denen sie unterworfen sind, ist wiederum zwiefach. Denn diese Gesetze sind entweder Gesetze der Natur, oder der Freiheit.Die Wissenschaft von der ersten heißt Physik,die der andern ist Ethik;jene wird auch Naturlehre, diese Sittenlehre genannt.

Die Logik kann keinen empirischen Theil haben, d.i. einen solchen, da die allgemeinen und nothwendigen Gesetze des Denkens auf Gründen beruheten, die von der Erfahrung hergenommen wären; denn sonst wäre sie nicht Logik, d.i. ein Canon für den Verstand, oder die Vernunft, der bey allem Denken gilt und demonstrirt werden muß. Dagegen können so wohl die natürliche, als sittliche Weltweisheit jede ihren empirischen Theil haben, weil jene der Natur als einem Gegenstande der Erfahrung, diese aber dem Willen des Menschen, so fern er durch die Natur afficirt wird, ihre Gesetze bestimmen muß, die erstern zwar als Gesetze, nach denen alles geschieht, die zweyten als solche, nach denen alles geschehen soll, aber doch auch mit Erwägung der Bedingungen, unter denen es öfters nicht geschieht.

Man kann alle Philosophie, so fern sie sich auf Gründe der Erfahrung fußt, empirische, die aber, so lediglich aus Prinzipien *a priori* ihre Lehren vorträgt, reine Philosophie nennen. Die letztere, wenn sie blos formal ist, heißt Logik, ist sie aber auf bestimmte Gegenstände des Verstandes eingeschränkt, so heißt sie Metaphysik.

Auf solche Weise entspringt die Idee einer zwiefachen Metaphysik, einer Metaphysik der Natur und einer Metaphysik der Sitten. Die Physik wird also ihren empirischen, aber auch einen rationalen Theil haben, die Ethik gleichfalls; wiewohl hier der empirische Theil besonders praktische Anthropologie, der rationale aber eigentlich Moral heißen könnte."

("Ancient Greek Philosophy was divided into three sciences: Physics, Ethics, and Logic. This classification is perfectly suitable to the nature of the thing, and the only improvement that can be made in it is to add the principle on which it is based, so that we may both certify ourselves of its completeness, and also be able to determine correctly the necessary subdivisions.

All rational knowledge is either material or formal: the former considers some object, the latter is concerned only with the form of the understanding and of the reason itself, and with the universal laws of thought in general without distinction of its objects. Formal philosophy is called Logic. Material philosophy, however, which has to do with determinate objects and the laws to which they are subject, is again two-fold; for these laws are either laws of nature or of freedom. The science of the former is Physics, that of the latter, Ethics; they are also called natural philosophy and moral philosophy respectively.

Logic cannot have any empirical part; that is, a part in which the universal and necessary laws of thought should rest on grounds taken from experience; otherwise it would not be logic, *i.e.* a canon for the intellect or the reason, valid for all thought, and to be demonstrated. Natural and moral philosophy, on the contrary, can each have their empirical part, since the former has to determine the laws of nature as an object of experience; the latter the laws of the human will, so far as it is affected by nature: the former, however, being laws according to which everything does happen; the latter, laws according to which everything ought to happen. Ethics, however, must also consider the conditions under which what ought to happen frequently does not.

We may call all philosophy *empirical,* so far as it is based on grounds of experience: on the other hand, that which delivers its doctrines from *a priori* principles alone we may call *pure* philosophy. When the latter is merely formal it is *logic*; if it is restricted to definite objects of the understanding it is *metaphysic.*

In this way there arises the idea of a two-fold metaphysic—a *metaphysic of nature* and a *metaphysic of morals.* Physics will thus have an empirical and also a rational part. It is the same with Ethics; but here the empirical part might have the special name of *practical anthropology,* the rational part being called *morality* in the proper sense.")

The field of the rational coincides with that of the innate ideas, that of the empirical with that of the acquired ideas.

In such an extended sense, Hobbes already uses the term "metaphysics" when he considers it to be the basis of his materialistic *Weltanschauung* (as metaphysics of nature in Kant's terminology) (*Leviathan*, pp. 523-524):

"There is a certain *Philosophia prima,* on which all other Philosophy ought to depend; and consisteth principally, [524] in right limiting of the significations of such Appellations, or Names, as are of all others the most Universall: Which Limitations serve to avoid ambiguity, and equivocation in Reasoning; and are commonly called Definitions; such as are the Definitions of Body, Time, Place, Matter, Forme, Essence, Subject, Substance, Accident, Power, Act, Finite, Infinite, Quantity, Quality, Motion, Action, Passion, and divers others, necessary to the explaining of a mans Conceptions concerning the Nature and Generation of Bodies. The Explication (that is, the setling of the meaning) of which, and the like Terms, is commonly in the Schools called *Metaphysiques*; as being a part of the Philosophy of Aristotle, which hath that for title: but it is in another sense; for there it signifieth as much, as *Books written, or placed after his naturall Philosophy*:But the Schools take them for *Books of supernaturall Philosophy*: for the word *Metaphysiques* will bear both these senses. And indeed that which is there written, is for the most part so far from the possibility of being understood, and so repugnant to naturall Reason, that whosoever thinketh there is any thing to bee understood by it, must needs think it supernaturall."

Kant has not delivered the "Metaphysics of Nature" promised several times (last in the preface to the *Critik der Urtheilskraft*, B 10); see my commentary, pp. 46 and 153-154. *Critik der reinen Vernunft* A 845-847 = B 873-875 gives information about its content. In the same chapter (A 841 = B 869) the classification into "Metaphysics of Nature" and "Metaphysics of Morals" is already mentioned.

Kant's system fits into the history of efforts from Descartes to Hegel to meet the demand for methodical rigour (and the underlying need for security). Wolff had already tried this and completely changed the structure of metaphysics.

# 8. Metaphysics in the Postmetaphysical Era

"Postmetaphysical era" is a frequently used characterization for an epoch that begins with the "Zusammenbruch des deutschen Idealismus" ("collapse of German idealism"). Paul Ernst, who published a book with this title, was a man of letters and with "idealism," above all, meant Schiller; the book with its author was soon forgotten, the catchword remained. For "German idealism" there was substituted what the author of this designation, Carl Ludwig Michelet, had meant in his *Geschichte der letzten Systeme der Philosophie in Deutschland von Kant bis Hegel* (p. 10): the period of German philosophy represented by the names Kant, Jacobi, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel (cf. p. 8). To Habermas (*Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, 1, 16) "postmetaphysical" is = "posthegelian".

However, the much-cited "collapse" is not an event that occurred sometime after Hegel's death. What actually took place was the strengthening of the "realistic" tendency, an opposition that already existed throughout the "flowering period" of "idealism".

## 8.1. Herbart

Probably the most important representative of the "realistic" opposition was Herbart. He (*Psychologie*, Erster Theil, p. 35) divides his metaphysics, according to the same schema as Wolff does, into "general metaphysics" (= *metaphysica generalis* = ontology) and "special" or "applied metaphysics" (= *metaphysica specialis*). The latter consists of "psychology," "natural philosophy" (= *cosmologia*) and "philosophical theology" (= *theologia naturalis*).

The difference to Wolff (and also to Kant) most important for our history of onto-theology is that Herbart rejects the concept of *ens realissimum*, and with it a *theologia naturalis*, "built on the superlative of reality" (*Metaphysik*, p. 73). According to Herbart, the concept of perfection does not belong to ontology (as with Wolff), but to "aesthetics," which includes everything that can be judged "by pleasure or displeasure without regard to what is and can be" (*Psychologie*, Erster, synthetischer Theil, p. 35[[55]](#footnote-55)) By "the ruinous blending of theoretical and practical philosophy," "the true meaning of approval and disapproval, by virtue of which the praiseworthy and the shameful are originally distinguished, is wholly destroyed" (ibidem, p. 34). Hereby the identity of *realitas* and *perfectio*, of *ens* and *bonum* is cancelled.

According to this, the distinction between reality and value has been made, which will then become explicit from Lotze on.

What remains of "philosophy of religion," which takes the place of the *theologia naturalis*, is a situational, therapeutic task:

"What did the church want? Certainly it wanted to admonish more than to teach; at least it wanted to give a very general instruction for everyone in order to unite people in spirit, even if they departed from each other in thinking. Here it is in the position of the speaker; who has to feel the affect he wants to upset himself, but must not let himself be overwhelmed and carried away by it, but above all must ensure that his own prudence is maintained. This prudence, this mind of the Church should be the philosophy of religion." (*Psychologie*, Zweyter, analytischer Theil, p. VII)

## 8.2. Lotze

Lotze's *Metaphysik* is divided into three books, disregarding theology: "Vom Zusammenhang der Dinge (Ontologie)," "Von dem Laufe der Natur (Kosmologie)" and "Von dem geistigen Dasein (Psychologie)". He refers to Hegel and Herbart as models for this structure:

"Den kosmologischen Voraussetzungen, aus denen im Gegensatze der willkührlichen Gedanken der geordnete Kosmos begriffen werden muß, pflegte in der alten Metaphysik als dritter und vierter Theil eine rationale Psychologie und Theologie zu folgen als der Inbegriff der reinen Vernunfterkenntniß über das Wesen Gottes und der Seele. Wir haben anstatt dieser beiden Theile nur einen dritten durch eine deutliche aus dem Vorigen sich entwickelnde Aufgabe bestimmt, der Kosmologie nachfolgen zu lassen, und sein Inhalt wird nahe mit dem zusammentreffen, was sowohl durch Hegel als durch Herbart an die Stelle jener alten Lehrabschnitte gesetzt worden ist." (*Metaphysik* 1841, pp. 28-29)

("In the old metaphysics, the cosmological presuppositions from which the ordered cosmos must be understood, in contrast to the arbitrary thoughts, used to be followed by a third and fourth part, rational psychology and rational theology as the system of pure rational knowledge of the nature of God and the soul. Instead of these two parts, we have determined only a third one to follow cosmology, through a distinct task evolving from the preceding parts, and its content will come close to that which has been substituted by Hegel and Herbart for those old disciplines [*psychologia rationalis* and *theologia naturalis*].")

That theology is now completely omitted is because Lotze consistently carries out the separation of reality and value, whereby God falls on the side of value as the supreme value; "the beginning of metaphysics is not in itself, but in ethics" (*Metaphysik* 1841, p. 329). As with Fichte, the practical part constitutes the theoretical part; with Fichte he has in common the "fundamental view," "that only in what I call the content of the Idea of good for the time, being for lack of a sufficiently comprehensive name, the sufficient reason for the content of all being and happening lies, or as I have described it differently, that the world of value is at the same time the key to the world of forms". (p. 54) What is meant are (according to p. 18) "the individual forms of existence and events," which emerge from this Idea with "logical, aesthetic or ethical necessity". This also hints at the classification of the system of values into logic, aesthetics and ethics. This is the way in which the transcendentals true, good, beautiful now live on: no longer in a trinity, but in one next to the other. According to Windelband (1920, p. 256), "logical, ethical and aesthetic values are coordinated in a certain sense and thus determine the three fundamental philosophical sciences of logic, ethics and aesthetics. This is the classification of the universally valid values on which Kant has based his critical philosophy [*Critik der reinen Vernunft* = logic; *Critik der practischen Vernunft* = ethics; *Critik der Urtheilskraft* = aesthetics]."

Lotze calls his point of view "teleological idealism" (*Metaphysik* 1841, p. 329). The said "realistic" tendency[[56]](#footnote-56) has an effect on him in that he acknowledges the empirical sciences full sovereignty and renounces any attempt to derive the finite from the absolute.

Where Lotze separates himself from Hegel, is already visible on p. 33 of his *Metaphysik* of 1879. In obvious allusion to the beginning of Hegel's *Logik*, he promises to show that the "natural Weltanschauung … is closer to truth" than "speculation" (= Hegel), which makes pure being the beginning. In doing so, he insinuates that "philosophy" (=Hegel) "hopes to derive somehow" empirical being "from pure being" ("aus dem reinen Sein irgendwie abzuleiten hofft") - the same insinuation that prompted Krug to demand of Hegel that he derive his pen.[[57]](#footnote-57)

For his purpose, Lotze first establishes the principle: "Every conception, which is to admit of any profitable application, must allow of a clear distinction between that which is meant by it and that which is not meant by it." ("Von jedem Begriffe, der eine fruchtbare Verwendung zulassen soll, muß man verlangen, daß er das, was mit ihm gemeint ist, deutlich von dem zu unterscheiden erlaube, was mit ihm nicht gemeint ist.") (p. 33); then he states that the concept of pure being does not satisfy this requirement, that in its case "the same definition includes the opposite of that which we intended to include in it" ("dieselbe Definition das Gegentheil dessen mit umfaßt, was wir durch sie umfassen wollten ") (p. 34). But Hegel himself had already pointed out that "pure being and pure nothing is the same" ("Das reine Seyn und das reine Nichts ist dasselbe.") (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, Erster Band, p. 23).

Lotze is regarded as the spiritual father of "value philosophy" ("axiology"). This sees itself as a necessary supplement to modern science, which takes no account of the "needs of the mind" ("Bedürfnisse des Gemüths") (cf. *Mikrokosmus* I, p. V). Lotze reflects on the "separation of the valuable and the indifferent" (*Metaphysik* 1841, p. 14). For him, this does not mean coordination, but subordination, "diversity of being" in the sense of an "increase" (ibidem). "He who speaks of the truly being demands to know the worthy in and of itself, not the indifferent." ("Wer vom wahrhaft Seienden spricht, der verlangt, das an und für sich Werthvolle zu wissen, nicht das Gleichgiltige.") (*Metaphysik* 1841, p. 13). In *Mikrokosmus* III, p. 458, Lotze calls the content of metaphysical truth "indifferent". Taken in isolation, the "eternal truths" could exist "as a groundless destiny" ("als ein grundloses Schicksal") (*Metaphysik* 1879, p. 604).

Like Lotze (cf. above, p. 199), Lange (volume 2, p. 546) speaks of the "world of values," which he opposes to the "world of being". As is well known, Lange had a great influence on Nietzsche.

At the beginning of his *Mikrokosmus* (1, p. v), Lotze offers another formulation for the conflict-prone opposition:

"Zwischen den Bedürfnissen des Gemüthes und den Ergebnissen menschlicher Wissenschaft ist ein alter nie geschlichteter Zwist. Jene hohen Träume des Herzens aufzugeben, die den Zusammenhang der Welt anders und schöner gestaltet wissen möchten, als der unbefangene Blick der Beobachtung ihn zu sehen vermag: diese Entsagung ist zu allen Zeiten als der Anfang jeglicher Einsicht gefordert worden."

("Between the needs of the mind and the results of human science there is an unsettled dispute of long standing. In every age the first necessary step towards truth has been the renunciation of those soaring dreams of the human heart which strive to picture the cosmic frame as other and fairer than it appears to the eye of the impartial observer.")

Wilhelm Wundt ties in with this when he (*System der Philosophie*, p. 1) defines the purpose of philosophy as "combining our individual knowledge into a view of the world and life that satisfies the demands of the intellect and the needs of the mind" ("Zusammenfassung unserer Einzelerkenntnisse zu einer die Forderungen des Verstandes und die Bedürfnisse des Gemüthes befriedigenden Welt- und Lebensanschauung").

On p. 10 Wundt points out that Aristotle is already at the crossroads between Weltanschauung and science:

"Denn mit Aristoteles beginnt jene Abzweigung einer Reihe von Einzelgebieten, die sich in der hellenistischen Periode vollendet. Hier zum ersten Male verfolgen Philosophie und Einzelwissenschaften gesonderte Wege. Unterstützt wird diese Trennung durch die vorwiegende Richtung auf religiöse Speculation, die sich der Philosophie bemächtigt, und die zu dem nüchternen und exacten Betrieb der Mathemathik, der Mechanik, der Naturgeschichte und Philologie in vollem Gegensatze steht. Dieser Gegensatz machte nun erst das intellectuelle Interesse zu einem selbständigen, da die Philosophie nach der Ueberlassung ihrer wissenschaftlichen Bestandteile an die Einzelwissenschaften nur noch die Befriedigung des religiösen Bedürfnisses für sich behielt. Die Physik und Kosmologie eines Aristoteles führen überall auf metaphysische Begriffe und durch diese auf die speculative Theologie des Philosophen zurück. Die mechanischen Arbeiten eines Archimedes, die astronomischen eines Hipparch sind von solchen Einflüssen beinahe völlig frei, weil diese Forscher die einzelnen Probleme in ihrem eigenen Zusammenhange, nicht mit Hülfe von Begriffen, die sie einem andern Gesichtskreise entlehnen, aufzufassen bemüht sind."

("For with Aristotle begins that separation of individual disciplines, which is completed in the Hellenistic period. Here, for the first time, philosophy and the individual sciences pursue separate paths. This separation is supported by the predominant tendency towards religious speculation, which takes hold of philosophy, and which stands in full opposition to the sober and exact operation of mathematics, mechanics, natural history, and philology. This opposition first turned intellectual interest into an independent one, since philosophy, after surrendering its scientific components to the individual sciences, retained only the satisfaction of the religious need for itself. The physics and cosmology of an Aristotle everywhere lead back to metaphysical concepts and through them to the speculative theology of the philosopher. The mechanical works of an Archimedes, the astronomical ones of a Hipparch, are almost entirely free of such influences, because these explorers seek to understand the individual problems in their own context, not by means of concepts borrowed from another.")

This is also Jaeger's view in "Aristoteles" (pp. 431-432):

"Das Verhältnis von Wissenschaft und Weltanschauung ist in der Philosophie des Aristoteles der problematische Punkt. Es ist ein doppelseitiges, insofern die Wissenschaft auf Prinzipien beruht, deren Begründung der Philosophie und nicht ihr selbst zufällt, anderseits die Philosophie sich auf der Grundlage der wissenschaftlichen Tatsachenerfahrung aufbaut. Mit dieser Auffassung von Denken und Erfahrung glaubt Aristoteles die Philosophie Platons zu einer kritischen Wissenschaft zu machen. Denn wenn er auch zwischen Philosophie und Wissenschaft dem Worte nach nicht unterscheidet, so ist doch ein fester Begriff der Wissenschaftlichkeit der Ausgangspunkt seiner Kritik aller früheren Philosophie. Auch innerhalb seiner eigenen Philosophie erkennt er dem einzelwissenschaftlichen Tatsachenwissen den Vorrang an Wissenschaftlichkeit zu, nicht wegen seiner größeren Exaktheit, die vielmehr dem begrifflichen Denken zukommt, sondern wegen seiner unumstößlichen Tatsächlichkeit: war doch das Problem der realen Existenz des Übersinnlichen die Quelle aller Unsicherheit auf diesem Gebiet. Die geistige Welt des Aristoteles ist von außen gesehen einheitlich, aber sie trägt den bewußten Zwiespalt jenes grundlegenden Gedankens von dem Auseinanderstreben der Philosophie und der Wissenschaft in sich, so sehr er bemüht ist, die Philosophie im engeren und höheren Sinne des Wortes als den notwendigen Abschluß der Wirklichkeitswissenschaft zu begreifen und beide Sphären einander anzunähern. Die griechische Wissenschaft hatte von der Weltanschauung, als der bewegenden Kraft der Philosophie, von jeher entscheidende Antriebe empfangen, und beide hatten sich in ihrer Entwicklung gegenseitig gefördert. Aber auf dem Gipfel angelangt, fanden sie sich miteinander im Widerstreit. Aristoteles bringt sie von neuem in ein labiles Gleichgewicht. Dieser Augenblick bezeichnet den Höhepunkt der gemeinsamen Wegstrecke ihrer Entwicklung. In der nacharistotelischen Zeit hat sich weder die Philosophie sie nur dem Triebe der Selbsterhaltung folgte, wenn sie diese Sehnsucht zu stillen suchte, im Vergleich zu der kritischen Haltung des Aristoteles erscheint die Stoa und der Epikureismus als Verfall der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie und als Dogmatismus. Man übernahm die logische Technik und bildete gewisse metaphysische Anschauungen inhaltlich weiter, indem man sie mit älteren primitiven Vorstellungen vermischte, oder man erneuerte die vorsokratische Physik wie Epikur den Demokrit und baute auf dieser Grundlage ein ethisches Lebensideal auf. Der Schwerpunkt liegt in der Metaphysik und Ethik, eigentliche Forschung wurde überhaupt nicht getrieben. Dieser praktischen Richtung schloß sich nach der dritten Generation auch der Peripatos an, obgleich er in dieser Hinsicht mit Stoikern und Epikureern nicht konkurrieren konnte: die Folge war der traurige Verfall der Schule seit Straton. Dieser große Forscher aber weist deutlich den Weg, den die von Aristoteles eingeleitete Bewegung unter den damaligen Verhältnissen allein nehmen konnte. Die peripatetische Forschung steht zu seiner Zeit bereits in Verbindung mit Alexandrien, wo für die Entwicklung der positiven Wissenschaften ein günstigerer Boden war als in Attika und wo der scharfe Wind der Wirklichkeit wehte. In der alexandrinischen Wissenschaft setzt sich die Spätzeit des Aristoteles geistig fort. Das Band zwischen Wissenschaft und Philosophie wird endgültig zerschnitten: die technisch unendlich verfeinerte Forschungsweise der ptolemäischen Gelehrten entbehrt des ruhenden geistigen Mittelpunktes, den die aristotelische Einzelarbeit in der großen spiritualistisehen Weltanschauung gehabt batte. Aber anderseits sind die bedeutendsten Entdeckungen der antiken Wissenschaft dieser Trennung zu verdanken. die für die Forschung eine notwendige Befreiung bedeutete. Die Medizin und Naturwissenschaft wie die exakte Philologie gehen jetzt ihrer höchsten Blüte entgegen. Sie werden vertreten durch Gestalten wie Aristarch, Aristophanes, Hipparch, Eratosthenes, Archimedes. Vom Standpunkt aristotelischer Philosophie und Wissenschaft ist dies alles freilich nur halbierter Geist. Aber Weltanschauungstrieb und Wissenschaftsstrenge haben sich in der Antike nicht wieder zusammengefunden. In ihrer Vereinigung liegt die späte Klassizität des Aristoteles, wenn auch der Welterklärer und Forscher in ihm bereits den Weltbildgestalter überwiegt."

("The relation between science and Weltanschauung is the problematical point in Aristotle's philosophy. There are two sides to it, since science rests on principles that have to be established not by itself but by philosophy, while on the other hand philosophy is built up on the basis of scientific experience. He believed that with this conception of thought and experience he could make Plato's philosophy into critical science; for, although he does not distinguish philosophy and science by different names, the starting-point of his criticism of all earlier philosophy is a firm conception of what constitutes science. Even within his own philosophy he recognizes that the factual knowledge of the special sciences is scientific in a superior degree, not because of its greater exactitude (for this belongs rather to conceptual thinking) but because of its impregnable reality—the problem whether the supersensible is real gave rise to all kinds of uncertainty in the other sphere. Aristotle's intellectual world presents a unified appearance from without, but it carries within itself a conscious discord in the fundamental idea that philosophy and science tend to diverge, in spite of his efforts to bring them together by conceiving philosophy in the narrower and higher sense of the word as the necessary conclusion of the study of reality. Greek science had always received strong stimulation from that metaphysical attitude towards the world which is the driving force of philosophy, and each had furthered the other during their development. Once on the summit, however, they found themselves in conflict. Aristotle restores them to unstable equilibrium. This instant represents the high point of the common part of their development. In Post-Aristotelian times neither philosophy nor science was able to maintain itself on this height. Science needed freer play than philosophy gave it. Its results often rendered doubtful the methods and principles of explanation that philosophy had provided it with. On the other side, the cultured classes, who had lost their religion, needed a metaphysical view of the world, and thus tempted philosophy to renew its bold speculative flight; and we have to admit that in trying to satisfy this longing it was only obeying the impulse of self-preservation. Compared with Aristotle's critical attitude Stoicism and Epicureanism look like dogmatism and the collapse of scientific philosophy. They took over his logical technique and developed the content of some of his metaphysical views, m mixing them with older primitive ideas; or they renewed Pre-Socratic physics as Epicurus renewed Democritus, and built up an ethical ideal of life on that foundation. The centre of gravity lay in metaphysics and ethics; real research was not prosecuted at all. After the third generation the Peripatos assumed the same practical tendency, although it could not compete with the Stoics and the Epicureans in this field; the result was the regrettable collapse of the school after Strato. That great investigator clearly shows, however, the only path that the movement initiated by Aristotle could take under the circumstances. During his period Peripatetic research was already in touch with Alexandria, where the soil was more favorable than in Attica to the development of the positive sciences, and where the keen wind of reality was blowing. Alexandrian science is the spiritual continuation of Aristotle's last period. There the link between science and philosophy was definitely broken; the infinitely refined technique of Ptolemaic research dispensed with the stable intellectual centre that Aristotle's detailed work had possessed in his great spiritualist view of the universe. On the other hand, the most important discoveries of ancient science are due to this separation, which was a necessary liberation of research. It was now that medicine and natural science, together with exact philology, attained their greatest flowering. They were represented by figures like Aristarchus, Aristophanes, Hipparchus, Eratosthenes, and Archimedes. From the standpoint of Aristotelian philosophy and science, of course, all this is but half of the intellectual realm; but the desire for a metaphysical view of the world, and the desire for scientific strictness, never came together again in the ancient world. Aristotle is classical in spite of his lateness just because he united them, although even in him research and explanation preponderate over the formation of world-pictures.")

## 8.3. Philosophy of values after Nietzsche

The unavoidable examination of the "Modeschriftsteller" ("fashionable writer") Nietzsche (Vaihinger, p. 13) confronted university philosophy with the problem of defending the absoluteness of values that it presupposed. Windelband (*Geschichte*, p. 552) sees philosophy threatened in its existence: after Nietzsche's "relativism," Philosophy can "only live on as doctrine of universally valid values". "Since Lotze has energetically emphasized the concept of value and placed it at the forefront also of logic and metaphysics, approaches to a «theory of values» as a new kind of philosophical fundamental science have often stirred up."

For this purpose Windelband (*Einleitung*, p. 255) postulates an axiological "normal consciousness":

"Wenn es unumgänglich erforderlich ist, von der Relativität in den individuellen Wertungen und in den Sitten der Völker zum Ergreifen absoluter Werte aufzusteigen, so scheint es nötig zu sein, über die historischen Formen des menschlichen Gesamtbewußtseins hinaus ein Normalbewußtsein zu denken, für welches diese Werte eben die Werte sind. Darin steckt ganz dieselbe Nötigung, der wir in der Erkenntnistheorie begegneten. Da es Gegenstände nur für ein vorstellendes und erkennendes Bewußtsein gibt, so wies der Gegenstand, der die Norm der Wahrheit bilden sollte, auf ein «Bewußtsein überhaupt» als auf dasjenige hin, für das er Gegenstand sein sollte. Genau wie beim Ding-an-sich steht es bei dem Wert-an-sich. Wir müssen ihn suchen, um aus der Relativität des tatsächlichen Wertens herauszukommen, und da es Wert nur in Beziehung auf ein wertendes Bewußtsein gibt, so deutet auch der Wert-an-sich auf dasselbe Normalbewußtsein hin, das der Erkenntnistheorie als Korrelat zu dem Gegenstand-an-sich vorschwebt. In beiden Fällen aber ist diese Hindeutung höchstens ein Postulat, aber keine metaphysische Erkenntnis."

("If it is inevitably necessary to ascend from the relativity in the individual valuations and in the customs of the peoples to the attainment of absolute values, it seems necessary to think beyond the historical forms of the human total consciousness of a normal consciousness, for which these values are just the values. This is exactly the same coercion that we encountered in epistemology. Since there are objects only for a perceptive and cognitive consciousness, the object which was to constitute the norm of truth pointed to a «consciousness in general» as to that for which it ought to be an object. Just like the thing-in-itself, it is the value-in-itself. We must seek it in order to get out of the relativity of actual value, and since there is value only in relation to an evaluating consciousness, value-in-itself also indicates the same normal consciousness which epistemology is thinking of as a correlate to the object-in-itself. In both cases, however, this reference is at most a postulate, but not metaphysical knowledge.")

At Husserl and Heidegger, we meet the "normal consciousness" of Windelband again under the names "reines Bewußtsein" and "Dasein" respectively. It is used everywhere where the claim of aprioricity and thus the independence of philosophy in relation to the empirical sciences is maintained. It is not too difficult to demonstrate the historical conditionality of the respective claimed contents of this consciousness.

Windelband's axiological approach is shared by Rickert (1920, p. 129):

"Damit aber müssen dann auch alle jene Behauptungen verschwinden, die darauf hinauslaufen, daß der Wert der Wahrheit, der Sittlichkeit und der Schönheit […] auf Lebenswerte zurückzuführen oder alle Kulturwerte nur Steigerungen und Verfeinerungen der Lebenswerte seien."

("But then all those claims must disappear which imply that the value of truth, morality, and beauty […] must be reduced to values of life, or that all cultural values are only increases and refinements of the values of life.")

pp. 186-187:

"Bloß Wirkliches bleibt stets unverständlich. Verstehen kann man nur den «Sinn» oder die «Bedeutung» einer Sache, und Sinn und Bedeutung hat etwas allein mit Rücksicht auf einen Wert. Das in [187] jeder Hinsicht wertfreie Sein ist zugleich sinn- oder bedeutungsfrei."

("What is merely real always remains incomprehensible. We can only understand the «sense» or «meaning» of a thing, and sense and meaning have something to do with value alone. Being which is worthless in in every respect is at the same time senseless or meaningless.")

In contrast to Lotze, Windelband and Rickert renounce the subordination of reality among value. We have reached the end of onto-theology.

In 1913, Husserl establishes *epoché* as methodical principle, renouncing any assertion of existence, and constitutes phenomenology as the science of essence or science of meaning. This introduces what Heidegger later called "ontological difference". The fundamental assertion of metaphysics is the assertion of the existence of God or of a *mundus intelligibilis*. Metaphysics thus slips away from the question of meaning, into "Seinsvergessenheit" ("oblivion of being") (= "Verfallen" in *Sein und Zeit*).

Excluding assertions of existence means eliminating Kant's practical philosophy, as with the Neokantians. With Kant, it is practical interest that justifies the assertions of existence of *metaphysica specialis*.

The departure from the consciousness-transcendent, metaphysical supposition of existence is made by Husserl consciously following Lotze.

In the draft of a "Vorrede" to *Logische Untersuchungen*, which was produced in 1913 but only published in 1939, Husserl confesses that he owes his liberation from his earlier psychologistic error - and thus the decisive impulse for founding his phenomenology - to Lotze:

"Die voll bewußte und radikale Umwandlung und den mit ihr gegebenen 'Platonismus' verdanke ich dem Studium der *Logik* Lotzes."

("I owe the fully conscious and radical transformation and the 'Platonism' given with it to the study of Lotze's *Logik*.")

In a note of the *Logische Untersuchungen* (II/1, page 132) he also mentions "Lotze, to whose interpretation of the Platonic doctrine of Ideas we are most gratefully indebted".

The second chapter of the third book "Vom Erkennen" (added in 1874) in Lotze's *Logik*, "Die Ideenwelt," must be read in connection with the first chapter "Vom Skepticismus". The rightly understood doctrine of Ideas should open to modern philosophy a way out of the embarrassment into which it was fallen, since Descartes had made skepticism the methodical beginning. Since then it has struggled with the opposition between "idealism" and "realism" (§ 304), the metaphysical (§ 309) question of the "relationship of our knowledge to an object beyond it" (§ 311). The new beginning, which was meant as liberation from all traditional "prejudices" (§ 302), remained - like ancient skepticism (§ 310) - prejudiced: the presupposition that truth is *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, agreement of thing and thought (§ 304). Idealism wants to save the possibility of such an agreement by denying the existence of the outside world and considering only our "ideas" ("ideas" according to the linguistic usage of Descartes: everything that is "in us") as the real, while realism lets things work on us (§ 306) and explains knowledge as an "image" of the thing (§ 304).

In the second chapter, Lotze interprets Plato's theory of Ideas as the first attempt at a epistemology that disregards the metaphysical presupposition of a transcendent object (§ 313). Plato has discovered a cognition whose truth is independent of the question of its conformity with an object beyond it (§ 315): the meaning of concepts and the validity of judgments (sentences) (§ 321). The "Ideas" are concepts that have a "firm and unchanging meaning" (§ 313), "which are always what they are, no matter whether there are things which, through participation in them, make them appear in this external world, or whether there are spirits which, by thinking, give them the reality of an occurring state of mind" (§ 317).

But how could this epistemologist Plato become the founder of metaphysics? According to Lotze, the fault lies with the Greek language, which Plato offered no other word for meaning and validity than οὐσία, "being". The independence and unchangeability of meaning and validity could thus be misunderstood as the self-subsistence and permanence of a being, οὐσία in the sense of "substance" (§ 317-318). This "hypostatizing" of Ideas (§ 318)[[58]](#footnote-58) then led to the dispute of nominalism and realism in the Middle Ages, which was about the real meaning of the logical (i. e. ultimately about the metaphysical question of the relationship between *intellectus* and *res*). The realists regarded the universal concept as the real being in things; the nominalists, on the other hand, held it with Aristotle, for whom only the individual thing was considered true οὐσία (§ 340; cf. § 319).

Husserl's "transformation" was an "idealistic turn" that had to lead into the vicinity of Hegel's philosophy of spirit, even if Husserl did not like him at all. (Cf. below, p. 221.)

Russell makes the same distinction between reality and value as Lotze and his successors; as a "disinterested" searcher, however, he sides with reality, the "indifferent" in the sense of Lotze (pp. 834-835):

"Philosophy, throughout its history, has consisted of two parts inharmoniously blended: on the one hand a theory as to the nature of the world, on the other an ethical or political doctrine as to the best way of living. The failure to separate these two with sufficient clarity has been a source of much confused thinking. Philosophers, from Plato to William James, have allowed their opinions as to the constitution of the universe to be influenced by the desire for edification: knowing, as they supposed, what beliefs would make men virtuous they have invented arguments, often very sophistical, to prove that these beliefs are true. For my part I reprobate this kind of bias, both on moral and on intellectual grounds. Morally, a philosopher who uses his professional competence for anything except a disinterested search for truth is guilty of a kind of treachery. And when he assumes, in advance of inquiry, that certain beliefs, whether true or false, are such as to promote good behaviour, he is so limiting the scope of philosophical speculation as to make philosophy trivial; the true philosopher is prepared to examine *all* preconceptions. When any limits are placed, consciously or unconsciously, upon the pursuit of truth, philosophy becomes paralysed by fear, and the ground is prepared for a government censorship punishing those who utter «dangerous thoughts»--in fact, the philosopher has already placed such a censorship over his own investigations.

Intellectually, the effect of mistaken moral considerations upon philosophy has been to impede progress to an extraordinary extent. I do not myself believe that philosophy can either prove or disprove the truth of religious dogmas, but ever since Plato most philosophers have considered it part of their business to produce «proofs» of immortality and the existence of God. They have found fault with the proofs of their predecessors--Saint Thomas rejected Saint Anselm's proofs, and Kant rejected Descartes'--but they have supplied new ones of their own. In order to make their proofs seem valid, they have had to falsify logic, to make mathematics mystical, and to pretend that deep-seated prejudices were heaven-sent intuitions.

All this is rejected by the philosophers who make logical analysis the main business of philosophy. They confess frankly that the human intellect is unable to find conclusive answers to many questions of profound importance to mankind, but they refuse to believe that there is some «higher» way of knowing, by which we can discover truths hidden from science and the intellect. For this renunciation they have been rewarded by the discovery that many questions, formerly obscured by the fog of metaphysics, can be answered with precision, and by objective methods which introduce nothing of the philosopher's temperament except the desire to understand. Take such questions as: What is number? What are space and time? What is mind, and what is matter? I do not say that we can here and now give definitive answers to all these ancient questions, but I do say that a method has been discovered by which, as in science, we can make successive approximations to the truth, in which each new stage results from an improvement, not a rejection, of what has gone before."

Compare Rickert (1911, pp. 19-20):

"Zu den verschiedensten Zeiten hat die Philosophie sich um eine Einheit von Wert und Wirklichkeit bemüht, auch dort, wo sie nicht wußte, daß sie dies tat, und es nicht wissen konnte, weil es zu einer Trennung der Begriffe von Wert und Wirklichkeit noch nicht gekommen war. Ja, man kann geradezu sagen, daß von hier aus erst die meisten Versuche ihrem eigentlichen Gehalt nach verständlich werden, die wir unter dem Namen der Metaphysik zusammenzufassen gewohnt sind, und die durch ein Ungenügen an der diesseitigen Welt charakterisiert werden. Platons Ideenlehre mag als klassisches Beispiel hierfür dienen."

("At various times philosophy has endeavored to unify value and reality, even where it did not know that it was doing so, and could not know it, because the concepts of value and reality had not yet been separated. One can even say that from this point of view only most of the experiments become comprehensible to their actual content, which we are accustomed to summarize under the name of metaphysics, and which are characterized by dissatisfaction with this world. Plato's theory of Ideas may serve as a classic example of this.")

As already stated above (p. 207), the separation of reality and value means the end of metaphysics. With Nietzsche the superlative God (cf. Herbart, above, p. 197) is replaced by the comparative superhuman.[[59]](#footnote-59) This is nothing other than the attitude of θνητὰ φρονεῖν ("to take care of the mortal"), which opposes the turn to the metaphysical (see our volume 3, pp. 30-31). So the end returns to the beginning.

# 9. Philosophizing without the fundamental concepts "beingness" and "being"

Kant's rejection of an "ontology" (see above, p. 185) does not change the fact that he continues to use the Aristotelian fundamental concept of "substance". The same applies to Fichte and Hegel, even to Lotze. Without this concept one cannot even get into Aristotelian metaphysics, see *Metaphysica* Γ 2, Ζ 1.

The criticism leading to the abolition of "substance ontology" comes from two sides. Locke and Russell deny that the term substance brings any gain of knowledge; another line runs from Husserl to Heidegger and Gadamer; here the term substance is rejected as unsuitable for the "Geisteswissenschaften" ("humanities"). Insofar as philosophy sees itself as hermeneutics (foundation of humanities), here too the Aristotelian term substance is dismissed.

Heidegger still holds on to the concept of "being" and makes it the dominant theme of his thinking. Here, linguistic analytical critics see a last remnant of metaphysics that still needs to be eliminated (9.2.).

## 9.1. Beingness

### 9.1.1. Locke

Locke knew scholastic logic and metaphysics from his studies (from 1652 at the College Christ Church of the University of Oxford), but he found the works of modern philosophers, such as Descartes, more interesting. As in this, criticism of scholastics shows an egalitarian tendency, which we also encounter later in Rousseau and Kant: if the metaphysicist is not smarter than the blacksmith (see below), has no apart knowledge that distinguishes him from ordinary people, then it is also over with *vita contemplativa* (see our volume 3, pp. 30; 169-173; 216-220) as the highest form of life reserved to an elite. After Hegel's restoration, which remains an intermezzo, Marx returns to Locke (see below, p. 217).

At the following passages of the *Essay concerning Humane Understanding*, Locke explains the emergence of the concept of substance:

1.4.18:

"I confess, there is another Idea, which would be of general use for Mankind to have, as it is of general talk as if they had it; and that is the Idea of Substance, which we neither have, nor can have, by Sensation or Reflection. If Nature took care to provide us any Ideas, we might well expect it should be such, as by our own Faculties we cannot procure to our selves: But we see on the contrary, that since by those ways, where by other Ideas are brought into our Minds, this is not, We have no such clear Idea at all, and therefore signify nothing by the word Substance, but only an uncertain supposition of we know, not what; (i. e. of something whereof we have no particular distinct positive *Idea*,) which we take to be the *substratum*, or support, of those Ideas we do know."

2.12.6:

"Secondly, The Ideas of Substances are such combinations of simple Ideas, as are taken to represent distinct particular things subsisting by themselves; in which the supposed, or confused Idea of Substance, such as it is, is always the first and chief."

2.23.1:

"The Mind being, as I have declared, furnished with a great number of the simple *Ideas*, conveyed in by the *Senses*, as they are found in exteriour things, or by *Reflection* on its own Operations, takes notice also, that a certain number of these simple *Ideas* go constantly together; which being presumed to belong to one thing, and Words being suited to common apprehensions, and made use of for quick dispatch, are called so united in one subject, by one name; which by inadvertency we are apt afterward to talk of and consider as one simple *Idea,* which indeed is a complication of many *Ideas* together; Because, as I have said, not imagining how these simple *Ideas* can subsist by themselves, we accustom our selves, to suppose some *Substratum*, wherein they do subsist, and from which they do result, which therefore we call *Substance.*"

2.23.2:

"So that if any one will examine himself concerning his *Notion of pure Substance in general*, he will find he has no other Idea of it at all, but only a Supposition of he knows not what support of such Qualities, which are capable of producing simple Ideas in us; which Qualities are commonly called Accidents."

Nonetheless, Locke uses the expression substance himself, see e. g. 2.27.2:

"We have the Ideas but of three sorts of Substances; 1. God. 2. Finite Intelligences. 3. Bodies."

Locke also gives a critique of the concept *essentia*, the second interpretation of ousía besides *substantia* (cf. above, p. 31):

Locke 3.3.8:

"By the same way, that they come by the general Name and *Idea* of *Man,* they easily *advance to more general Names* and Notions. For observing,that several Things that differ from their *Idea* of *Man,* and cannot therefore be comprehended under that Name, have yet certain Qualities, wherein they agree with *Man,* by retaining only those Qualities, and uniting them into one *Idea,* they have again another and a more general *Idea;* to which having given a Name, they make a term of a more comprehensive extension: Which new Idea is made, not by any new addition, but only, as before, by leaving out the shape, and some other Properties signified by the name Man, and retaining only a Body, with Life, Sense, and spontaneous Motion, comprehended under the Name Animal.

3.3.9:

Leave out of the Idea of Animal, Sense and spontaneous Motion, and the remaining complex Idea, made up of the remaining simple ones of Body, Life, and Nourishment, becomes a more general one, under the more comprehensive term, Vivens. And not to dwell longer upon this particular, so evident in it self, by the same way the Mind proceeds to Body, Substance, and at last to Being, Thing, and such universal terms, which stand for any of our Ideas whatsoever. To conclude, this whole mystery of Genera and Species, which make such a noise in the Schools, and are, with Justice, so little regarded out of them, is nothing else but abstract Ideas, more or less comprehensive, with names annexed to them.

3.3.15:

But since the Essences of Things are Thought, by some, (and not without reason,) to be wholly unknown; it may not be amiss to consider *the several significations of the Word Essence*.

*First*, Essence may be taken for the very being of any thing, whereby it is, what it is. And thus the real internal, but generally in Substances, unknown Constitution of Things, whereon their discoverable Qualities depend, may be called their Essence. This is the proper original signification of the Word, as is evident from the formation of it; Essentia, in its primary notation signifying properly Being. And in this sense it is still used, when we speak of the Essence of particular things, without giving them any Name.

*Secondly*, The Learning and Disputes of the Schools, having been much busied about Genus and Species, the Word Essence has almost lost its primary signification; and instead of-the real Constitution of things, has been almost wholly applied to the artificial Constitution of *Genus* and *Species*."

For Locke, what Kant calls "logical essence" (see above, p. 188) and what for the Platonists and the Aristotelians (the "realists about universals") was the essence of things, serves only the economy of thought, see 3.3.20:

"To conclude, this is that, which in short I would say,( viz.). that all the great Business of Genera and Species, and their Essences, amounts to no more but this, That Men making abstract Ideas, and settling them in their Minds, with names annexed to them, do thereby enable themselves to consider Things, and discourse of them, as it were in bundles, for the easier and readier improvement, and communication of their Knowledge, which would advance but slowly, were their Words and Thoughts confined only to Particulars."

What Locke is aiming at with his criticism is that we gain nothing in knowledge through the abstractions of scholastic philosophy; for we have only, the higher we climb, left out the more. A blacksmith knows better what iron is than a philosopher who speaks of *formae substantiales* (2.23.3).

The extreme opposite position to this is Hegel's logic.

"Die Logik ist sonach als das System der reinen Vernunft, als das Reich des reinen Gedankens zu fassen. Dieses Reich ist die Wahrheit selbst, wie sie ohne Hülle an und für sich selbst ist. Man kann sich deßwegen ausdrücken, daß dieser Inhalt die Darstellung Gottes ist, wie er in seinem ewigen Wesen, vor der Erschaffung der Natur und eines endlichen Geistes ist." (Einleitung, p. XIII)

("Accordingly, logic is to be understood as the system of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought. This realm is truth as it is without veil and in its own absolute nature. It can therefore been said that this content is the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and a finite mind.")

Those who believe in progress in philosophy will be disappointed that Marx criticizes Hegel's logic in the same way Locke criticizes scholastic ontology (*Misère de la philosophie*, pp. 95-96):

"A force d'abstraire ainsi de tout sujet, tous les prétendus accidents, animés ou inanimés, hommes ou choses, nous avons raison de dire qu'en dernière abstraction on arrive à avoir comme substance les catégories logiques. Ainsi les métaphysiciens qui, en faisant ces abstractions, s'imaginent faire de l'analyse, et qui, à mesure qu'ils se détachent de plus en plus des objets, s'imaginent s'en approcher au point de les pénétrer, ces métaphysiciens ont à leur tour raison de dire que les choses d'ici-bas sont des broderies, dont les catégories logiques forment le canevas."

("By dint of abstracting all so-called accidents, animate or inanimate, men or things, from any subject, we are right to say that in the last abstraction we manage to have as substance the logical categories. Thus metaphysicists who, in making these abstractions, imagine themselves doing analysis, and who, as they detach themselves more and more from objects, imagine themselves approaching them to the point of penetrating them, these metaphysicists are in turn right to say that things from here below are embroideries, whose logical categories form the canvas.")

### 9.2.2. Russell

Russell's path of thinking was similar to Marx's, in that both began as Hegelians or Hegel critics and ended up with Locke.

In his *History of Western Philosophy* (pp. 200-201) Russell writes:

"The notion of essence is an intimate part of every philosophy subsequent to Aristotle, until we come to modern times. It is, in my opinion, a hopelessly muddle-headed notion, but its historical importance requires us to say something about it. The "essence" of a thing appears to have meant "those of its properties which it cannot change without losing its identity." Socrates may be sometimes happy, sometimes sad; sometimes well, sometimes ill. Since he can change these properties without ceasing to be Socrates, they are no part of his essence. But it is supposed to be of the essence of Socrates that he is a man, though a Pythagorean, who believes in transmigration, will not admit this. In fact, the question of [201] "essence" is one as to the use of words. We apply the same name, on different occasions, to somewhat different occurrences, which we regard as manifestations of a single "thing" or "person." In fact, however, this is only a verbal convenience. The "essence" of Socrates thus consists of those properties in the absence of which we should not use the name "Socrates." The question is purely linguistic: a *word* may have an essence, but a *thing* cannot."

The example Socrates is already used by Porphyry (*Introduction*, p. 7, 19-23 Busse):

ἄτομον δέ λέγεται ὁ Σωκράτης καὶ τουτὶ τὸ λευκὸν καὶ οὑτοσὶ ὁ προσιὼν Σωφρονίσκου υἱός, εἰ μόνος αὐτῷ εἴη Σωκράτης υἱός. ἄτομα οὖν λέγεται τὰ τοιαῦτα, ὅτι ἐξ ἰδιοτήτων συνέστηκεν ἕκαστον, ὧν τὸ ἁθρόισμα οὐκ ἂν ἐπ' ἄλλου ποτὲ τὸ αὐτό γένοιτο.

("An individual, however, is such as Socrates, this white, and this man who approaches, viz. the son of Sophroniscus, if Socrates is the son of Sophroniscus. Things of this kind are called individuals, because each of them consists of peculiarities, of which the collection can never belong to any other thing.")

The metaphysicist could reply to Russell: of course it is a verbal convenience to give a certain collection of peculiarities (or "properties") the name "Socrates"; but the occurrence of such a collection is a fact. What it is about is the distinction between combinations of properties that occur only once and those that occur frequently. This is the basis for the distinction between "general" and "individual," and has nothing to do with linguistics.

What Russell is driving at, however, is the question: what entitles us to assume, in addition to the said collection, a unit different from it? This brings us to the next point: the said unit is only a "collective name". See ibid. pp. 201-203:

"The conception of «substance,» like that of «essence,» is a transference to metaphysics of what is only a linguistic convenience. We find it convenient, in describing the world, to describe a certain number of occurrences as events in the life of «Socrates,» and a certain number of others as events in the life of «Mr. Smith.» This leads us to think of «Socrates» or «Mr. Smith» as denoting something that persists through a certain number of years, and as in some way more «solid» and «real» than the events that happen to him. If Socrates is ill, we think that Socrates, at other times, is well, and therefore the being of Socrates is independent of his illness; illness, on the other hand, requires somebody to be ill. But although Socrates need not be ill, *something* must be occurring to him if he is to be considered to exist. He is not, therefore, really any more «solid» than the things that happen to him.

«Substance,» when taken seriously, is a concept impossible to free from difficulties. A substance is supposed to be the subject of properties, and to be something distinct from all its properties. But when we take away the properties, and try to imagine the substance by itself, we find that there is nothing left. To put the matter in another way: What distinguishes one substance from another? Not difference of properties, for, according to the logic of substance, difference of properties presupposes numerical diversity between the substances concerned. Two substances, therefore, must be *just* two, without being, in themselves, in any way distinguishable. How, then, are we ever to find out that they are two?

«Substance,» in fact, is merely a convenient way of collecting events into bundles. What can we know about Mr. Smith? When we look at him, we see a pattern of colours; when we listen to him talking, we hear a series of sounds. We believe that, like us, he has thoughts and feelings. But what is Mr. Smith apart from all these occurrences? A mere imaginary hook, from which the occurrences [203] are supposed to hang. They have in fact no need of a hook, any more than the earth needs an elephant to rest upon. Any one can see, in the analogous case of a geographical region, that such a word as «France» (say) is only a linguistic convenience, and that there is not a *thing* called «France» over and above its various parts. The same holds of «Mr. Smith»; it is a collective name for a number of occurrences. If we take it as anything more, it denotes something completely unknowable, and therefore not needed for the expression of what we know.

«Substance,» in a word, is a metaphysical mistake, due to transference to the world-structure of the structure of sentences composed of a subject and a predicate."

This criticism is obviously inspired by Locke and brings nothing new. The difference is that Russell no longer uses this term on his own behalf.

Locke and Russell, in turn, basically say nothing new to Galilei (see above, p. 190), in that they declare the assumption of an "interior of nature" superfluous. They go further than this in that they declare the methodically superfluous non-existent.

### 9.2.3. Husserl

Starting point is the assumption of a complete difference between the sciences of nature and spirit. Therefore, the concept of substance cannot - as in Descartes (*substantia cogitans -substantia extensa*) - be the common fundamental concept for both. Gadamer (p. 229) speaks of the "inappropriateness of the concept of substance for the historical".

Husserl makes this distinction already in the programmatic essay "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft" (Logos, p. 312):

"Es gibt, eigentlich gesprochen, nur Eine Natur, die in den Dingerscheinungen erscheinende. Alles was wir im weitesten Sinne der Psychologie ein psychisches Phänomen nennen, ist, an und für sich betrachtet, eben Phänomen und nicht Natur.

Ein Phänomen ist also keine «substanzielle» Einheit, es hat keine «realen Eigenschaften," es kennt keine realen Teile, keine realen Veränderungen und keine Kausalität: all diese Worte im naturwissenschaftlichen Sinne verstanden. Phänomenen eine Natur beimessen, nach ihren realen Bestimmungsstücken, nach ihren kausalen Zusammenhängen forschen — das ist ein reiner Widersinn, nicht besser, als wenn man nach kausalen Eigenschaften, Zusammenhängen etc. der Zahlen fragen wollte. Es ist der Widersinn der Naturalisierung von etwas, dessen Wesen das Sein als Natur ausschließt."

("There is, properly speaking, only one nature, the one which appears in the appearance of things. Everything we call a psychic phenomenon in the broadest sense of psychology, considered in and for itself, is phenomenon and not nature.

A phenomenon is therefore not a «substantial» unity, it has no «real properties» [substance understood as "support," cf. p. 310], no real parts, no real changes and no causality: all these words understood in the sense of physics. To attribute a nature to phenomena, to search for their real determinants, for their causal connections - this is a pure absurdity, not better, than if one wanted to ask about the causal properties, contexts etc. of numbers. It is the absurdity of naturalization of something whose essence precludes being as nature.")

In his late phase, Husserl conceived phenomenology as science of the spirit (Husserliana VI, 345, highlighted in italics):

"Der Geist und sogar nur der Geist ist in sich selbst und für sich selbst seiend, ist eigenständig und kann in diesem Eigenstande, und nur in diesem, wahrhaft rational, wahrhaft und von Grund auf wissenschaftlich behandelt werden."

("The spirit, and even only the spirit, is being in itself and for itself, is self-subsistent and can be treated in this self-subsistency, and only in this, truly rationally, truly and thoroughly scientifically.")

It is remarkable that Husserl, for the characterization of his research object, has no other vocabulary at his disposal than that of "substance ontology," see our section 1. 2. under "subsistere" and "substance".

### 9.2.4. Heidegger

"Phenomenology, that's me and Heidegger," Husserl used to say at the beginning of the 1920s. Back then, the two felt connected in their efforts, now finally, after so many failed attempts, to bring about a scientific philosophy.

Heidegger's "Dasein" takes the place of the "spirit" in Husserl and Hegel. The "wholeness of Dasein" is the counterpart to substance as a natural wholeness. In *Sein und Zeit*, p. 373, the expressions "beharrliche," "Wechsel der Erlebnisse" ("permanent," "change of experiences") are intentionally reminiscent of Kant's "Grundsatz der Beharrlichkeit der Substanz" ("principle of permanence of substance") in *Critik der reinen Vernunft*, B 224: "Bey allem Wechsel der Erscheinungen beharret die Substanz" ("In all change of appearances substance is permanent").

Husserl and Heidegger also have in common that they blame the predominance of the naturalistic concept of being for the crisis of Europe; their diagnosis, unanimous in substance, is "objectivism" in Husserl, "Seinsvergessenheit" ("oblivion of being")[[60]](#footnote-60) in Heidegger. Since naturalism is tied to the concept of substance, the origin of the crisis is traced back to antiquity, see *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 22 + 25: the ancient interpretation of "Sein des Seienden" ("being of what is") is oriented towards the "world" or "nature" in the broadest sense.

## 9.2. Being

Kant (*Critik der reinen Vernunft*, A 598 = B 626) objects to the ontological proof of God: "being is not a real predicate". If it only expresses a "position" empty of content, it cannot be the subject of a science with material content.

Frege goes even further than Kant (*Dialog mit Pünjer über Existenz*, pp. 16-17):

"Zur Bildung eines Begriffes ohne Inhalt eignete sich vorzüglich die Kopula, d. i. die bloße Form der Aussage ohne Inhalt. In dem Satz «Der Himmel ist blau» ist die Aussage «ist blau», der [17] eigentliche Inhalt der Aussage liegt aber in dem Worte «blau». Wenn man dies wegläßt, so erhält man eine Aussage ohne Inhalt[:] «Der Himmel ist» übrig. So bildet man einen Quasibegriff «Seiendes» ohne Inhalt [, da] von unendlichem Umfang. Man kann nun so sagen: Menschen = seiende Menschen [cf. Aristoteles, *Metaphysica* Γ, 1003b26-27]; «Es gibt Menschen» ist dasselbe wie «Einige Menschen sind» oder «Einiges Seiende ist Mensch». Es liegt also hier der eigentliche Inhalt der Aussage nicht in dem Worte «Seiend», sondern in der Form des partikulären Urteils. Das Wort «Seiend» ist nur eine Verlegenheitsschöpfung der Sprache, um die Form des partikulären Urteils zur Anwendung bringen zu können. Wenn die Philosophen von dem «absoluten Sein» sprechen, so ist dies eigentlich eine Vergötterung der Kopula."

("For the formation of a concept without content, the copula was most suitable. i. e. the mere form of the statement without content. In the sentence «The sky is blue» the statement is «is blue,» the actual content of the statement lies in the word «blue.» If you omit this, you get a statement without content [:] «The sky is» left over. Thus one forms a quasi-concept of «being» without content [, since] of infinite extent. You can now say: humans = being humans [cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* Γ, 1003b26-27]; «There are humans» is the same as «Some humans are» or «Some beings are humans.» So here the real content of the statement is not in the word «being,» but in the form of particular judgment. The word «being» is only an makeshift creation of language in order to be able to apply the form of particular judgment. If the philosophers speak of «absolute Being,»[[61]](#footnote-61) this is actually a deification of the copula.")

In Frege's opinion, it is not permissible to predicate existence of proper names (*Begriff und Gegenstand*, p. 200):

"Der Satz «es gibt Julius Cäsar» ist weder wahr noch falsch, sondern sinnlos, wiewohl der Satz «es gibt einen Mann mit Namen Julius Cäsar» einen Sinn hat; aber hier haben wir auch wieder einen Begriff, wie der unbestimmte Artikel erkennen lässt. Dasselbe haben wir in dem Satze «es gibt nur ein Wien». Man muss sich nicht dadurch täuschen lassen, dass die Sprache manchmal dasselbe Wort theils als Eigennamen, theils als Begriffswort gebraucht. Das Zahlwort deutet hier an, dass der letzte Fall vorliegt. «Wien» ist hier ebenso Begriffswort wie «Kaiserstadt». Man kann in diesem Sinne sagen «Triest ist kein Wien»."

("The sentence «there is Julius Caesar» is neither true nor false, but meaningless, although the sentence «there is a man named Julius Caesar» makes sense; but here again we have a concept, as the indefinite article reveals. We have the same thing in the sentence «there is only one Vienna.» One need not be fooled by the fact that the language sometimes uses the same word partly as a proper name, partly as a conceptual word. The numeral here indicates that the last case exists. «Vienna» is as much a term here as «Kaiserstadt.» In this sense one can say «Trieste is not a Vienna.»")

The linguistic indistinguishability of proper name and concept word criticized by Frege is found in the term "god," which was generic name in polytheistic paganism, but gradually became proper name in monotheistic Christianity ("God does this and that"). Through Frege we become aware that "god" is used as concept word in the "proofs of God".

# 10. Conclusion

Reception and criticism of Aristotelian metaphysics will continue. Can we draw a preliminary conclusion?

Even a superficial glance is enough to recognize that the development depicted was anything but inevitable. No Hegelian world spirit directed it. In my opinion, without exaggeration, one can say that precisely the decisive changes remain under the surface; they are not thematized, let alone justified.

This begins with the schools of the Stoá and Epicurus; they represent an independent development of Socraticism that runs past Plato and Aristotle (above 3.4.2., p. 67). A few details are adopted from both, but the negation of an incorporeal reality is apparently certain from the outset (above, p. 58).

The transition from the supremacy of Stoicism to the supremacy of Neoplatonism went with similarly little reflection. Stoic physics is rejected by Plotinus as much without discussion as does Platonic-Aristotelian hyperphysics by the Stoics. This is probably why the "hidden Stoic doctrines" that Porphyry notices in Plotinus (*Vita Plotini* 14, 4-5) can bring about a fundamental but unnoticed change in the understanding of divine "omniscience" (see above, 5.2.1.).

Also remains hidden the further life of Aristotelian onto-theology in the *via abstractionis* and *via eminentiae*. The *via abstractionis* leads to the *on* ("being") as the most abstract (cf. our volume 3, p. 280), which *via eminentiae* leads to the *nous* ("intellect") as the highest level of being (ibidem, pp. 16; 22; 30; 216-220); both taken together lead to the unity of ontology and theology (the divine intellect as the most abstract, see volume 3, p. 16). This combination is no longer possible if the totality of being takes the place of the abstract 'being' (God's omniscience). In this way the unity becomes two different "ways" whose relation to one another remains unclear.

Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics is affected by the progress of natural science to the extent that modern astronomy removes the proof of God from motion (cf. above, 5. 4. and 6. ). Darwin creates difficulties for metaphysics which, following the Stoics, sees itself as an explication of rational human nature (cf. above, p. 182). In his criticism of metaphysics in *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* (1.2), Nietzsche has in mind this metaphysics on an anthropological basis:

"Alle Philosophen haben den gemeinsamen Fehler an sich, dass sie vom gegenwärtigen Menschen ausgehen und durch eine Analyse desselben an's Ziel zu kommen meinen. Unwillkürlich schwebt ihnen «der Mensch» als eine *aeterna veritas*, als ein Gleichbleibendes in allem Strudel, als ein sicheres Maass der Dinge vor. Alles, was der Philosoph über den Menschen aussagt, ist aber im Grunde nicht mehr, als ein Zeugniss über den Menschen eines sehr beschränkten Zeitraumes."

("All philosophers make the common mistake of taking contemporary man as their starting point and of trying, through an analysis of him, to reach a conclusion. «Man» involuntarily presents himself to them as an *aeterna veritas* as a passive element in every hurly-burly, as a fixed standard of things. Yet everything uttered by the philosopher on the subject of man is, in the last resort, nothing more than a piece of testimony concerning man during a very limited period of time.")

Through the whole history of metaphysics there runs the opposition between nominalism (or "conceptualism") and realism. We encounter conceptualism in the anecdote about Plato and Antisthenes (see our volume 3, p. 207), in the Stoic "corporealism" for which the Platonic Ideas are mere "thoughts" (SVF 1.19, 27-28: οἱ ἀπὸ Ζήνωνος Στωικοὶ ἐννοήματα ἡμέτερα τὰς ἰδέας ἔφασαν = "the Stoics derived from Zeno said that the Ideas were only thoughts of us"), with Locke, Marx and Russell. That the "true world" of metaphysics finally disappears in the Königsbergian mist (cf. Nietzsche, Götzendämmerung, Wie die "wahre Welt" endlich zur Fabel wurde, 3.) is because for Kant the "things" must remain unrecognizable: the individual is real, not the general; but the individual is infinite, and thus unrecognizable. This is already written by Aristotle (999a26-28 τὰ δὲ καθ' ἕκαστα ἄπειρα, τῶν δ' ἀπείρων πῶς ἐνδέχεται λαβεῖν ἐπιστήμην;).

Kant's intellect, endowed with categories and principles, i. e. with the content of ontology, looks into the void, if left on its own. As a conceptualist, Kant cannot accept his transcendental analytics as a self-knowledge of the intellect in the Aristotelian sense, as its own reality.

Starting with Plato, the discussion between realists and conceptualists consists of each denying to the other the scientific attitude or the talent for philosophy. Remember the contempt with which Plotinus talks about Epicurus (see above, 2. 2.). Revealing for modern times is the contrasting assessment of Locke and Hume by Kant on the one hand (see above, 7. 2.), Hegel and Schelling on the other hand. During an evening of conversation with Madame de Stael, Schelling's notorious sentence falls: "Je méprise Locke." See Schiller to Goethe, November 30, 1803:

"Wir würden nicht so leicht damit [mit Madame de Staels "französischer volubilität"] fertig werden wie Schelling mit Camille Jordan der ihm mit Locke angezogen kam - Je méprise Locke, sagte Schelling und so verstummte denn freilich der Gegner."

("We would not be able to deal with it [Madame de Stael's "French volubility"] so easily as Schelling with Camille Jordan who came along with Locke - Je méprise Locke, Schelling said, and so, of course, the opponent fell silent.")

Hegel's judgement about Locke is not more favorable (*Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Band 3, p. 429):

"Locke's Raisonnement ist ganz seicht; es hält sich ganz nur an die Erscheinung, an das, was ist, nicht was wahr ist. Den Zweck und das Interesse der Philosophie hat er ganz aufgegeben."

("Locke's raisonnement is very shallow; it adheres only to appearance, to what is, not what is true. He has completely abandoned the purpose and interest of philosophy.")

Similarly about Hume (ibidem, p. 497):

"Hume sieht nun die Nothwendigkeit, die Einheit Entgegengesetzter [Ursache - Wirkung], ganz subjektiv in der Gewohnheit; tiefer kann man im Denken nicht herunterkommen."

("Hume now sees the necessity, the unity of opposites [cause - effect], quite subjectively in habit; one cannot get down deeper in thinking.")

Reversely Brentano, who had a high opinion of Locke, on Hegel:

"Dieses Hegelsche System und seine Prätensionen sind gerichtet. Vor wenigen Decennien noch allgemein als die höchste Leistung menschlicher Forschungskraft gepriesen, wird es heute eben so allgemein als die äußerste Entartung menschlichen Denkens verdammt. Das ist ein gutes Zeichen." (p. 28)

("On this Hegelian system and its pretensions the sentence is passed. Even a few decades ago, generally praised as the highest performance of human research ability, today it is condemned as generally as the ultimate degeneration of human thought. That is a good sign.")

Brentano's judgement remained authoritative for Husserl, who makes some bows to "German idealism" in his later years, without any real rapprochement, however.

The self-confident appearance of the antagonists seems to owe itself to an intuitive certainty about the sense of philosophy. Is this refusal of dialogue? Or do limits of rationality become visible here?

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1. An exception make thinkers like Wittgenstein. "Wittgenstein has no historical interest in philosophy, he does not want to understand the history of philosophy or certain authors or texts new or better than others." (Vossenkuhl 12) Other examples are Epicurus, Descartes, Spinoza, Fichte and Husserl. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In the Introduction Hume writes: "'Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature: and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another." [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In Metaphysica, p. 179, 14-18 Hayduck (on B, 996a1):

   ζητῆσαι δέ φησιν ὁμοίως δεῖν τοῦτο περί τε τῶν εἰδικῶν αἰτίων (ταῦτα γάρ ἐστι τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ· ταῦτα γὰρ καθ' ἃ ὁ λόγος ἑκάστου καὶ ὁ ὁρισμός) καὶ περὶ τῶν ὑλικῶν· ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ ὑποκείμενα. εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸ ποιητικὸν καὶ τὸ τελικὸν αἴτιον εἴδη καὶ αὐτά, ὡς εἶπεν ἐν Φυσικῇ ἀκροάσει, περὶ πάντων ἂν εἴη τῶν αἰτίων εἰρηκώς.

   ("He says that we must inquire in like manner about the formal causes (these are the ones contained in the formula of a thing; for it is terms of them that the formula of each thing , its definition, is framed), and about the material causes, for these are the subjects. If the efficient cause and the final cause are also themselves kinds [of causes], as he said in the *Physics*, he would have mentioned all the causes.") [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. According to Proclus only what "is constituted by itself" (τὰ παρ' ἑαυτῶν ὑφιστάμενα) has a "self-subsistent beingness" (οὐσία αὐθυπόστατος). "By itself" there only exists what is "capable of reverting to itself" (πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐπιστρεπτικόν), i. e. the intellectual; it is, by virtue of its self-constitution, ungenerated and uncorruptible, (*Elementatio theologica* §§ 40–49. 51). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The epithet "divine" came up with the Neoplatonists and was applied first of course to Plato; later also to Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The author of the *Theologia Aristotelis* poses as Aristotle ("in our earlier book of *Metaphysica*"):

   "All excellent philosophers agree that there are four principles for this ancient visible world, namely matter, form, efficient cause and final cause.

   It is now necessary to look at these, with their accidents, existing in them and coming from them: one must know their primary and middle causes as well as the forces effective in them, also which of the causes is more worthy to be advanced and put at the top, although otherwise in some respects an equality prevails between them. In our earlier book of the *Metaphysica* «what follows after the natural sciences» we have made this clear and clearly emphasized these principles - we have arranged them in this way: God, intellect, and then soul, nature and its works." (p. 2 Dieterici) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. He could rely on Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann's *Geschichte der Philosophie* (Third Volume, Leipzig 1801), who attributes the difficulties of the presentation not only to the "imperfect state in which Aristotle's writings came to us" (p. 18), but also to Aristotle's "way of philosophizing" (pp. 19-20):

   "Irrespective of Aristotle being the most systematic and methodical of all Greek philosophers, one very often misses the rigor of the method, and he often sketches one out without fully following it. He often heaps problems over problems without solving them all; he often interferes with foreign things, lingers too long on less important ones. His great reading and knowledge of the assertions of older philosophers involves him in too many disputes and rebuttals. What he gives is often only a series of observations and reflections arranged under general rubrics, without being linked and processed by [20] a strict scientific context. Add to that his own terminology and the nervous, too crowded presentation of his thoughts." [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Following Christian Wolff, see below, pp.69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. III/1, p. 481; cf. pp. 398, 262, 369. Hereby he is in agreement with the late antique (Neoplatonic) eclecticism of a Boethius, who adopted the Stoic morals, but rejected the natural philosophy. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See Diogenes Laertius 7.117: φασὶ δὲ καὶ ἀπαθῆ εἶναι τὸν σσφὸν ("they say that the wise man is passionless"). To the Stoics, freedom took precedence over everything, as to their predecessors, the Cynics: being independent of external goods (autárkeia = self-sufficiency for Antisthenes), of affects that come over you without doing anything of your own. Both is combined by Chrysippus in Epictetus (*Epicteti Dissertationes* I, 4, 28 = SVF III, p. 35, 11-13):

    τί οὖν παρέχει ἡμῖν Χρύσιππος; "ἵνα γνῷς, φησίν, ὅτι οὐ ψευδῆ ταυτά ἐστιν, ἐξ ὧν ἡ εὔροιά ἐστι καὶ ἀπάθεια, ἅπαντα λάβε μου τὰ βιβλία καὶ γνώσῃ ὡς <ἀληθῆ> τε καὶ σύμφωνά ἐστι τῇ φύσει τὰ ἀπαθῆ με ποιοῦντα."

    ("What, then, does Chrysippus furnish us? «That you may know,» he says, «that these things are not false from which serenity arises and tranquility comes to us, take my books and you shall know how conformable and harmonious with nature are the things which render me tranquil.»") [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. For the apathy of the aether in Critolaus and Diodorus see Diels, *Doxographi Graeci*, 303b, 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Plutarch, *De notionibus communibus*, 1075 E: οὐ γὰρ ἀθάνατον καὶ μακάριον μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ κηδεμονικὸν καὶ ὠφέλιμον προλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ νοεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. This even leads to the accusation of circularity in Sextus Empiricus 9. 43-47 (= Long/Sedley 23F). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos* 11.22-24 (= SVF 3.18,26-39):

    οἱ μὲν οὖν Στωικοὶ τῶν κοινῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐννοιῶν ἐχόμενοι ὁρίζονται τἀγαθὸν τρόπῳ τῷδε “ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ὠφέλεια ἢ οὐχ ἕτερον ὠφελείας”, ὠφέλειαν μὲν λέγοντες τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν σπουδαίαν πρᾶξιν, οὐχ ἕτερον δὲ ὠφελείας τὸν σπουδαῖον ἄνθρωπον καὶ τὸν φίλον. (23) ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετή πως ἔχον ἡγεμονικὸν καθεστηκυῖα, καὶ ἡ σπουδαία πρᾶξις, ἐνέργειά τις οὖσα κατ' ἀρετήν, ἄντικρύς ἐστιν ὠφέλεια· ὁ δὲ σπουδαῖος ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ φίλος, πάλιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὄντες καὶ αὐτοί, οὔτε ὠφέλεια λεχθεῖεν ἂν ὑπάρχειν οὔθ' ἕτεροι ὠφελείας δι' αἰτίαν τοιαύτην.· (24) τὰ γὰρ μέρη, φασὶ Στωικῶν παῖδες, οὔτε τὰ αὐτὰ τοῖς ὅλοις ἐστὶν οὔτε ἑτεροῖα τῶν ὅλων, οἷον ἡ χεὶρ οὔτε ἡ αὐτή ἐστιν τῷ ὅλῳ ἀνθρώπῳ (οὐ γὰρ ὅλος ἄνθρωπός ἐστιν ἡ χείρ), οὔτε ἑτέρα τοῦ ὅλου (σὺν γὰρ τῇ [ὅλῃ] χειρὶ ὅλος ὁ ἄνθρωπος νοεῖται ἄνθρωπος). ἐπεὶ οὖν καὶ τοῦ σπουδαίου ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ φίλου μέρος ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, τὰ δὲ μέρη οὔτε ταὐτὰ τοῖς ὅλοις ἐστὶν οὔτε ἕτερα τῶν ὅλων, εἴρηται ὁ σπουδαῖος ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ φίλος οὐχ ἕτερος ὠφελείας. ὥστε πᾶν ἀγαθὸν τῷ ὅρῳ ἐμπεριειλῆφθαι, ἐάν τε ἐξ εὐθείας ὠφέλεια τυγχάνῃ, ἐάν τε μὴ ᾖ ἕτερον ὠφελείας.

    ("The Stoics, sticking fast to the common conceptions so to speak, define the good as follows: 'Good is benefit or not other than benefit', meaning by 'benefit' virtue and virtuous action, and by 'not other than benefit' the virtuous man and his friend. For virtue, which is a disposition of the commanding-faculty, and virtuous action, which is an activity in accordance with virtue, are benefit directly. But the virtuous man and his friend, while also themselves belonging to goods, could neither be said to be benefit nor other than benefit, for the following reason. Parts, the sons of the Stoics say, are neither the same as wholes nor are they different from wholes; for instance, the hand is not the same as a whole man, since the hand is not a whole man, but nor is it other than the whole since the whole man is conceived as man together with his hand. Since, then, virtue is a part of the virtuous man and of his friend, and parts are neither the same as wholes nor other than wholes, the good man and his friend have been called 'not other than benefit'. So every good is taken in by the definition, whether it is benefit or not other than benefit.") [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. They only continued a tradition of Socratics who had not participated in the Pythagorean turn of the late Plato (see volume 3, pp. 169-173): Antisthenes and Aristippus. Both are mentioned by Aristotle, the former with condescension. See our volume 3, pp. 103 (Aristippus), 158, 159, 207, 208 (Antisthenes). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. That Sextus ascribes the division and its doctrine of principles to the Pythagoreans is due to an archaizing tendency that led to Neopythagoreism in late antiquity, but already began in the early Academy with Speusippus (Burkert, pp. 46-73). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Cf. *Metaphysica* N, 1089b11-14. Of the εἴδη τοῦ πρός τι ("kinds of relative") mentioned there Sextus quotes (besides great and Small) much and little, deep and flat. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. On this important term see our volume 3, pp. 148-150. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Primary matter as ἄποιος οὐσία Plutarch, De communibus notitiis, p. 1086a (= SVF 2.126.40). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. ἄποιος ὕλη Simplicius, In Categorias 48, 13 = Dexippus, In Categorias 23, 27 (= SVF 2.125, 33) SVF 2.322.18. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. For the Stoic it goes without saying that the virtues are bodies; otherwise they could have no effect. Like all individuals they are parts of the cosmos; possession of virtue means participation in the active (divine) principle, see the following chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Sextus Empiricus, Hypotyposes Pyrrhoneae 2.81 (= Adversus Mathematicos 7.39):

    ἡ δὲ ἐπιστήμη πὼς ἔχον ἡγεμονικὸν ὥσπερ ἡ πὼς ἔχουσα χεὶρ πυγμή.

    ("scientific knowledge is 'the commanding faculty disposed in a certain way', just as a fist is the hand disposed in a certain way.") [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Diogenes Laertius 7.92 = SVF 3.65.8-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Cf. Diogenes Laërtius 7.161 (= SVF 1, 79, 15-17) on Aristo:

    ἀρετάς τ' οὔτε πολλὰς εἰσῆγεν, ὡς ὁ Ζήνων, οὔτε μίαν πολλοῖς ὀνόμασι καλουμένην, ὡς οἱ Μεγαρικοί, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ πρός τί πως ἔχειν.

    ("He would not admit a plurality of virtues with Zeno, nor again with the Megarians one single virtue called by many names; but he treated virtue in accordance with the category of relative modes.")

    Plutarch, De virtute morali 2 p. 440e-441a (=SVF 1.86.8-17):

    Ἀρίστων δ' ὁ Χῖος τῇ μὲν οὐσίᾳ μίαν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀρετὴν ἐποίει καὶ ὑγίειαν ὠνόμαζε· τῷ δὲ πρός τί πως διαφόρους καὶ πλείονας, ὡς εἴ τις ἐθέλοι τὴν ὅρασιν ἡμῶν λευκῶν μὲν ἀντιλαμβανομένην λευκοθέαν καλεῖν, μελάνων δὲ μελανοθέαν ἤ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον. καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἀρετὴ ποιητέα μὲν ἐπισκοποῦσα καὶ μὴ ποιητέα κέκληται φρόνησις, ἐπιθυμίαν δὲ κοσμοῦσα καὶ τὸ μέτριον καὶ τὸ εὔκαιρον ἐν ἡδοναῖς ὁρίζουσα σωφροσύνη, κοινωνήμασι δὲ καὶ συμβολαίοις ὁμιλοῦσα τοῖς πρὸς ἑτέρους δικαιοσύνη· καθάπερ τὸ μαχαίριον ἓν μέν ἐστιν ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλο διαιρεῖ, καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἐνεργεῖ περὶ ὕλας διαφόρους μιᾷ φύσει χρώμενον.

    ("Ariston of Chius also made virtue essentially one thing, which he called 'health'. It was by relativity that he made the virtues in a way different and plural, just as if someone wanted to call our vision 'white-seeing' when it apprehended white things, , 'black-seeing' when it apprehended black things, and so in other matters. For according to him, virtue, when it considers such things as we ought to do or not to do, is called prudence; when it moderates our desires, and prescribes the measure and season for our pleasures, temperance; and when it governs the commerce and mutual contracts of mankind, justice; — in the same manner, for instance, as a knife is one and the same knife still, notwithstanding sometimes it cuts one thing, sometimes another, and just as fire does operate upon different matter, and yet retain the very same nature.") [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. This is already tried in Plato's *Parmenides* 131a-c: the idea must be divisible if participation is to take place. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Cf. Epicteti Dissertationes 1.14.6:

    ἀλλ' αἱ ψυχαὶ μὲν οὕτως εἰσὶν ἐνδεδεμέναι καὶ συναφεῖς τῷ θεῷ ἅτε αὐτοῦ μόρια οὖσαι καὶ ἀποσπάσματα.

    ("But our souls are so bound up with God and joined together with Him, as being parts and fragments of His being.")

    Likewise 2.8.11:

    σὺ ἀπόσπασμα εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ· ἔχεις τι ἐν σεαυτῷ μέρος ἐκείνου. τί οὖν ἀγνοεῖς σου τὴν συγγένειαν; τί οὐκ οἶδας, πόθεν ἐλήλυθας;

    ("you are a fragment of God; you have within you a part of Him. Why, then, are you ignorant of your own kinship?")

    Seneca (*Epistula* 31.11) says about the "animus" (= πνεῦμα, spirit):

    "quid aliud voces hunc quam deum in corpore humano hospitantem?"

    ("What else could you call it than a god dwelling as a guest in a human body?")

    The same about reason (*Epistula* 66.12):

    "Ratio autem nihil aliud est quam in corpus humanum pars divini spiritus mersa."

    ("Reason, however, is nothing else than a portion of the divine spirit set in a human body.") [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. That is why in Aristotle the sphere of action of the first mover is limited to the fixed starry sky. See Moraux 33:

    "It is the Stoics who elaborated a doctrine of Providence, and not Aristotle; Aristotle does not attribute to the Supreme Thought any other object than itself; it was necessary that the Stoics put the problem in fashion so that one could try to elaborate, starting from elements borrowed from the Stagirite, Aristotelian doctrines of Providence. We write «doctrines» because commentators and doxographers could not agree. Some call Providence the action of the First Mover on the astral spheres inferior to it; this action does not extend to the sublunary world, which is only accidentally influenced by astral revolutions; the domain of Providence is thus limited to celestial beings: this is the position of the doxographers [Diels, *Doxographi Graeci*, pp 330. , 8 ff. (Aetius); 450, 16 (Arius Didymus) and 592, 11 ff. (Epiphanius)] and Diogenes [5.32] (διατείνειν δὲ αὐτοῦ [scilicet τοῦ θεοῦ] τὴν πρόνοιαν μέχρι τῶν οὐρανίων = "that his providence extended to the heavenly bodies"). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Plutarch, *De communibus notitiis* cp. 36 p. 1077d-e (= SVF II 312, 34-38):

    λέγει γοῦν Χρύσιππος ἐοικέναι τῷ μὲν ἀνθρώπῳ τὸν Δία καὶ τὸν κόσμον τῇ δὲ ψυχῇ τὴν πρόνοιαν· ὅταν οὖν ἡ ἐκπύρωσις γένηται, μόνον ἄφθαρτον ὄντα τὸν Δία τῶν θεῶν ἀναχωρεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν πρόνοιαν, εἶθ' ὁμοῦ γενομένους ἐπὶ μιᾶς τῆς τοῦ αἰθέρος οὐσίας διατελεῖν ἀμφοτέρους.

    ("Chrysippus says that Zeus and the world are like a man and providence like his soul, so that when the conflagration comes Zeus, being the only incorruptible one among the gods, withdraws into providence, whereupon both, having come together, continue to occupy the single substance of aether.")

    With this state of extreme concentration Seneca (*Epistulae morales* 9. 16) compares the state of the wise man alone with himself:

    "Qualis tamen futura est vita sapientis, si sine amicis relinquatur in custodiam conjectus vel in aliqua gente aliena destitutus vel in navigatione longa retentus aut in desertum litus ejectus?' Qualis est Jovis, cum resoluto mundo et dis in unum confusis paulisper cessante natura acquiescit sibi cogitationibus suis traditus. Tale quiddam sapiens facit: in se reconditur, secum est."

    ("But what sort of existence will the wise man have, if he be left friendless when thrown into prison, or when stranded in some foreign nation, or when delayed on a long voyage, or when out upon a lonely shore?" His life will be like that of Jupiter, who, amid the dissolution of the world, when the gods are confounded together and Nature rests for a space from her work, can retire into himself and give himself over to his own thoughts. In some such way as this the sage will act; he will retreat into himself, and live with himself.") [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Plutarch, De Fato, 11, p. 574e: κατὰ δὲ τὸν ἐναντίον [λόγον] μάλιστα μὲν καὶ πρῶτον εἶναι δόξειε τὸ μηδὲν ἀναιτίως γίγεσθαι, ἀλλὰ κατὰ προηγουμένας αἰτίας· δεύτερον δὲ τὸ φύσει διοικεῖσθαι τόνδε τὸν κόσμον, σύμπνουν καὶ συμπαθῆ αὐτὸν αὑτῷ ὄντα.

    ("But according to the contrary opinion, the first and principal conclusion seems to be, that there is nothing done without a cause, but that all things depend upon antecedent causes; the second, that the world is governed by Nature, and that it conspires, consents, and is compatible with itself.") [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Alexander, De Fato, 22, p. 72: ὅμοιόν τε εἶναί φασι καὶ ὁμοίως ἀδύνατον τὸ ἀναιτίως τῷ γίνεσθαί τι ἐκ μὴ ὄντος.

    ("They say that coming to be without a cause is similar and similarly impossible as coming to be out of nothing.") [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Simply κινῆσαν ("having moved") in *Metaphysica* 1024b7-8. 1027b15-16. 1044b11. 1045b22. 1059a38. 1071a28. 1075b1. *Analytica posteriora* 94a36-b8. *Physica* 198a19. 24. 33; 266b30. 267a3. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *De finibus* 5.7:

    … Aristoteles, quem, excepto Platone, haud scio an recte dixerim principem philosophorum.

    ("Aristotle, whom, next to Plato, I think I may fairly call the prince of philosophers.")

    *Tusculanae disputationes* 1.21:

    Aristoteles longe omnibus — Platonem semper excipio — praestans et ingenio et diligentia …

    ("Aristotle, a man superior to all others, both in genius and industry - I always except Plato.") [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Cf. Ph. Merlan: From Platonism to Neoplatonism (21960), pp. 219-220. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Stobaeus, Eclogae physicae I p. 36 Wachsmuth = Aetius I 7, 30 p. 304b Diels = Xenocrates, fr. 15 Heinze (p 164, 30-165, 3) = fr. 213, 1-6 Isnardi Parente:

    Ξενοκράτης Ἀγαθήνορος Καλχηδόνιος τὴν μονάδα καὶ τὴν δυάδα θεούς, τὴν μὲν ὡς ἄρρενα πατρὸς ἔχουσαν τάξιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βασιλεύουσαν, ἥντινα προσαγορεύει καὶ Ζῆνα καὶ περιττὸν καὶ νοῦν, ὅστις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πρῶτος θεός· τὴν δ' ὡς θήλειαν, μητρὸς θεῶν δίκην, τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν λήξεως ἡγουμένην, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ψυχὴ τοῦ παντός.

    ("Xenocrates, son of Agathenor, of Chalcedon, posited monad and dyad to be gods, the former, as masculine, having the rank of a father reigning in the heavens - he calls it also Zeus and odd and intellect, which is for him the first god; the latter, as feminine, in the way of mother of gods, governing the region under heaven - it is for him the soul of the universe.") [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. In Apuleius, *De Platone* I, 3, 187 (p. 91, 4-5 Moreschini) there is to be read: "naturalis a Pythagoreis [scilicet suscepta], rationalis atque moralis ex ipso Socratis fonte". Moreschini's distorting interpunction makes Plato adopt the logic from the Pythagoreans. In asserting that Plato took his physics from the Pythagoreans, Apuleius is evidently thinking of the *Timaeus*. Likewise Augustinus, *Contra Academicos*, III, 13, 37: Plato took from the Pythagoreans "naturalium divinarumque peritiam". [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Since it was not clear how an unmoved thinking could direct individual contingents towards good, the Platonists distinguished themselves from the Peripatetics in their doctrine of providence. (Opsomer 410b) [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Compare in 5. 2. 3, 7-8 ἀνέδραμε with εἰς in 6. 9. 9, 14. 6. 4. 15, 36; ἐκεῖ ἐνυπάρχοντα with 3. 7.4, 4; ἐνέλειπε with 6. 7. 10, 1; l. 2 ἐκεῖ πάντα with 3. 9.1, 9. A preceding ἐκεῖ is resumed. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Summa theologiae 1.12.1. corpus:

    "inest enim homini naturale desiderium cognoscendi causam, cum intuetur effectum; et ex hoc admiratio in hominibus consurgit. si igitur intellectus rationalis creaturae pertingere non possit ad primam causam rerum, remanebit inane desiderium naturae. unde simpliciter concedendum est quod beati dei essentiam videant."

    ("For there resides in every man a natural desire to know the cause of any effect which he sees; and thence arises wonder in men. But if the intellect of the rational creature could not reach so far as to the first cause of things, the natural desire would remain void. Hence it must be absolutely granted that the blessed see the essence of God.") [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The thesis that the *visio beatifica* is attainable in this life is one of the 1277 condemned theses (thesis 36, p. 133 Flasch):

    "Quod Deum in hac vita mortali possumus intelligere per essentiam."

    ("that in this mortal life we can recognize God in his being.") [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Suárez describes "prima philosophia" or "metaphysica," insofar it is based on the knowledge of God (*Disputationes metaphysicae* 1, 1), with reference to Aristotle (*Metaphysica* E, 1026a19), as "theologia," in contrast to the "theologia supernaturalis" (*Disputationes metaphysicae* I, 1,5, 5, 38). It is called "theologia naturalis" (I, 5, 5,18) because it gains its knowledge of God solely with the help of the "natural light" ("naturali lumine") (I, 5, 5, 19), reason. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Diogenes Laertius 7.101 (= SVF 3.23.3-4):

    δοκεῖ δὲ πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἴσα εἶναι καὶ πᾶν ἀγαθὸν ἐπ' ἄκρον εἶναι αἱρετὸν καὶ μήτ' ἄνεσιν μήτ' ἐπίτασιν ἐπιδέχεσθαι.

    ("They hold that all goods are equal and all good is desirable in the highest degree and admits of no lowering or heightening of intensity.") [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. To the question "What is God" is dedicated a medieval collection of apophthegmata entitled "Liber viginti quatuor philosophorum". [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. To 993b24-26 compare the parallels given in our volume 3, pp. 97-98. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Spinoza himself does not refer to any sources, but we can establish as a fact that his definition of God as "ens absolute infinitum" ("absolutely infinite being," *Ethica*, Definitio VI) corresponds with what the scholastics understood by *ens perfectum* and *ens infinitum*, cf. *Cogitata metaphysica* III:

    "nam eatenus ipsum infinitum esse dicimus, quatenus ad ejus essentiam sive summam perfectionem attendimus."

    ("for we call him [God] infinite in that we attend to his essence or supreme perfection.") [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. This does not appear anywhere in the *Corpus Aristotelicum*, but agrees with a report on the theology of Xenocrates (in Stobaeus I, p. 36, 6-12 = Diels, *Doxographi*, p. 304b, 1-10):

    Ξενοκράτης Ἀγαθήνορος Καλχηδόνιος τὴν μονάδα καὶ τὴν δυάδα θεούς, τὴν μὲν ὡς ἄρρενα πατρός ἔχουσαν τάξιν, ἐν οὐρανῷ βασιλεύουσαν, ἥντινα προσαγορεύει καὶ Ζῆνα καὶ περιττὸν καὶ νοῦν, ὅστις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πρῶτος θεός· τὴν δὲ ὡς θήλειαν μητρὸς θεῶν δίκην, τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν λήξεως ἡγουμένην, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ψυχὴ τοῦ παντός.

    ("Xenocrates, son of Agathenor, of Chalcedon, <holds> as gods the Monad and the Dyad, the former as male, having the role of Father, reigning in the heavens, which he terms 'Zeus' and 'odd' and 'intellect', which is for him the primary God; the latter as female, in the way of being mother of gods leading the realm under the firmament, which is for him the soul of the universe.") [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Duns Scotus distinguishes *passiones unitae* (unum, verum, bonum; ἀληθές and ἀγαθόν are mentioned together in *Metaphysica* E, 1027b25-27), co-extensive and convertible with being, and *passiones disjunctae*: *idem vel diversum, contingens vel necessarium, actus vel potentia*. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Already in Avicenna metaphysics falls into two (albeit unequal) halves: the doctrine of being as a fundamental concept (the first recognized) together with the concept of "thing" (res) and "thingness" (realitas) and the "first classification" (see the heading of chapter 5) of being into contingent and necessary existing (1. 5. 22). The terms unity and truth (1. 7 and 8) also belong to the concept of necessary existing. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Cf. 1. 4. 4: "in being either a cause or an effect, the existent does not need to be natural, mathematical, or some [similar] thing". Thomas Aquinas (Summa contra gentiles III, c. 107, n. 3) formulates: "Quidquid est in rebus oportet quod vel causa vel causatum sit." ("everything really existing must either be cause or caused.") [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. see e. g. Micraelius, column 337:

    "Cosmologia est pars physicae, tractans de mundo, tanqvam compage seu systemate ex caelo et terra, iisqve, qvae in illis continentur, concinnato."

    ("Cosmology is a part of physics; it is about the world as a building or system artfully composed [an explanation of the Greek word "cosmos"] of heaven and earth and all that is contained therein".) [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. He attributed it to his pupil Bilfinger, in whose *Dilucidationes philosophicae* of 1725, however, there occurs only (on p. 116) the phrase "systematis Leibnitiani vel Wolfiani". Wolff probably confused Bilfinger's book with the "Observationum eclecticarum ex controversiis de metaphysica Leibnitio-Wolfiana specimen IV praeside Iacobo Wilhelmo Feverlino" published in the same year. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. See my commentary, pp. 419-420. Kant had read Hume's *Philosophical Essays concerning Human Understanding* from 1748 in German translation, see my commentary, p. 421. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The expression comes from Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*, §. 423:

    "PHILOSOPHIA respective primum pro absolute primo habens philosophia PIGRORUM dicitur."

    ("A philosophy that considers the relatively first to be the absolute first is called the philosophy of the lazy.") Cf. my commentary, pp. 315-316 and 385. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. "Das dogmatische Philosophiren, das Leibnitz und Wolff eigen war, ist sehr fehlerhaft; und es ist darin so viel Täuschendes, daß es nöthig ist, dieses Verfahren zu suspendiren. Das andere Verfahren aber, das man einschlagen könnte, wäre Kritik, oder das Verfahren der Vernunft, zu untersuchen und zu beurtheilen. Locke hat den menschlichen Verstand zergliedert, und gezeigt, welche Kräfte zu dieser oder jener Erkenntniß gehören; er hat das Werk aber nicht vollendet." (*Metaphysik Pölitz*, pp. 15-16)

    ("Philosophizing dogmatically, characteristic of Leibnitz and Wolff, is very erroneous; and it contains so much deceptive that it is necessary to suspend this method. But the other method that could be used would be critique, or the method of reason to examine and judge. Locke has dissected the human mind, and showed what powers belong to this or that knowledge; but he did not complete the work.") [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. SVF 2. 306, 21-22: καὶ πνεῦμα μὲν διῆκον δι' ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου [supple: οἱ Στωικοὶ θεὸν ἀποφαίνονται].

    ("[The Stoics say that] God is the spirit that pervades the whole world.")

    Cf. ibidem, p. 137, 30; 145, 17; 154, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. cf. *Metaphysik*, p. 432: "But metaphysics, as long as it lingers with its non-temporal realities, has no yardstick at all for objects that have a value." [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. In the *Metaphysik* 1879, p. 180, he characterizes as realist the one who contents himself "with the mere recognition of an unconditional facticity" ("mit der bloßen Anerkennung einer unbedingten Thatsächlichkeit"); the idealist, on the other hand, has the "assurance" ("Zuversicht") that "the world does not merely be but has a meaning" ("daß die Welt nicht blos sei, sondern daß auch etwas mit ihr gemeint sei") (pp. 180-181). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. On this, see Hegel, Wie der gemeine Menschenverstand die Philosophie nehme, dargestellt an den Werken des Herrn Krug, in Kritisches Journal der Philosophie (1802), Ersten Bandes erstes Stück, pp. 91-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Cf. already Micraelius, columns 584-585:

    "ldeae Platonicae si ita a Platone definitae fuerunt, prout illas proponit et refutat Aristoteles 1. Eth. 6. et Met. 1.6.7. ut et 7. Met. 14. merito rejiciuntur, quia statuuntur naturae communes, a Deo et creaturis individuis realiter distinctae. Ideae Platonicae si in ipso Dei intellectu ponuntur, non sunt rejiciendae."

    ("If the Platonic Ideas were defined by Plato as Aristotle represents and disproves them in *Ethica Nicomachea* A 6, *Metaphysica* A 6-7 and Z 14, they are rightly rejected because they are supposed to be common natures that are really different from God and the individual creatures. If the Platonic Ideas are set in the mind of God himself, they are not to be rejected.") [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. "Könntet ihr einen Gott schaffen? – So schweigt mir doch von allen Göttern! Wohl aber könntet ihr den Übermenschen schaffen." (Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Zweiter Theil, Auf den glückseligen Inseln)

    ("Could ye create a God? - Then, I pray you, be silent about all gods! But ye could well create the Superman.") [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. This already occurs under the name "Verfallen" ("entanglement") in *Sein und Zeit*, see p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Author's note: for instance, Hegel, in the 16. lecture "über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes," remarks that in all religions and philosophies "God is absolute being". [↑](#footnote-ref-61)