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**Systems of Predication.
Aristotle's Categories in *Topics*, I, 9***

1. INTRODUCTION

In *Topics*, I, 4-5 Aristotle introduces and describes the so-called 'four predicables': definition (ὀρισμός), property (ἴδιον), genus (γένος) and accident (συμβεβηκός)¹. These notions single out the four basic ways in which a predicate can belong to a certain subject. As forms of predicative relations between terms, the predicables are not types of *predicate* as rather types of *predication*. They are relational items: no predicate is *a priori* or *simpliciter* a property or an accident, but only with reference to a certain subject². For example, 'biped' is a property of a human being but an accident of a dog who lost two paws. Further, inasmuch as Aristotle demonstrates, through induction (διὰ τῆς ἐπαγωγῆς) and deduction (διὰ συλλογισμοῦ), the completeness of the classification of the predicables in *Topics*, I, 8 (103b6-19), they constitute a 'system', i.e. a unitary, complete and organized set³. As a result, the four predicables form a

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¹ Aristotle does not have a common name for these four notions. He frequently uses either the word 'genera' (γένη) or phrases with no substantive, cf. BRUNSCHWIG, *Aristote. Topiques* cit., p. XLV n.1. There are clues to speculate that he could have used κατηγορία or κατηγορούμενα, cf. *infra*, pp. 5 and 10. 'Predicables' is a calque of the Latin word *praedicabilia* introduced in the Middle Ages, perhaps to distinguish these items from the ten 'categories' (*praedicamenta*).

² Cf. J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, Translated with an Introduction and Commentary, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2003, p. 65; M. MALINK, *Aristotle's Modal Syllogistic*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2013, p. 119.

³ Cf. BRUNSCHWIG, *Aristote. Topiques* cit., pp. XLVII-VIII; Id., *Sur le système des 'prédicables' dans les Topiques d'Aristote*, in *Energiea. Études Aristotéliciennes* offertes à Mgr. Antonio Jannone, Vrin, Paris 1986, pp. 145-157; BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction* cit., pp. 303-306; MALINK, *Aristotle's Modal Syllogistic* cit., pp. 115-117. More precisely, Aristotle proves that every proposition (πρότασις) or problem (πρόβλημα) expresses one of the predicative relations conveyed by the four predicables (a claim stated and left unproved at 101b17-25). However, despite Aristotle's demonstration in I, 8 and his mention of

system of predication. The theoretical issue tackled by Aristotle through this system is a relevant one and might be expressed by this question: which are *all* the possible types of predication one can make of an object? His answer, in this context, is the following: when a predicate P is (truly) predicated of a subject S, then P must be either a definition, or a genus, or a property or an accident of S.

In *Topics*, I, 9, according to the interpretation I attempt to support, Aristotle introduces another system of predication, consisting of ten items. He distinguishes this system from the predicables and explores their mutual relationship. These two systems, I maintain, cut across each other and their relationship is semantic in nature (§2). Further, this second list of kinds of predications (γέννη τῶν κατηγοριῶν) introduced in I, 9 is nearly identical with the list of items signified by the ‘things said without any combination’ (τὰ κατὰ μηδεμίαν συμπλοκὴν λεγόμενα) presented in Chapter 4 of the *Categories*⁴. It is widely agreed that these are the two most complete lists of ‘categories’ in the *Corpus Aristotelicum*. The only difference between them is their first member, which in the *Topics* is called ‘what it is’ (τί ἐστὶ), while in the *Categories* is ‘substance’ (οὐσία). Commentators have often identified these two lists and their first members. I argue, on the contrary, that the lists of *Topics*, I, 9 (henceforth T-categories) and *Categories*, 4 (C-categories)⁵ cannot be considered identical and that Aristotle not only separate them but also explains their connection (§3).

2. TWO SYSTEMS OF PREDICATION: A SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION

In the opening sentence of I, 9, Aristotle introduces ten γέννη τῶν κατηγοριῶν and connects them to the four predicables. Next, he lists these γέννη and makes clear the nature of this connection.

« Now, after these things, we have to determine the kinds of predications in which the four aforementioned <predications> are found. They are ten in number: what

‘four items’ throughout Book I (cf. e.g. 4, 101b16-25), the number of the predicables distinguished by Aristotle is not an uncontroversial question. As BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction* cit., pp. 30-31 remarks, there are reasons to maintain that Aristotle intended his fourfold scheme as a provisional one and there are passages suggesting a possible extension thereof, e.g. separating difference from genus (cf. IV, 6, 128a20-29). This might also explain why Aristotle’s followers, from Theophrastus to Porphyry, did not hesitate to reduce or increase the number of the predicables. Nonetheless, even though I do not take the word ‘system’ in too strong a sense and not exclude possible variations in Aristotle’s view, I think that, as far as Book I is concerned, there is little doubt that Aristotle has in mind a classification of exactly four predicative relations. More in detail, he explicitly includes difference under genus (cf. 4, 101b17-19). Cf. also M. MALINK, *Categories in Topics I.9*, « Rhizai », 4, 2007, pp. 271-294: p. 281.

⁴ Cf. *Cat.*, 4, 1b25-2a4 (trans. Ackrill).

⁵ I take from MALINK, *Categories* cit. the denominations T-categories and C-categories.

it is, of a certain quantity, of a certain quality, relative to something, somewhere, at some time, lying, having, acting, being affected. For the accident, the genus, the property and the definition are always in one of these predications. For all the propositions <formed> by means of them [viz. accident, genus, property and definition] signify either what it is, or of a certain quantity, of a certain quality or one of the other predications »⁶.

In what follows I first address the meaning of γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν and try to justify why I take the list at 103b22-23 as a second ‘system of predication’. Then, I argue for a semantic interpretation of the relationship between the four predicables and these ten kinds of predication.

Some interpreters have claimed that a κατηγορία is either a ‘predicate’ or a ‘predication’⁷. In I, 9 there are five occurrences of this term (103b20-21, 25, 26-27, 29, 38-39)⁸. Following Frede, I maintain that the most appropriate translation is ‘predication’ throughout the chapter, with the single exception of b29, where ‘predicate’ must be preferred⁹. I shall account for this exception below. Three chief reasons support the choice for ‘predication’ in all the other cases.

(1) The other six occurrences of this term in the *Topics* (107a3; 109b5; 141a4; 152a38; 178a5; 181b27) very likely have this meaning and at least three of them (109b5; 141a4; 181b27) must do so.

(2) In b21 we read the phrase αἱ ῥηθεῖσαι τέτταρες (‘the four aforementioned’). As Alexander of Aphrodisias already observed, this phrase is of course elliptical (‘the

⁶ 103b20-27 : μετὰ τοίνυν ταῦτα δεῖ ὀρίσασθαι τὰ γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν ἐν οἷς ὑπάρχουσιν αἱ ῥηθεῖσαι τέτταρες. ἔστι δὲ ταῦτα τὸν ἀριθμὸν δέκα, τί ἐστὶ, ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τι, ποῦ, ποτέ, κείσθαι, ἔχειν, ποιεῖν, πάσχειν. αἰεὶ γὰρ τὸ συμβεβηκὸς καὶ τὸ γένος καὶ τὸ ἴδιον καὶ ὁ ὀρισμὸς ἐν μιᾷ τούτων τῶν κατηγοριῶν ἔσται· πᾶσαι γὰρ αἱ διὰ τούτων προτάσεις ἢ τί ἐστὶ ἢ ποσόν ἢ ποιόν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τινὰ κατηγοριῶν σημαίνουσιν.

⁷ Cf., e.g., S. MANSION, *Notes sur la doctrine des catégories dans les Topiques*, in G. E. L. OWEN ed., *Aristotle on Dialectic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1968, p. 191 and T. EBERT, *Gattungen der Prädikate und Gattungen des Seienden bei Aristoteles: Zum Verhältnis von Cat. 4 und Top. I 9*, « Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie », 67, 1985, pp. 114-123 for ‘predicate’; M. FREDE, *Categories in Aristotle*, in Id., *Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1987, pp. 29-48 : pp. 32-36 and J. BARNES, *Aristotle’s Categories and Aristotle’s ‘categories’*, in Id., *Logical Matters. Essays in Ancient Philosophy II*, ed. by M. BONELLI, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2011, pp. 187-265 : p. 190, for ‘predication’.

⁸ Only in the first occurrence κατηγορία is preceded by τὰ γένη. Otherwise Aristotle simply uses τῶν κατηγοριῶν and dismisses the previous phrase, apparently referring to the same objects. Thus, τὰ γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν is equivalent to the simple κατηγορία. According to R. SMITH, *Aristotle : Topics. Books I-VIII with excerpts from related texts, Translated with a Commentary*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997, p. 74, similar equivalences occur also in *APr.* for ‘problems’ and ‘kinds of problems’, ‘causes’ and ‘kinds of causes’.

⁹ Cf. FREDE, *Categories* cit., pp. 33-35. My work is much indebted to Frede’s groundbreaking paper. However, in what follows I shall criticize some crucial points in his reading.

four aforementioned [something']¹⁰. Intuitively one would tend to say that Aristotle is referring to the four predicables described in I, 4-6 and whose exhaustivity is demonstrated in I, 8. This hypothesis is confirmed by the next sentence (b23-25), where συμβεβηκός, γένος, ἴδιον and ὀρισμός are explicitly recalled, and they unambiguously are 'the four aforementioned'¹¹. According to the grammar, though, the implicit noun should be κατηγορία¹². It means that *the same word* designates both the predicables and the ten categories introduced by Aristotle in the opening sentence and listed in the next one. However, as I already remarked, the predicables are not 'predicates', but 'predications'. This further proves that γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν should mean 'kinds of predications'.

(3) At b22-23 Aristotle lists the 'kinds of predications'¹³. Most commentators, since Alexander, have considered this list identical with another ten-items list which Aristotle provides in *Cat.*, 4, 1b25-2a4. These two lists consist exactly of the same members except for the first one: in the *Topics* the first member is 'what it is' (τί ἐστὶ), while in the *Categories* it is 'substance' (οὐσία). It has been usually assumed that these two phrases are synonyms¹⁴. However, leaving a closer examination of this assumption to §3, I now confine myself to claiming that the textual evidence of I, 9 does not warrant this identification. Indeed, as some recent studies have shown¹⁵, it rather suggests that τί ἐστὶ and οὐσία cannot be identical items. More generally, the τί ἐστὶ must be taken as a predication. A predicate P is a 'what it is'

¹⁰ Cf. ALEX. APHR., *In Top.*, 65, 13. I assume that the διαφοραὶ found after τέτταρες in some more recent mss. and in Boethius' translation, is a posterior interpolation. Alexander does not have this word in his text, and it is absent from the older mss., cf. G. COLLI, *Aristotele. Organon*, Einaudi, Torino 1955, p. 919. Alexander, though, in order to explain the phrase, claims that Aristotle has omitted διαφοραὶ τῶν προβλημάτων τε καὶ προτάσεως (*In Top.*, 65, 13-14). Hence, it is very likely that διαφοραὶ had been later introduced in the main text on the basis of Alexander's gloss.

¹¹ The γὰρ at b23 is exegetical. Both the subject and the object of both the predicates are exactly the same, i.e. the four predicables and the ten T-categories. So the two verbs point out the same kind of relation.

¹² Considering the terminological context of *Topics*, I, the implicit noun can be either πρότασις or κατηγορία. About the former, at b26, i.e. five lines after our phrase, this is the subject of a sentence which has a similar meaning with respect to the first one we are dealing with. However, the last occurrence of πρότασις, to whom the pronoun is supposed to refer, is at 103b4, i.e. 17 lines before. So, presumably, the implicit noun is not πρότασις but κατηγορία, mentioned in the same sentence few words before, though in a different case.

¹³ The plural neutral adjective ταῦτα at b22 must refer to the previous τὰ γένη.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. ALEX. APHR., *In Top.*, 65, 14-19; COLLI, *Aristotele. Organon* cit., p. 921; J. L. ACKRILL, *Aristotle: Categories and De Interpretatione*, Translated with Notes, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1963, p. 79; MANSION, *Notes sur la doctrine* cit., p. 198; C. KAHN, *Questions and Categories*, in H. Hiz ed., *Questions*, Reidel, Dordrecht 1978, pp. 227-278: p. 237; SMITH, *Aristotle. Topics* cit., p. 75.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. J. MALCOLM, *On the Generation and Corruption of the Categories*, «Review of Metaphysics», 33, 1981, pp. 662-681: pp. 664f.; FREDE, *Categories* cit., pp. 36-37; MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 273; BARNES, *Aristotle's Categories* cit., pp. 196-198.

when it expresses an essential attribute of a subject S, i.e. when it appropriately answers the question ‘what is S?’. As a result, a predicate P is not *a priori* a ‘what it is’, but rather with respect to a certain subject S.

These last remarks suggest the following conclusion. The word κατηγορία can certainly mean both ‘predicate’ and ‘predication’, but in *Topics*, I, 9 the latter should be preferred (in seven of its eight occurrences)¹⁶. Hence, in this chapter, another list of kinds of predication is introduced. Aristotle never explicitly comes up with a demonstration of its members, neither inductive nor deductive, like for the predicables in I, 8. Nonetheless, in I, 9, he presents these kinds saying that they are exactly ten in number (ἔστι δὲ ταῦτα τὸν ἀριθμὸν δέκα), i.e. suggesting that he is providing a complete and exhaustive set¹⁷. So I call also this second list a ‘system of predication’.

¹⁶ Pace MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 271 who is persuaded that the two translations do not need to be mutually exclusive. In this article, though, he does not explicitly provide any reasons to justify his opinion. The only pertinent argument I found is in MALINK, *Aristotle’s Modal Syllogistic* cit., p. 145 n. 20. Quoting Alexander, *In Top.*, 66, 7-10, Malink states that « a term belongs to a given T-category just in case every predication in which this term occurs as the predicate belongs to that T-category ». However, I still do not see Malink’s point. This reading seems to me still open to an objection already advanced by Frede, i.e. that a predication like ‘white is a colour’ is in the first category of predication (τί ἐστί), but ‘color’ as a predicate could not be in any other kind of predicate than ποῖόν.

¹⁷ The demonstration of the completeness and systematicity of the table of categories is a vexed question of Aristotelian scholarship. Aristotle does not give any strong proves of the exhaustiveness of his table, nor he declares whether he followed a criterion whatsoever to fill that out. I confine myself to speculating that the list descends from an *inductive* recollection and an accurate classification of all the things that can be asked or said about a given subject (cf. e.g. *SE*, 22, 178a4f.), likely fostered by a prolonged practice in dialectical discussions and definitory divisions within Plato’s Academy, where Aristotle was educated. Otherwise said, the categories were selected one by one and catalogued on the basis of empirical observations ; for similar readings cf. C. M. GILLESPIE, *The Aristotelian Categories*, « Classical Quarterly », 19, 1925, pp. 75-84 ; E. KAPP, *Greek Foundations of Traditional Logic*, Columbia University Press, New York 1942 ; ACKRILL, *Aristotle. Categories* cit. ; KAHN, *Questions* cit. ; FREDE, *Categories* cit. ; S. MENN, *Metaphysics, Dialectic and the Categories*, « Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale », 100, 1995, pp. 311-377 ; R. BODÉÛS, *Aristote. [Categories]*, introduction, texte, traduction et notes, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2001. Notice that (1) Aristotle refers to exact numbers even of other kinds of things, e.g. four causes or twelve virtues. In all these cases Aristotle does not give a strict justification of the number at issue, which is presumably established by means of induction, cf. C. NATALI, *Aristotele, Categoriae, 4. La lista delle categorie*, in M. BONELLI, F. MASI eds., *Studi sulle Categoriae di Aristotele*, Hakkert, Amsterdam 2011, pp. 89-94 : p. 90. Further, (2) in *An. Pr.*, B, 23, 68b13-4 Aristotle claims that every πίστις is reached either by syllogism or by induction (ἅπαντα γὰρ πιστεύομεν ἢ διὰ συλλογισμοῦ ἢ ἐξ ἐπαγωγῆς). The completeness of the table of categories is never demonstrated by syllogism, so it is likely reached by induction. As a matter of fact, (3) induction is one of the two proves to demonstrate the completeness of the list of the predicables in *Top.*, I, 8. So Aristotle regards induction at least as a proof worth to be mentioned. Moreover, besides *Top.*, I, 9 and *Cat.*, 4 Aristotle either composes shorter lists or avoids recalling all the items of the list, making use of abbreviations (cf. K. OEHLER, *Aristoteles. Kategorien*, Übersetzt und Erläutert, Akademie Verlag,

The aforementioned theoretical issue — which are *all* the possible types of predication one can make in relation to an object? — seems to be given a second answer: when a predicate P is (truly) predicated of a subject S, then P is either a ‘what it is’, or a ‘quantity’ or a ‘quality’ and so on.

So far, then, there are two actors in this scenario, two systems of predication, both designated by the label of κατηγορία:

(a) Predicables: συμβεβηκός, γένος, ἴδιον, ὀρισμός.

(b) T-categories: τί ἐστὶ, ποσόν, ποιόν etc.

Next task is to determine the nature of their relationship.

Aristotle expresses the relationship between T-categories and predicables by means of the phrase ἐν οἷς ὑπάρχουσιν, which I translated ‘are found in’¹⁸. I assume that here the verb ὑπάρχειν is used in a non-technical fashion, i.e. does not mean anything like ‘being predicated of’ (as synonym of κατηγορεῖσθαι κατὰ τινας), nor does it denote the belonging of a quality or an attribute to a given substrate (as synonym of τὸ ὑποκείμενον παθεῖν)¹⁹. At b24-25, in fact, an equivalence is established between (ἐν τινι) ὑπάρχειν and a ‘generic’ (ἐν τινι) εἶναι, ‘being in (something)’²⁰. So ὑπάρχειν is rather employed in its ordinary meaning of ‘belonging to’, ‘being found in’ or ‘being present in’²¹. Taking this for granted, we still need to know what is the philosophical sense of ‘being found’ here. Commentators do not usually provide satisfactory explanations about this point. How is a predicable found in one of the kinds of predications?

When we predicate a genus or a definition of a given subject, both designate, at different levels of generality, *what* a subject *is*, an essential attribute of a subject. So these are instances of τί ἐστὶ. By contrast, when we predicate one of the other two predicables, i.e. a property or an accident, these are instances of ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τί and so on, as long as both coincide with a non-essential attribute of a subject. This seems very likely to be how the predicables belong to or are found in the T-categories.

Berlin, 1984, pp. 289-292 for a complete comparative table of all the enumerations of categories in the *Corpus Aristotelicum*). How can one account for this numeric discrepancy? *Top.*, I, 9 and *Cat.*, 4 offer the most extended pattern of all the possible categories, albeit it should not mean that in every single case, the entire scheme is useful to the current inquiry. For example, the seventh and eighth categories (κεῖσθαι, ἔχειν) are useful if one takes a human being as object of questioning, while do not make sense if applied to other objects.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. SMITH, *Aristotle. Topics* cit., p. 8, MALCOLM, *On the Generation* cit., p. 663 and BARNES, *Aristotle's Categories* cit., p. 189 for this translation.

¹⁹ Cf. H. BONITZ, *Index Aristotelicus*, Reimer, Berlin 1870, p. 789a for these technical acceptations.

²⁰ Cf. *supra* p. 4 n. 11.

²¹ Cf. *LSJ s.v.* ὑπάρχειν.

But what is the nature of this belonging or presence? The term γένη would suggest membership in a kind, i.e. the belonging of a species to a genus. But a species falling under a genus cannot fall under other genera which are not in the same column of predicates. For example, 'man' is under 'animal', but cannot be also under 'color' unless accidentally. On the other hand, property and accident do so, since they would be species of ποσόν, ποιόν and so forth. Consequently, this is not the right type of relationship we are looking for. I do not think either, from a more general point of view, that any extensional interpretation of this relationship, or any interpretation explaining this belonging or presence as a *subordination*, can aspire to fit well these lines.

I propose the adoption of a *semantic* interpretation of this belonging. According to this option, a predicable is found in a category *as a constituent*. It means that every proposition formed through a predicable constitutes at the same time a predication according to one of the ten T-categories, and, consequently, *signifies* one of them, expressing one of the predicative relationships conveyed by them. This hypothesis is confirmed at b25-6²², where it is specified that the ὑπάρχειν/εἶναι ἐν-relationship consists in a relationship of signification linking every proposition built up by means of a predicable, to one of the T-categories. There does not exist, in other words, any proposition composed through one of the four predicables, which is not a proposition expressing one of the ten categories too. Further, this belonging is also *biunivocal* because as long as a proposition formed through a predicable signifies simultaneously one of the ten T-categories, the converse is likewise true, viz. every proposition built up through a T-category means at the same time one of the predicative relationships conveyed by one of the predicables. This 'biunivocity' is not explicit in our passage. Nonetheless, I think it is legitimate to infer it, for the simple reason that the opposite is false. We will not find any propositions expressing one of the ten predicative relationships of the T-categories, which does not express one of the four predicative relationships of the predicables too. After all, in *Top.*, I, and particularly in Chapters 4-12, the focus is on the predicables not on the categories. If this is not groundless, we can infer the following conclusion: in *Top.*, I, 8 is stated that every proposition or discourse (λόγοι) is formed through one of the predicables; in I, 9 Aristotle establishes also that every proposition formed through one of the predicables signifies at the same time one of the ten kinds of another system of predication. Therefore, each proposition signifies one of the ten T-categories²³.

²² « For all the propositions <formed> by means of them [viz. accident, genus, property and definition] signify either what it is, or of what quantity, or of what sort or one of the other predications ». I interpret the γάρ at b25 as expegetical.

²³ Cf. MALINK, *Categories* cit. p. 275.

Accordingly, we have two systems of predication cutting across each other, so that predications classified under the heads corresponding to the four predicables can also be classified under the heads specified in the list of the T-categories. That is presumably why Aristotle calls predicables and T-categories with the same term (κατηγορία), i.e. in order to remark this double track in predication. The clarification of this intersection seems to me the main purpose of Chapter 9.

3. T-CATEGORIES AND C-CATEGORIES

The list of ten kinds of predication occurring in *Topics*, I, 9, as I have already noted, counts almost the same members as that of ten items signified by the ‘things said without any combination’ in *Categories*, 4²⁴. The only variation in these two lists involves their first member. It has almost always proved tempting, at least since Alexander of Aphrodisias, to identify these lists, and take τί ἐστὶ and οὐσία as synonyms. These are the two most complete enumerations of the categories in the *Corpus Aristotelicum*. Thus, supposing that Aristotle had just one list of categories, it has been concluded that T-categories and C-categories correspond and represent Aristotle’s complete ‘table of categories’. Moreover, in the manifold classifications of categories we find throughout the *Corpus Aristotelicum*, there is a quite wide range of phrases or words aimed to designate the first of their items, viz. οὐσία, τί, τόδε, τόδε τι. So it has seemed reasonable to suppose either that all these phrases are synonyms, or, even though they do not have precisely the same meaning, they should at least have the same *denotatum*, of which they specify different aspects.

However, in *Topics*, I, 9 Aristotle states something significantly different. Reading the following passage in a non-biased way, it is hard to deny that ‘what it is’ and ‘substance’ cannot be the same:

« On the other hand, it is clear from the things themselves that someone who signifies the ‘what it is’, signifies either a substance, or a quantity or a quality, or one of the other predicates. For when a human is taken as an example and one says that the example is a man or an animal, one says what it is and signifies a substance. On the other hand, when a white color is taken as an example and one says that the example is white or a color, one says what it is and signifies of what sort. And likewise when a magnitude of a cubit is taken as an example and one says that the example is, one says what it is and signifies of what quantity. And likewise in the other cases »²⁵.

²⁴ Cf. *Cat.*, 4.1b25-2a4 (trans. Ackrill).

²⁵ 103b27-35 : δῆλον ἐξ αὐτῶν ὅτι τὸ τί ἐστὶ σημαίνειν ὅτε μὲν οὐσίαν σημαίνει, ὅτε δὲ ποσόν, ὅτε δὲ ποιόν, ὅτε δὲ τῶν ἄλλων τινὰ κατηγοριῶν. ὅταν μὲν γὰρ ἐκκειμένου ἀνθρώπου φῆ τὸ ἐκκείμενον ἀνθρώπον εἶναι ἢ ζῶον, τί ἐστὶ λέγει καὶ οὐσίαν σημαίνει. ὅταν δὲ χρώματος λευκοῦ ἐκκειμένου φῆ τὸ ἐκκείμενον

In what follows, I first argue for the distinction of the lists at b22-23 and b28-29. Then I reply to two possible objections against a part of my reading. Finally I provide an overall account of the relationship between predicables, T-categories and C-categories.

As I already remarked, the governing claim (b27-29) of the passage just mentioned, which is illustrated by three examples (b29-35), suggests that τί ἐστὶ and οὐσία cannot be identical items. The τί ἐστὶ is not restricted to substances and includes instances of οὐσία, ποσόν, ποιόν and so forth. Commentators endorsing the traditional interpretation cannot avoid to acknowledge that, as long as the identification of τί ἐστὶ and οὐσία is maintained, this identification can fit only two of the eight occurrences of τί ἐστὶ, i.e. the first two of b22 and 26, where τί ἐστὶ appears as the first item of the list of T-categories. Whereas in the other six occurrences it does not work. Otherwise said, one would have to argue that τί ἐστὶ is used equivocally, i.e. with different meanings, without any explicit clarifications by Aristotle.

The majority of those interpreters are confident of solving this putative ambiguity through a reference to *Metaph.*, Z, 4, 1030a17-31²⁶. In this passage, Aristotle declares that ‘what it is’ is said in an primary and absolute sense (πρώτος καὶ ἀπλῶς), of the substance, and in a secondary sense (πῶς, εἶτα) of the other categories²⁷. Thus, in b22 and 26, τί ἐστὶ is used in its specific acceptance of ‘substance’, while in the other six occurrences in a more generic sense of ‘essence’. Yet, since in *Topics*, I, 9 there is no mention whatsoever of this piece of doctrine, these interpreters should assume that Aristotle, in this chapter, took for granted that readers or listeners were conscious of this implicit reference to a different tenet, i.e. that the ‘what it is’ *par excellence* is the substance. This also implies that the two lists given at b22-23 (and 26-27) and 28-29 are one and the same list, namely the same presented in the *Categories*, though seen from different perspectives. Nonetheless, even if one wants to concede such a very unnatural reading of the text, this reference to *Metaph.*, Z, 4 is not legitimate, as Aristotle does not seem to have yet come up with that piece

λευκὸν εἶναι ἢ χρῶμα, τί ἐστὶ λέγει καὶ οὐσίαν σημαίνει. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐὰν πηχυσίου μεγέθους ἐκκειμένου φῆ τὸ ἐκκειμένον πηχυσίον εἶναι μέγεθος, τί ἐστὶ λέγει καὶ ποσὸν σημαίνει. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων. I take the phrase δῆλον ἐξ αὐτῶν as pointing to a transition to another argumentative segment: Aristotle’s focus is no more on the relationship between T-categories and predicables, but between T-categories and C-categories. So I give the δέ a slightly adversative value (‘on the other hand’).

²⁶ Cf. e.g. ALEX. APHR., *In Top.*, p. 65, 17-19; F. A. TRENDELENBURG, *Geschichte der Kategorienlehre*, Verlag von G. Bethge, Berlin 1846, p. 47 n. 1; MANSION, *Notes sur la doctrine* cit., p. 198; KAHN, *Questions* cit., p. 243.

²⁷ Cf. part. 1030a17-23: « [...] ‘what a thing is’ in one sense means substance and a ‘this’, in another one or other of the predicates, quantity, quality, and the like. For as ‘is’ is predicable of all things, not however in the same sense, but of one sort of thing primarily and of others in a secondary way, so too the ‘what’ belongs simply to substance, but in a limited sense to the other categories » (transl. Ross).

of doctrine whereby he distinguishes different senses of 'what it is'. This is a tenet which, as I shall remark below, Aristotle comes up with at the time of the redaction of the central books of the *Metaphysics*, which are beyond doubt later than *Topics*, I. Consequently, this cannot be a piece of doctrine that a reader or a listener could have presupposed. So the ambiguous use of τί ἐστὶ in I, 9 remains unexplained by commentators endorsing the traditional interpretation of this passage and results in being significantly puzzling for any reader.

There is an alternative way of interpreting the account of I, 9. This can make a perfect sense, though not the traditional one, even assuming that τί ἐστὶ is employed in its usual (originally Platonic) meaning ('what it is'), in all of the eight occurrences of I, 9 and throughout the treatise. So the occurrences at b22 and 26 are not exceptions to this trend and between τί ἐστὶ and οὐσία there is not a mere difference in name. As a result, in I, 9 we have *two different and irreducible lists* of categories, one corresponding to the ten kinds of predication listed at b22-23, the T-categories, and another, whose first item is οὐσία, placed under the first T-category, the τί ἐστὶ. As I said, I identify this second list with that of *Categories*, 4²⁸, so I call its members C-categories.

So we have now three actors in our scenario, all designated by the word κατηγορία :

- (a) Predicables : συμβεβηκός, γένος, ἴδιον, ὀρισμός.
- (b) T-categories : τί ἐστὶ, ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τι etc.
- (c) C-categories : οὐσία, ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τι etc.

Thus, every non-traditional interpretation is compelled to admit that κατηγορία is used ambiguously here, and has three *denotata*²⁹. C-categories, though, cannot be 'predications', like the four predicables and the ten T-categories, because their first member is οὐσία which is not a predication. The classification in *Cat.*, 4 is expressly presented as a classification of items signified by τὰ κατὰ μηδεμίαν συμπλοκὴν λεγόμενα. To be sure, this is presumably meant to imply a parallel classification of the 'things said without combination' themselves. Otherwise said, linguistic expressions and their referents (*denotata*) are corresponding fields³⁰. I take this

²⁸ This is also maintained, albeit without any argument, by MALCOLM, *On the Generation* cit., p. 665 and MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 271.

²⁹ Some interpreters, such as J. P. ANTON, *On the Meaning of Kategoria in Aristotle's Categories*, in A. PREUS, J. P. ANTON eds., *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy V*, SUNY Press, Albany 1992, pp. 1-18 : p. 6 claim that κατηγορία might be actually considered as a πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον, although there is no explicit textual ground to endorse plainly this conclusion.

³⁰ Cf. D. SEDLEY, *Aristotelian Relativities*, in M. CANTO-SPERBER, P. PELLEGRIN eds., *Le Style de la Pensée*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres 2002, pp. 324-352 : p. 333, who talks about predicates having both linguistic and metaphysical value. However, Sedley seems to assume that *Cat.*, 4 primarily and directly lists λεγόμενα and not items signified by λεγόμενα, which is a claim I'm not inclined to endorse. I thank the anonymous reader for saving me from a gross mistake at this point.

parallel list of linguistic expressions as a list of predicates, and I claim that this is recalled in *Top.*, I, 9, 103b28-29. Hence in *Topics*, I, 9 Aristotle presents two lists of predications and a list of predicates, clarifies that they should be kept separated, and explains their mutual connection.

I shall now make another point, that is actually rather speculative. Unlike T-categories, that Aristotle introduces *ex novo*, as the first lines of our passage suggest³¹, C-categories look as a 'ready-made' list which Aristotle does not need to present as something new and assumes as known. Now, it has been argued that a careful comparison between the *Categories* and the *Topics* suggests that the former was written before the latter and provided its general preliminary conceptual basis³². In other words the *Topics* assumes as known several essential concepts of the *Categories* and build upon them. Examples thereof are the accounts of the opposites, of the homonymies and synonyms, of the difference. If this presupposition is conceded, one might raise the following hypothesis about the relationship between T-categories and C-categories. According to this hypothesis we have three steps.

(1) Aristotle sets forth the C-categories in the *Categories*.

(2) Next, when he comes to tackle the problem of the possible kinds of predication which can be made about an object, in the *Topics*, Aristotle exploits the pattern of notions put forward in the list of *Cat.*, 4 to fill out another list of kinds of predications, the T-categories. When he sets forth this second list, in *Top.*, I, 9, he explains its relationship both with another system of predication, the predicables, and with the C-categories which the T-categories derive from. In this sense, T-categories are an *application* of C-categories to the logical field of propositions³³. So Aristotle runs two different lists that, according to some interpreters, are two parallel and independent devices exploited autonomously by Aristotle throughout his works, on the base of the type of object he examines³⁴.

(3) In the *Metaphysics*, as Frede has argued, these two lists overlap through a restriction of the first T-category, the 'what it is', to the first C-category, 'substance'. This is one of the most considerable outcomes of a new piece of doctrine elaborated by Aristotle at the time of the redaction of the central books of the *Metaphysics*, that of the relationship $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$: the truth of statements about non-substantial items grounds on truth about substances.

³¹ Cf., in particular, two textual clues : the verb 'determine' ($\acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\alpha\theta\alpha\iota$) and the specification of the number of items.

³² Cf. I. HUSIK, *On the Categories of Aristotle*, « The Philosophical Review », 13, 1904, pp. 514-528. However, Husik identifies T-categories and C-categories.

³³ Cf. TRENDELENBURG, *Geschichte* cit., pp. 164-165. Cf. *contra* KAHN, *Questions* cit., p. 242-243 for the claim that in the *Topics* we find the earliest version of the doctrine of categories.

³⁴ Cf. MALCOLM, *On the Generation* cit., pp. 669-671.

Before I move on to explain the connection between the three lists, I should address two objections raised by Frede against the possible identification of the list provided at 103b28-29 with that of *Categories*, 4, or rather, against the claim that in Aristotle's logical works, as well as in all the other writings earlier than the central books of the *Metaphysics*, it actually occurs a list of 'categories' whose first member is οὐσία.

(a) According to Frede, in the *Topics*, as much as in the *Organon* in general, no category of 'substance' exists. A category of οὐσία appears only in Aristotle's later writings, especially in the *Metaphysics*, as a restriction of the first T-category of τί ἐστὶ to substances. Frede takes this restriction, as I said, as one of the most considerable outcomes of the doctrine of the relationship πρὸς ἕν³⁵. In I, 9, therefore, οὐσία is not one of τῶν ἄλλων κατηγοριῶν mentioned right after (b28-29), but it refers just to a given *object*. It is ποσόν, ποιόν and the other implicit items (with reference to b22-23) which are kinds of predicates, not οὐσία. It follows that, if one indicates the first T-category, she may indicate, on the one hand an οὐσία, which is not a kind of predicate; on the other hand, one of the other kinds of predicates. Hence if οὐσία should not be conceived as a category, the enumeration of items at b28-29 is not effectively a list of 'categories' starting with 'substance'. But if in the *Topics* there is no category of 'substance', and in *Categories*, 4 οὐσία is certainly one of the items signified by one 'things said without any combination', which are usually taken as the '*Categories*' categories', it means that the list of *Topics*, I, 9, 103b28-29 and that of *Categories*, 4 cannot overlap.

To this objection I reply that in *Top.*, IV, 1, 120b36-121a9 Aristotle explicitly mentions again οὐσία, ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τι and, by a usual abbreviate form (ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων), all the other members of the list given at I, 9, 103b28-29, under the heading of 'divisions' (διαίρεσεις)³⁶. The context of the passage strongly suggests that this label means kind of predicate (not predication), i.e. refers to τῶν ἄλλων τινὰ κατηγοριῶν of 103b29. For Aristotle says that a genus and a species should belong to the same 'division' (καθόλου δ' εἶπειν ὑπὸ τὴν αὐτὴν διαίρεσιν δεῖ τὸ γένος τῷ εἶδει εἶναι), i.e. two predicates with different extension, one subordinated to another in the same column of predicates, should fall under the same kind of predicate. There is no doubt that οὐσία is actually one of these διαίρεσεις and I do not see any good reason to interpret this passage separating οὐσία from the other 'divisions'. This passage is never quoted or recalled by Frede. So in the *Topics* there is a passage in which the separation that he proposes does not work.

³⁵ Cf. FREDE, *Categories* cit., pp. 39-46.

³⁶ « Moreover, see whether the genus and the species are not found in the same division, but the one is a substance while the other is a quality, or the one is a relative while the other is a quality (ἔτι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ διαίρεσει τὸ γένος καὶ τὸ εἶδος, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν οὐσία τὸ δὲ ποιόν, ἢ τὸ μὲν πρὸς τι τὸ δὲ ποιόν) » (transl. Pickard-Cambridge).

(b) The second objection is that we cannot rely on the *Categories* in order to find a satisfactory meaning of κατηγορία, or better, that the *Categories* is not about categories. Thus the list of items signified by the ‘things said without any combination’ in *Cat.*, 4 should not be considered as a list of ‘categories’. He gives basically two main reasons to draw this rather striking conclusion: (i) in this treatise, there are several philological issues about title and textual unity which would not license certainty about its actual content³⁷; (ii) more specifically the treatise does not say anything clear from whom we can infer that it examines categories, nor uses the word κατηγορία unless twice (8.10b19, 21) and in insignificant contexts³⁸. The latter reason, in my opinion, is questionable. First of all it is false that κατηγορία is used just twice in the *Categories*. There are four occurrences: 5, 3a35; 5, 3a37; 8, 10b19; 8, 10b21. Now, in the former two the term is used in a non-technical fashion and has very likely the meaning ‘predicate’. Secondly, I do not see any good reason to consider the use of κατηγορία in *Cat.*, 8, 10b19, 21 as aspecific or not pertinent. This assumption is unwarranted and the scholars endorsing it do not offer any clear reason to hold it³⁹. In this passage Aristotle uses the word κατηγορία (10b19: τὰς ἄλλας κατηγορίας; b21: τῶν ἄλλων κατηγοριῶν) with regard to items like ποσόν, ποιόν, πρὸς τι, πού which unambiguously are the items signified by the ‘things said without any combination’ given in *Categories*, 4 — and the phrase τι τῶν τοιούτων (10b23) clearly alludes to the full list. And, as is known, the items signified by the ‘things said without any combination’ are the subject of the survey carried out at least in *Cat.*, 4-9. Therefore, we actually do have textual evidence to claim that at least the section called *Praedicamenta*, viz. *Cat.*, 4-9, of the *Categories*, whatever their real title might be, are about ‘categories’, whatever sense this word might have in this context⁴⁰. And it does not seem too challenging to find an explanation for the two different uses in chapters five and eight: κατηγορία might well mean both items placed in a column of predicates, and at once the headings of these columns.

Moreover, although Frede holds that the *Categories* do not provide any answer to the question about the nature of categories⁴¹, at the same time, a few pages after this statement, he accepts that one of the uses of the term κατηγορία, as well as ‘kind of predication’ and ‘kind of predicate’, is « the ultimate genera of what

³⁷ Cf. M. FREDE, *The Title, Unity, and Authenticity of the Aristotelian Categories*, in *Id.*, *Essays* cit., pp. 11-28 : pp. 24-28; BODÉUS, *Aristote. [Categories]*, pp. xc-cx; but see also the fresh attempt to reorganize the traditional textual architecture of the treatise in C. NATALI, *Struttura e organizzazione del trattato aristotelico detto Categoriae*, in BONELLI, MASI eds., *Studi sulle Categoriae di Aristotele* cit., pp. 17-30 : pp. 27-28.

³⁸ Cf. FREDE, *The Title, Unity, and Authenticity*, cit., p. 16; FREDE, *Categories* cit., pp. 30-31.

³⁹ Cf. FREDE, *Categories* cit., p. 31; BARNES, *Aristotle's Categories* cit., p. 196.

⁴⁰ This allows to reply also to (i).

⁴¹ Cf. FREDE, *Categories* cit., pp. 30-31.

there is as they are distinguished, e.g., in the treatise *Categories* »⁴². Hence, even for Frede, there seems to be a meaning of *κατηγορία* conveyed by the *Categories*, and Frede believed it is that of *γέννη τοῦ ὄντος*, i.e. kinds of being (non-linguistic terms), albeit this, as a matter of fact, is far from obvious. It might well be the case that the old formula proposed by the Aristotelian commentators in Late Antiquity, of categories as « simple significant vocalizations, insofar as they signify things » (*περὶ φωνῶν σημαντικῶν ἀπλῶν καθὸ σημαντικαί εἰσι τῶν πραγμάτων*) still has some explanatory efficacy, and some notable interpreters still accept that⁴³. I must acknowledge, however, that with the last remarks I have not yet replied to all the objections formulated by Frede, but I hope they at least have some value in suggesting a revision of some relevant aspects of his interpretation.

I have argued that in I, 9 Aristotle deals with three lists: the four predicables (predications), the T-categories (predications), and the C-categories (predicates). I shall now provide an overall account of their connection, which is expressed through two verbs: 'signifying' (*σημαίνειν*) and 'saying' (*λέγειν*). Let us first explain the meaning of these verbs and then how they work in connecting the three lists.

The verb 'saying' (*λέγειν*), in three of its four occurrences follows the phrase 'what it is'. Aristotle shows the meaning of 'saying what it is' (*τί ἐστὶ λέγειν*) through three examples, then expresses it with an abstract formula at b36-37. The three examples are equivalent, so I shall recall just one of them: taking a man as example, a person saying (*ὅταν ... φῆ*) (through a proposition) that this is a man or an animal, actually says what it is (b30-31). Outside the example, and according to the abstract formula: a person says what a certain item is, when, in the proposition she states, (a) the same thing is said of itself (*αὐτὸ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγεται*) or (b) its genus is said of it (*τὸ γένος περὶ τούτου*)⁴⁴. What kinds of predication are (a) and (b)? (a) is a definition. Strictly speaking, it is a self-predication. As Alexander already noticed, and modern scholars confirm, a self-predication might be considered as a particular type of definition⁴⁵. (b) is undoubtedly a predication of genus. Hence (a) and (b) refer to predications according to two of the four

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴³ Cf. PORPH., *In Cat.*, p. 58, 4-7 Bodeüs; SIMPL., *In Cat.*, p. 11, 23-29 Kalbfleisch; MENN, *Metaphysics, Dialectic and the Categories* cit., p. 321.

⁴⁴ Cf. 103b36-7: « for <with regard to> each of such things, both if it is said of itself and if the genus is said of this, it signifies what it is (*ἕκαστον γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων, ἐάν τε αὐτὸ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγεται ἐάν τε τὸ γένος περὶ τούτου, τί ἐστὶ σημαίνει*) ». I understand *αὐτό* at b36 as not referring to *ἕκαστον τῶν τοιούτων*. Further, as the examples show, the term *αὐτό* might refer either to a substantial or to a non-substantial term (*ἄνθρωπος*; *λευκόν*; *πνεῦμα*): when there occurs an essential predication, in any of the C-categories, a *τί ἐστὶ*-predication will be formed, i.e. a predication according to the first T-category.

⁴⁵ Cf. ALEX. APHR., *In Top.*, p. 67, 8-11; MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 280 and *Id.*, *Aristotle's Modal Syllogistic* cit., pp. 139-140.

predicables and ‘saying what it is’ means making a predication according to the definition or the genus. On the other hand, a person does not say *what* a certain item *is*, when, in the proposition she states, the same thing is said of another (περὶ ἑτέρου λέγειν)⁴⁶. In this case (non-essential predication), we shall have a predication according to one of the non-τί ἐστὶ T-categories. But such a predication can be made only when a proposition is formed out of an accident (συμβεβηκός) or a property (ἴδιον), which are the only two predicables not signifying an essential feature of a given subject.

The verb σημαίνειν occurs eight times in I, 9 always tied to items belonging to one of the two lists of categories⁴⁷. Two questions might be asked about this verb: (a) What does ‘signifying’ mean? I am persuaded by Malink’s opinion, according to which, when Aristotle uses this verb in relation to his theory of categories, it always refers to the *belonging* of an item to one of the categories⁴⁸. So ‘signifying’ a ‘predication’ means uttering a proposition which conveys one of the predicative relationships listed at b22-23; ‘signifying a ‘predicate’ means uttering a proposition whose predicate (e.g. b32-33) belongs to one of the kinds of predicate listed at b28-29. (b) *Who/What* signifies? There are four different subjects linked to σημαίνειν: (i) προτάσεις (b25) for the occurrence at b27; (ii) the masculine subject expressed by the substantive participle ὁ σημαίνων (b27) for the occurrences of b28; (iii) the implicit subject of the three occurrences of φῆ, which is likely an indefinite masculine pronoun⁴⁹ and is also the implicit subject of the three occurrences of σημαίνει at b31, 33, 35; (iv) the indefinite pronoun ἕκαστον (followed by the demonstrative plural pronoun τῶν τοιοῦτων) for the occurrences of b37 and b38. I consider the first subject and the first occurrence of σημαίνειν as the governing one. Aristotle, as we have already seen, states that it is a πρότασις — every πρότασις formed out from the four predicables — that *signifies*, i.e. indicates or express, one of the ten categories. The predicative relationship conveyed by one of the ten kinds of predications is expressed by a *proposition* constituted through one of the predicables. This is how the two systems of predication cut across each other, and this seems to me the main claim of this chapter 9. In b28 the participle ὁ σημαίνων is presumably a *person* who signifies⁵⁰. But very likely, a speaker signifies something *through a proposition* — otherwise it would not make any sense to state that a person belongs to one of the categories.

⁴⁶ The structure of the sentence at b37-39 is exactly the same as that of that at b35-37, which I have already quoted. Therefore two implicit words should be found in the first part of the sentence: ὅταν δὲ [αὐτὸ] περὶ ἑτέρου [λέγῃται].

⁴⁷ 103b27, twice in 28, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38.

⁴⁸ Cf. MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 227.

⁴⁹ Cf. Brunschwig’s translation: « quand... on dit ».

⁵⁰ Cf. KAHN, *Questions* cit., p. 270; MALCOLM, *On the Generation and Corruption* cit., p. 663; FREDE, *Categories* cit., p. 12; MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 272.

Thus, the actual subject of the signification throughout the passage, at least until 103b35 is a proposition : πρότασις is *what* actually σημαίνει ; a person σημαίνει only inasmuch as she utters a πρότασις⁵¹. This leads me to believe that the last subject of σημαίνει, ἕκαστον τῶν τοιούτων, does not interrupt this trend⁵². I am not saying that the implicit noun which the pronoun refers to is πρότασις, that is grammatically incorrect, πρότασις being a feminine noun. But it is plausible that the neutral pronoun ἕκαστον refers generically to the three cases examined⁵³ and we would not need necessarily a feminine pronoun ἕκαστη referring to κατηγορία.

These last remarks suggest the following conclusion about the connection between predicables, T-categories and C-categories.

(1) Essential predication

[Predicables-level] ‘Definition’ and ‘genus’ i.e. *saying* what a certain item is.

[T-categories-level] ‘What it is’, i.e. *signifying* what a certain item is.

[C-categories-level] Any of the C-categories, i.e. *signifying* ‘substance’, ‘quality’ and so on.

(2) Non-essential predication

[Predicables-level] ‘Accident’ and ‘property’, i.e. *not saying* what a certain item is.

[T-categories-level] Any of the other nine T-categories besides the first.

[C-categories-level] Any of the other nine C-categories besides the first⁵⁴.

4. CONCLUSION

Let me sum up what seems to me the chief philosophical claim that emerges from this survey. In the context of the description of the four predicables, Aristotle decides to devote a chapter of *Topics*, I to the comparison between this system

⁵¹ A similar ambiguous case is at *Soph.*, 262a9-e3. F. ADEMOLLO, *Names, Verbs, and Sentences in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, in M. CAMERON, R. J. STANTON eds., *Linguistic content. New Essays on the History of Philosophy of Language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2015, p. 43 n. 29 maintains that in this case there is an intended equivalence between the claim that with names a speaker names things and the claim that names name things. One might make the same point about these lines of *Topics*, I, 9. I do not exclude that this might be the case, but I do not think that this would jeopardize my point. If a speaker is able to name things only ‘with names’ it means that it is *because of names* that she is able to name. Similarly, it is *because of a proposition* that a person is able to *signify*.

⁵² Pace MALINK, *Categories* cit., p. 276.

⁵³ I do not think that ἕκαστον refers to the *predicates* of the previous examples, because a predicate, alone, cannot signify a ‘what it is’, that is a predication.

⁵⁴ Accordingly, in the case of a non-essential predication T-categories and C-categories coincide : for instance, a *predication* according to quality can be made only if the *predicate* that we use belongs to the kind of predicate of quality.

of predication, and another (T-categories), of whom Aristotle offers a complete list comprising ten items. I attempted to offer a fresh account of the relationship between these two systems of predication. I have maintained that these systems cut across each other and all the predications might be classified under the headings of one system or another. Thus, their relationship might be defined *semantic* (and *biunivocal*). Every proposition formed out of the four predicables signifies, i.e. expresses, at once the predicative relationship conveyed through one of the categories. The converse is likewise true. By means of an ὀρισμός or a γένος, one (through a proposition) signifies the first kind of predication, the 'what it is'. By means of a συμβεβηκός or an ἴδιον, one signifies (through a proposition) one of the other T-categories.

Furthermore, Aristotle clarifies the connection between these two systems of predication and the list of predicates implied at *Cat.*, 4 and recalled in *Top.*, I, 9. When one makes a predication according to the 'definition' or the 'genus', she signifies the first T-categories and, in turn, any of the C-categories. Whereas, when one makes a predication according to the 'accident' or the 'property', she signifies any of the other nine T-categories besides the first and, in turn, any of the other nine C-categories besides the first.

What is the ultimate point of the introduction of these lists? Categories (of both lists) are basically a classificatory and heuristic device. During his twenty-year-research and discussions on predication in Plato's Academy, Aristotle found out this extremely powerful dialectical tool, that he used to dissipate conceptual ambiguities and discover or bring out logical linguistic fallacies. It is a centrifuge carefully separating different elements which ordinary communicative praxis or sophisticated tricks coagulate in equivocal single phrases. As a matter of historical fact, this might be considered as the most notable outcome of an Academic widely shared interest for linguistic ambiguities. In this sense its main philosophical role is to reveal and neatly articulate multivocity according to a certain pattern.

ABSTRACT

Systems of Predication. Aristotle's Categories in Topics, I, 9

In this paper I investigate Aristotle's account of predication in *Topics*, I, 9. I argue for the following interpretation. In this chapter Aristotle (i) presents two systems of *predication* cutting across each other, the system of the so-called four 'predicables' and of the ten 'categories', in order to distinguish them and explore their mutual relationship. I propose a *semantic* interpretation of the relationship between them. According to this reading, every proposition formed through a predicable constitutes at the same time a predication according to one of the ten categories, and, consequently, *signifies* one of them, expressing one of the predicative relationship conveyed by them. Further, Aristotle (ii) explains the predicative connection between these two systems and the ten items signified by the 'things said without any combination' enumerated in Chapter 4 of the *Categories*, whose list is almost identical with that of categories in *Top.*, I, 9, with the only exception of their first members.

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SISMEL-EDIZIONI DEL GALILEO