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## Aristotle's *Categories*. Annotated bibliography of the studies in English: Kwa - Ras

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## Bibliography

1. Kwan, Tze-Wan. 2008. "The Doctrine of Categories and the Topology of Concern." In *The Logic of the Living Present (Analecta Husserliana, Vol. 46)*, edited by Tymieniecka, Anna-Teresa, 243-301. Dordrecht: Kluwer.  
 "Introduction. There is little doubt that the problem of categories has been among one of the most frequently discussed topics in philosophy ever since Aristotle. Important as it was, the problem of categories has however become in the eyes of today's students of philosophy an old-fashioned or even out-dated problem. If philosophy itself is for most people a marginal discipline of little practical value, then the problem of categories would turn out to be the most abstract and most detached issue of all. But is the problem of categories really that abstract? Compared with more sensuous problems such as "Life and Death", "Freedom" or "Justice", the problem of categories gives us the impression of being a matter of theoretical technicality that is of mere scholastic interest. However, we will see bit by bit in the following, that the problem of categories has in the last analysis a strong relevance to the basic concerns of philosophy as well as to the very world perspective of man.  
 We will also show that as man's basic concerns vary from culture to culture and from one age to another, the respective systems of categories will take up an utterly different structural outlook." (p. 243)  
 (...)
 "To sum up Benveniste's observation of the ten categories, we can end up with the following table:  
 Οὐσία [τί ἐστι] Substantive  
 Ποσόν Adjective (quantitative)  
 Ποιόν Adjective (qualitative)  
 Πρὸς τι Adjective (comparative)  
 Ποῦ Adverb of place  
 Πότε Adverb of time  
 Κεῖσθαι Verb - middle voice  
 Ἐχειν Verb - perfect  
 Ποιεῖν Verb - active voice  
 Πάσχειν Verb - passive voice" (p. 260)
2. Labuda, Pavol. 2019. "The Ontological Status of Human Speech in Aristotle's 'Categories'." *Filosoficky Casopis* no. 67:877-894.  
 Abstract: "The subject of this paper is the issue of human speech in Aristotle, especially in his work Categories. Its primary goal is to elaborate an interpretation of Aristotle's statements about human speech as a quantity (Cat. 4b20–b39, 5a15–b2) that would allow them to fit reasonably into the whole of Aristotle's theory of language. The structure of the paper is as follows. In the first part a certain approach to the question of the reconstruction of Aristotle's theory of language is proposed. The second part, by means of the introduction of the criteria of separability and ontological priority of the first substance, creates a framework for the subsequent analysis of the two basic classifications, which constitute the main theme of Categories. The third part supplies its own interpretation of the ontological status of human speech in the context of the classification schemes in Categories, and this, in the fourth part, is inserted into the greater whole of Aristotle's theory of language."
3. Lang, Helen. 2004. "Aristotle's Categories 'Where' and 'When'." In *Categories: Historical and Systematic Essays*, edited by Gorman, Michael and Sanford, Jonathan J., 21-32. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.  
 "The word 'category' itself comes from the verb κατηγορέω, meaning 'to denounce,' 'to accuse,' or, as we shall see in Aristotle, 'to be predicated.' In his

entry "Categories" in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Manley Thompson turns first to "Aristotelian Theory" and asserts:

The word "category" was first used as a technical term in philosophy by Aristotle. In his short treatise called *Categories*, he held that every uncombined expression signifies (denotes, refers to) one or more things falling in at least one of the following ten classes: substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, posture, state, action, and passion.<sup>(1)</sup>

This list of categories is almost always attributed to Aristotle. But in fact it does not reflect Aristotle's language either in the *Categories*, which Thompson cites, or in the rest of the corpus. With the exception of the first category, substance, none of Aristotle's categories is a noun;<sup>(2)</sup> they are adjectives, adverbs, infinitives, and in one case ("relation") a prepositional phrase, made to stand as substantives. Although classical Greek certainly allows for the formation of substantives by means of a definite article, Aristotle does not always use an article when specifying categories, and even when he does, these expressions seem odd. Indeed, they are part of the reason why Aristotle's Greek is often thought of as Hellenistic rather than "classical," strictly speaking.

The question for a philosopher is not translation per se but what is at stake substantively in this apparently linguistic matter. Here I shall consider two of Aristotle's categories. They appear above as "place" and "time," but I shall argue that they are more properly "where" and "when"—indefinite adverbs that are sometimes best translated as "somewhere" and "sometime." I shall conclude that the translations "place" and "time" obscure important substantive issues at stake in these categories. These issues appear clearly in both the historical origins of these categories in Plato and in the relation of these categories to Aristotle's physics." (pp. 21-22)

1. Manley Thompson, "Categories," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 2:46–47.

2. A good deal of work has been done on the etymology of Aristotle's word οὐσία. For example, see the excellent discussion in Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics*, 3d ed. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 137–54.

4. Leszl, Walter. 1970. *Logic and Metaphysics in Aristotle (Aristotle's Treatment of Types of Equivocity and Its Relevance to His Metaphysical Theories)*. Padova: Antenore.

Contents: Preface 1; Introduction 7; Part I. Aristotle on Meaning and What Is Meant 23; Chapter I. The meaning of words 25; Chapter II. The unity of the components of definition 50; Chapter III. The structure of reality 60; Part II. Homonymy, Synonymy and Related Concepts 81; Chapter I. Aristotle's classification of the uses of predicate words and expressions and of sentences 83; Chapter II. Generalities on focal meaning and on analogy 114; Part III. Some Interpreters Treatment of Focal Meaning and Analogy 133; Chapter I. The prevailing accounts of focal meaning and of analogy and of Aristotle's employment of them in the context of his metaphysics 135; Chapter II. The synonymy account of focal meaning as applied to the being of the categories 162; Chapter III. The synonymy account of focal meaning as applied to the model-copy situation 182; Part IV. Close Analysis of the Logical Mechanism of Focal Meaning and of Analogy According to the Various Competing Accounts 203; Chapter I. Criticism of the synonymy account of focal meaning as applied to the being of the categories 205; Chapter II. Criticism of the synonymy account of focal meaning as applied to the model-copy situation 252; Chapter III. Introduction of some logical distinctions concerning relations and related terms and of some other accounts of focal meaning 285; Chapter IV. The homonymy account of focal meaning and of analogy 303; Part V. Evidence for and Against each of the Competing Accounts of Focal Meaning and of Analogy 327; Chapter I. Examination of the evidence concerning Aristotle's alleged changes in his treatment of words with focal meaning and with analogy 329; Chapter II. Interpretation of the evidence concerning analogy 373; Chapter III. Interpretation of the evidence concerning focal

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"The generality of the main title of the present work may be misleading as to its actual scope, which is more appropriately defined by its subtitle. It is an inquiry into Aristotle's treatment of *ὁμωνυμία* and of its species, considered in the background of his metaphysical theories, which both condition and are conditioned by that logical treatment. It is the prevalence of an interest in these two-way conditionings which is expressed by the main title.

In spite of misgivings, then, I have preserved it on this ground, and also because the work is meant to be a part of a more comprehensive treatment of logic and metaphysics in Aristotle, which should include a detailed examination of the way in which the logical distinctions here introduced are used in dealing with fundamental words like "being", "one" and "good". At least in the conclusive chapter I have actually gone beyond (the theme defined by the subtitle by showing that Aristotle's treatment of types of equivocity is only one instance, if probably the most important and interesting one, of his methodology of definition." (Preface, p. 1)

5. Lewis, Frank A. 1991. *Substance and Predication in Aristotle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
Part I: *Aristotle's Earlier Metaphysical Theory*, pp. 3-82.  
"The book is organized into four parts, corresponding to what I take to be the different stages in Aristotle's metaphysical thinking. Part I offers a sketch of perhaps the earliest phase of Aristotle's thinking in the *Categories* and his reaction to the background in Plato's metaphysical theory. Part II examines Aristotle's notions of substance, accident, accidental compounds, and the two sameness relations 'x is accidentally the same as y' and 'x is the same in being as y'. Part III extends the treatment of accidental compounds in Part II to form-matter compounds and to the notions of form and matter, which do not appear in Aristotle's earlier works but are central to the theories of the *Metaphysics*. Part IV, finally, addresses the special problems that Aristotle's new metaphysical theory brings. I set out some of the classic puzzles that bedevil Aristotle's later metaphysics - for example, the puzzle of how in the *Metaphysics* an Aristotelian form is apparently both a primary substance and a universal, while Aristotle also insists that "no universal is a substance," or again, the puzzle of how form is a primary substance and a universal, and hence predicated of many, while "primary substance is not predicated of any subject" - and argue that they result from Aristotle's attempt to adapt the various requirements on primary substance developed in his earlier works (the *Categories* and *Topics* especially) to the very different metaphysical picture - including a different choice of what to count as primary substance! - in the *Metaphysics*. I also show how the solutions I suggest to these puzzles fit within the overall theory, large parts of which have already been laid out in earlier chapters." (p. X)
6. ———. 2004. "Aristotle on the Homonymy of Being." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* no. 68:1-36.  
"The topic of homonymy, especially the variety of homonymy that has gone under the title, "focal meaning," is of fundamental importance to large portions of Aristotle's work-not to mention its central place in the ongoing controversies between Aristotle and Plato. It is quite astonishing, therefore, that the topic should have gone so long without a book-length treatment.  
And it is all the more gratifying that the new book on homonymy by Christopher Shields should be so comprehensive, and of such uniformly high quality.(1)  
Everyone who cares about Aristotle will be in his debt.  
Shields's book falls into two parts. In the first, he is concerned to lay out the basic structure of Aristotle's views about homonymy; in the second part, we are led

through the various applications of the idea, to the analysis of friendship, for example, the homonymy of the body, the account of goodness and, not least, the homonymy of being. Shields's book brings out well how the topic of homonymy weaves in and out of the fabric of Aristotle's thinking in a variety of areas. I will resist the temptation to follow Shields through these various subject-matters, and instead take up essentially two topics. First, (I), the basic outline of Aristotle's notion of homonymy, more or less independently of its different applications (here, I follow Shields's example in the first half of his book). Thereafter, I discuss a single application: the homonymy of being (this is the subject of Shields's last and longest chapter). Here, I will be interested (II) in how homonymy relates to the theory of the categories; and (III) in the application of homonymy to the analysis of substance in the *Metaphysics*." (p. 1)

(1) Shields, Christopher (1999), *Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle*, Oxford.

7. Lloyd, Antony C. 1962. "Genus, Species and Ordered Series in Aristotle." *Phronesis. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy* no. 7:67-90.  
"Aristotle claims that when objects have an order of priority their common predicate or universal is not something apart from them.  
It will be convenient from time to time to refer to such objects as terms, for they are terms of an ordered series; and for a similar convenience the groups containing them will be called P-series. Aristotle's claim is expressly used as the premiss of more than one argument in his works; and the Neoplatonists made very interesting comments on it.

I wish to ask and to suggest an answer to the questions what Aristotle meant by it and why he made it. The matter was expounded some fifty years ago by Cook Wilson, not for the first time but in a way of his own which has been repeated (among others) by Sir David Ross. (1) Their interpretation is, I feel sure, quite misleading and I believe it to be just wrong. Apart from that there are more questions to be asked about the Aristotelian passages than it was Cook Wilson's purpose to ask and perhaps more than he recognised. Thirdly the ancient commentators' arguments, which he ignored, are both to the point and worth considering for their own development of Aristotelianism. Some of them are echoed in the criticisms of modern idealists. These arguments are concerned with the logical relationship of species to genus. I shall try to show that Aristotle's thesis about P-series raises the crucial problem how an "appropriate differentia" is to be distinguished from any apparently defining characteristic; and to solve this is to discover how the relation of a species like man or dog to the genus animal differs from the relation of a quasi-species like male or female." (p. 67)

(1) J. Cook Wilson, "On the Platonic doctrine of ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί", *Classical Review* XVIII (1904), pp. 247-60, esp. §§ i and 7; W. D. Ross *ad Ar. Met.* B 999a6-10. L. Robin, *Théorie platonicienne des idées et des nombres* ....., pp. 614-18 uses more material from A. but really says less that explains.

8. ———. 1966. "Aristotle's Categories Today." *Philosophical Quarterly* no. 16:258-267.  
Review-article of: *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, translated with notes, by J. L. Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).  
"The *Categories* have always had at least three centres of interest: the distinction of primary and secondary substances, the concept of homonymy and synonymy and its application to the concept of being, and the more or less formal properties discovered in the categories one by one. I shall be concerned mostly with the first. To my judgement there is a comparatively simply way into the categories according to which the word translated 'substance' means 'being' and the primary notion of being is existence. (This is the εἶναι απλῶς opposed to εἶναι ἐπὶ μέρους, i.e. εἶναι τοδί ἢ τοδί (of *An. Post.* II 2 and *Met.* Z 1, 1028a31.) About existence we can ask (or so it seems) "what is it to exist?" and "what exists" The first question is given, though not in the *Categories*, the answer "to be active" (*energeia*). The second question could be a request to identify everything that there is, which would not



even *prima facie* be a sensible request. Or it could be a request to identify the sorts of thing that exist: this is given two answers in the *Categories*, individuals and those genera and species which are composed of individuals. But so as to understand the ten categories we can distinguish these two kinds of things from all the kinds of things-or, what it is superfluous to add, all the kinds of things there are (*onta*), which are the ten categories. The individuals and the species and genera are then called 'beings', in the plural and in the usage which has regularly been translated 'substances'." (p. 258)

9. Losev, Alexandre. 2019. "Aristotle's Categories, why 10?" *Philosophical Alternatives* no. 6:101-111.  
 "Aristotle's Categories is beyond dispute one of the most remarkable books in the Western intellectual tradition and it is hardly necessary to rehearse the historical circumstances of this fact. Observing the incalculable amount of commentaries devoted to it(1), the lack of consensus on the very principles underlying this brief treatise becomes obvious.  
 Incompatibilities or inconsistencies with other passages from the Aristotelian corpus are a source of puzzlings and misunderstandings. Among the various questions inquiries include usually considerations on the state of the transmitted text which is also problematic, to the point that its authorship has been questioned. Scholastics tried in every way to smooth out the problems, but the modern attitude does not allow to ignore them. Not so long ago, a researcher warned that it was "a common mistake to consider the theory from The Categories for the Aristotle's theory of categories(2), which is a brutal reminder of how inevitable seem the moves to other places from the corpus and from there, imperceptibly, to things said by others. New readings appears to demand a stepping out of the tradition, that is to say, to reject the Neo-Platonic suggestions along with all ontotheology: Aristotle is not overly committed to hierarchizing and he is not obsessed about (non)existence." (p. 101)  
 (1) Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, Berlin: Reimer, 1882 – 1909; Lloyd N., *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008, p.1; listed in Lohr C., 1967 – 73, *Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries*, Traditio vols.23 – 29 ; Gorman M. and Sanford J., (eds) (2004) *Categories: Historical and Systematic Essays* Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press 2004; *Special Issue on Categories*, Monist (v.98. no3) July 2015 (eds.) Javier Cumpa and Peter M. Simons; *Categories: Histories and Perspectives*, (eds.) Giuseppe D'Anna and Lorenzo Fossati 2017; *Catégories de langue, catégories de l'être*, Les Études philosophiques 2018/3, (N° 183).  
 (2)«cette erreur est fréquente - considérer la théorie du Traité des Catégories comme la théorie aristotélicienne des catégories» ([Madeleine van] Aubel, [Accident, catégories et prédicables dans l'oeuvre d'Aristote, Revue Philosophique de Louvain, 71, pp. 361-401], 1963:377).
10. Loux, Michael. 1997. "Kinds and Predications: An Examination of Aristotle's Theory of Categories." *Philosophical Papers* no. 26:3-28.  
 "The classificatory framework Aristotle calls the categories appears repeatedly throughout the corpus. The treatise that opens the corpus has come to be known as the *Categories* and is apparently concerned to delineate the central features of the most important and potentially most puzzling of the categories listed there.(1) The categories reappear in subsequent works of the *Organon*, where they are put to substantive philosophical use in the resolution of semantical, logical, and epistemological problems. In numerous places in the *Physics*, we meet with the claim that there is a variety of different categories, each with its own distinct ontological properties, and the claim plays a significant role in delineating the general contours of the concept of change. In the *De Anima*, Aristotle's attempt to characterize the soul takes the classification provided by the categories as its theoretical backdrop.  
 Again, in the *Metaphysics*, there is regular reference to the framework of the categories, and the distinctions expressed by the framework prove crucial to the treatment of ontological problems about being, unity, and substance. Even in the

ethical writings, Aristotle reminds us that there are different categories of being and uses the reminder as a vehicle for introducing us to central metaethical claims about the semantics of 'good'. It is not unreasonable, then, to conclude that Aristotle took the classification associated with the categories to be a fundamental feature of his own approach to philosophical issues." (p. 3)

(1) For doubts about the traditional reading of the *Categories*, see Michael Frede, 'Categories in Aristotle' in his *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1987, pp. 29-48.

11. Mahlan, John Robert. 2019. "Aristotle on Secondary Substance." *Apeiron* no. 52:167-197.  
Abstract: "At the beginning of *Categories* 5, Aristotle distinguishes between two kinds of substance: primary substance and secondary substance. Primary substances include particular living organisms, inanimate objects, and their parts. Secondary substances are the species and genera of these. This distinction is unique to the *Categories*, which raises the question of why Aristotle treats species and genera as substances. I argue that Aristotle has two distinct reasons for doing so, and contrast my interpretation with recent alternatives. On my view, species and genera enjoy two kinds of fundamentality – ontological and epistemological – in virtue of which they warrant their status as substances."
12. Malcolm, John. 1981. "On the Generation and Corruption of the Categories." *The Review of Metaphysics* no. 33:662-681.  
"It is tempting to assume that an obvious way in which Aristotle determined his list of categories was to take a primary substance as subject and classify its predicates.  
(1) The advantage of this suggestion is that it appears to give us the list of categories given at *Categories* 1 b25 ff. For example, if we take Socrates as subject, then, when we predicate man of him, we get a predicate which is a substance (*ousia*). When we consider "Socrates is grammatical" we get a predicate in quality or "how qualified" (*poion*). "Socrates is in the market place" gives us place or "where" (*pou*) and so on.  
Although I shall propose that, in the case of the first category, *ousia*, this is not how Aristotle, in fact, proceeds in the *Categories* (see p. 674 below), the major shortcoming of this procedure is that it cannot account for individuals, and a fortiori individual substances, as items in the categories." (p. 662)  
(...)  
"My procedure, therefore, will not be to start with the SRPR [*subject restricted to substance predicate relative*] option and try to adjust it to harmonize with the doctrine of the work entitled *Categories*, nor indeed to take this work as my point of departure, for, somewhat paradoxically, I shall contend that the list of *Categories* 1b25 ff. was assembled in a rather haphazard fashion. I shall, in fact, begin with *Topics* 1.9 and, taking this as basic, endeavor to explain the other relevant passages in the Aristotelian corpus in the light of what is to be found there." (p. 663)  
(1) See J. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 78-79, for this alternative.
13. Malink, Marko. 2007. "Categories in *Topics* I.9." *Rhizai. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* no. 4:271-294.  
"In the first sentence of *Topics* 1.9, Aristotle proposes to determine the γένη τῶν κατηγοριῶν. These are the ten categories he is going to discuss in this chapter. He seems to think of them as genera classifying items which are referred to as κατηγορίαι. What are these items? Commentators tend to agree that they are either predications or predicates.(1) In the first case, the categories would classify items such as 'Socrates is white' or 'man is animal'. In the second case, they would classify terms such as 'white' or 'animal' which are able to serve as predicates of predications. The two options need not be incompatible with each other, for the categories might provide a classification both of predicates and of predications. At any rate, we should like to determine the criteria by which the categories manage to classify either predicates or predications or both." (p. 271)

14. Mann, Wolfgang-Rainer. 2000. *The Discovery of Things: Aristotle's Categories and Their Context*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.  
Contents: Acknowledgments IX; A Note on Citations XI; Introduction 3; Part I. Setting the stage: The "Antepredicamenta" and the "Predicamenta" 39; Part II: Plato's metaphysics and the status of things 75; PART III. The categories picture once more: an alternative to Platonism and late-learnerism 184; Epilogue 205; Select Bibliography 207; Index Locorum 219; Index Rerum 226-231.  
"1. The Project  
In two of his early works—in the *Categories* especially, but also in the *Topics*—Aristotle presents a revolutionary metaphysical picture. This picture has had a peculiar fate. Its revolutionary theses are so far from being recognized as such that they have often been taken to be statements of common sense, or expressions of an everyday, pretheoretical ontology.<sup>2</sup> The most striking and far-reaching of those theses is the claim that, included among what there is, among the entities (τά ὄντα), there are things. Aristotle, famously, goes on to maintain that these things are ontologically fundamental. All the other entities are (whatever they are)<sup>3</sup> by being appropriately connected to the things, for example, either as their features (their qualities, sizes, relations-to-each-other, locations, and so on), or as their genera and species, that is, the kinds under which the things fall.<sup>4</sup> These further claims and their proper interpretation have received considerable discussion. Yet the fundamental one has gone virtually unnoticed. To formulate it most starkly: before the *Categories* and *Topics*^ there were no things. Less starkly: things did not show up ^5 things, until Aristotle wrote those two works." (pp. 3-4)  
(...)  
"With a better understanding of Plato's metaphysical picture before us, we will be in a position to appreciate just how revolutionary and innovative Aristotle is being in the *Categories* and *Topics*. We will also be able to see how Aristotle set the stage for turning "the unaccustomed" into "longstanding custom" (Heidegger's phrase). The unique and central role which the *Categories* played in the philosophical curricula of late antiquity and the Latin middle ages obviously contributed enormously to this philosophical picture's successful ascendancy, to the point where it truly could appear to be nothing more than a reflection of common sense, precisely because it had become a part of common sense. And I am inclined to believe that this success, to a large extent, also explains why Plato is read in the ways he is commonly read: the mistake is neither one of simply overlooking something obvious—or not so obvious—nor one of inadvertently smuggling in Aristotelian notions. Rather, the ascent and dominance of the ontological picture of the *Categories* has so thoroughly eclipsed other pictures and interpretative possibilities that they cannot even come into view, much less be made to seem plausible, without considerable effort." (p. 6)
15. Matthen, Mohan. 1978. "The *Categories* and Aristotle's Ontology." *Dialogue*. *Canadian Philosophical Review* no. 17:228-243.  
Abstract: "What where Aristotle's aims in the *Categories*? We can probably all agree that he wanted to say something about different uses of the verb 'to be' - something relevant to ontology. The conventional interpretation goes further: it has Books Γ and Ζ of the *Metaphysics* superseding theories put forward in the *Categories*. We should expect then that the *Categories* and these books of the *Metaphysics* try to do the same sort of thing. Most exegetes do indeed ascribe to the earlier work fairly elaborate ontologies, though they are in disagreement as to what theory Aristotle held while writing it. I shall argue in this paper that the whole enterprise of reconstructing the ontology of the *Categories* from its small stock of clues is misguided; that the business of the *Categories* is to set out data for which the *Metaphysics* tries to account. This view is not without consequences relevant to some widely held theses. I shall claim that the differences between the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics* cannot uncritically be used to trace the development of Aristotle's ontology, that the differences between the two doctrines has been greatly exaggerated. More of this later: let me first explain the distinction on which I shall depend."



16. Matthews, Gareth B. 1989. "The Enigma of Categories 1a20ff and Why it Matters." *Apeiron* no. 22:91-104.  
 Of things there are: (a) some are said of a subject but are not in a subject ... (b) some are in a subject but not said of any subject. (By 'in a subject' I mean what is in something, not as a part, and cannot exist separately from what it is in.) ... (c) Some are both said of a subject and in a subject ... (d) some are neither in a subject nor said of a subject, ...'(1)  
 Perhaps no passage in Aristotle has excited more attention in recent years, or aroused more controversy, than the second paragraph of Chapter 2 of the *Categories*, from which the above quotation is taken.  
 I want to offer a fresh assessment of this recent discussion, as well as some thoughts on why the controversy remains philosophically important.  
 Paradoxically, I shall offer my fresh assessment by presenting some of the discussion of an ancient commentator, Ammonius.(2) After we have learned what we can from Ammonius, I shall say a little about why it matters which interpretation of *Cat.* 1a20ff we accept." (p. 91)  
 (1) *Categories* 1a20ff. The translation is by J.L. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1963).  
 (2) I choose Ammonius, not because he is especially original, but because I am currently working with Marc Cohen on an English translation of his commentary on the *Categories* and hence am most familiar with it. [Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Categories*, translated by S. Marc Cohen and Gareth B. Matthews, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1991]  
 Citations of Ammonius will give the page and line numbers in volume IV.4 of *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca*, Berlin Academy edition of 1895, edited by A. Busse.
  
17. ———. 2009. "Aristotelian Categories." In *A Companion to Aristotle*, edited by Anagnostopoulos, Georgios, 144-161. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.  
 "That which is there to be spoken of and thought of, must be.  
 Parmenides, *Fragment 6* (McKirahan trans.)  
 The short treatise entitled *Categories* enjoys pride of place in Aristotle's writings. It is the very first work in the standard edition of Aristotle's texts. Each line of the thirty columns that make up this treatise has been pored over by commentators, from the first century BCE down to the present. Moreover, its gnomic sentences still retain their fascination for both philosophers and scholars, even today.  
 In the tradition of Aristotelian commentary, the first works of Aristotle are said to make up the *Organon*, which begins with the logic of terms (the *Categories*), then moves on to the logic of propositions (the *De Interpretatione*) and then to the logic of syllogistic argumentation (the *Prior Analytics*). But to say that the *Categories* presents the logic of terms may leave the misleading impression that it is about words rather than about things. That is not the case. This little treatise is certainly about words. But it is no less about things. It is about terms and the ways in which they can be combined; but this "logic" of terms is also meant to be a guide to what there is, that is, to ontology, and more generally, to metaphysics.  
 The *Categories* text was not given its title by Aristotle himself. Indeed, there has long been a controversy over whether the work was even written by Aristotle. Michael Frede's discussion of this issue in "The Title, Unity, and Authenticity of Aristotle's *Categories*" (Frede 1987: 11-28) is as close to being definitive on this issue as is possible. Frede concludes that the *Categories* can only be the work of Aristotle himself or one of his students.  
 The question of authenticity is often connected with the issue of whether the last part of the *Categories*, chapters 10-15, traditionally called the "*Postpraedicamenta*," and the earlier chapters really belong to the same work. We shall have very little to say about the *Postpraedicamenta* here." (p. 144)
  
18. Matthews, Gareth B., and Cohen, S. Marc. 1968. "The One and the Many." *The Review of Metaphysics* no. 21:630-655.

The Platonic argument that Aristotle calls "The One Over Many" ([*Metaphysics*, Book 1] 990b13; 107B69) (1) doubtless had something like this as its key premiss: Whenever two or more things can be properly said to be F, it is by virtue of some one thing, F-ness, that they are properly called F.

The following sentence from Plato's *Republic* suggests such a premiss:

We are in the habit of assuming one Form for each set of many things to which we give the same name.(2)

The pattern of reasoning is familiar. x and y are round. It must be in virtue of roundness ( or in virtue of their participating in roundness) that they are properly said to be round. Exactly what is established by the reasoning -- for that matter, what is supposed to be established-is not obvious. Taken in one way, Plato's Theory of Forms presents us with nothing more than a manner of speaking.

(...)

But if we take Plato's theory this way, we ignore the perplexities that give rise to it. There are at least two distinguishable perplexities that lead to a doctrine like Plato's.

(3) One perplexity is ontological: Why is it that things naturally fall into kinds? The other - -and it is this perplexity especially that gives life to the One-Over-Many Argument -- is linguistic.(4) The puzzle is this: How can it be that many things are properly called by one name? To take this puzzle seriously we must indulge (I) the inclination to take the case of one name for each thing named (i.e., the case of an ideal proper name) as the paradigm case of a name, and also (II) the inclination to suppose that 'wise' in 'Pericles is wise' and 'a man' in 'Callias is a man' are names. If we go along with these inclinations, then the puzzle, How can it be that many things are properly called by one name?, becomes real.

(...)

We want to try to show that the *Categories*, on at least one plausible interpretation, offers a more general answer to Plato than has usually been thought to be the case.

We shall then make some comments toward assessing the philosophical strengths and weaknesses of this Aristotelian answer." (pp. 631-632, some notes omitted)

(1) Line references, unless otherwise identified, are to the works of Aristotle.

(2) *Republic* 696A. Translations of passages from Plato and Aristotle are our own.

(3) Cf. David Pears's two questions, "Why are things as they are?" and "Why are we able to name things as we do?" in his article, "Universals," in *Logic and Language* (2nd series), ed. by A. Flew (Oxford, 1963), pp. 61-64.

19. Menn, Stephen. 1995. "Metaphysics, Dialectic and the *Categories*." *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* no. 100:311-337.

Abstract: "I examine the status and function of the *Categories* in Aristotle's philosophy. The work does not belong to «first philosophy, » or indeed to philosophy at all, but to dialectic; not as a « dialectical discussion » of being, but in the strict sense that it is intended, together with the *Topics*, to help the dialectical disputant to decide whether a given term can fall under a proposed definition or a proposed genus. Although the *Categories*, like dialectic in general, has uses in philosophical argument, the supposed opposition between the accounts of substance in the *Categories* and in the *Metaphysics* depends on a misunderstanding of the different aims of the two works."

20. Mesquita, António Pedro. 2015. "Individual Substances and Individual Accidents in the "Categories" of Aristotle." *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* no. 71:399-421.  
Abstract: "In the second chapter of *Categories*, Aristotle introduces a conceptual scheme in accordance to which, using only two criteria, "being in a subject" and "said of a subject", it is possible to distribute reality over four types of beings: individual substances, which are neither in a subject nor are said of a subject; universal substances, which are said of a subject but are not in a subject; individual accidents, which are in a subject, but are not said of a subject; and universal accidents, which are in a subject and are said of a subject. The problem arises with the third type of entity, individual accidents (or, in modern words, 'inherences'), due to the way they are defined in the text, namely as something which "cannot exist separately from what it is in". The importance of this clause, and therefore of its

correct interpretation, goes far beyond the mere decision on textual or even doctrinal matters, if restricted to the passage and to the question under consideration. What is at stake here is the significance that Aristotle wishes to attribute to the individuality of inferences and, through that, the way in which the ontological distinction between individual substances and individual accidents - that is to say, between primary substances and their accidents as diverse types of individual items - is conceived by him. Here, then, is the scope of this paper: to grasp the meaning and the rationale of the distinction between individual substances and individual accidents in Aristotle, based on the analysis of the statute of inferences in the second chapter of the *Categories*."

21. ———. 2025. *Aristotle on Natural Simultaneity of Relatives in the Categories*. New York: Routledge.

Abstract: "This book addresses the issue of natural simultaneity of relatives, discussed by Aristotle in *Categories* 7, 7b15– 8a12.

Natural simultaneity is a form of symmetrical ontological dependence that holds between items that are not causally linked. In this section of the *Categories*, Aristotle introduces this topic in his analysis of relatives and maintains that although relatives seem to be for the most part simultaneous by nature, there seem to be some exceptions. He mentions two pairs of relatives as exceptions, namely the pairs knowledge/ knowable and perception/ perceptible, and argues at length for the priority of the second relative over the first one in each case. Through a close reading of this text, the author analyses Aristotle's arguments for the thesis of the exceptional character of these pairs and shows that all of them are unsuccessful in supporting the thesis. In order to draw this conclusion, the author highlights and carefully considers the properties that Aristotle is committed to attributing to relatives, taking into account the metaphysical framework of the *Categories* as well as their specificities within the set of non- substantial categories. Then, he shows that Aristotle's mature views on relatives in the *Metaphysics* can be construed as committing him to the rejection of such a thesis.

Although the issue of natural simultaneity is just one of several that Aristotle considers in his discussion of relatives throughout *Categories* 7, it is a particularly relevant issue, since it involves a number of puzzles whose analysis allows for a better understanding of the very notion of relativity in Aristotle. This is the first book to explore this issue from the perspective of illuminating the Aristotelian views on relatives."

22. Mignucci, Mario. 1986. "Aristotle's Definitions of Relatives in *Categories* Chapter 7." *Phronesis. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy* no. 31:101-127.

Reprinted in Andrea Falcon, Pierdaniele Giaretta (eds.), *Ancient Logic, Language, and Metaphysics: Selected Essays by Mario Mignucci*, New York: Routledge 2020, pp. 300-322.

"Chapter 7 of Aristotle's *Categories* is dedicated to a study of relatives, which are called "πρός τι". (p. 101)

(...)

"To sum up, I take Aristotle's definition of relatives to mean exactly that a property F is said to be a relative property if, and only if, it can be expanded into a relation that determines F univocally." (p. 104)

(...)

"Aristotle does not clarify the nature of the link that there is between a relative property and its constitutive relation. As we have seen, it is surely an intensional connection, which involves the senses both of the property and of the relation. But how senses are implied is not explicitly stated by him. Shall we leave the problem here? Perhaps an advance can be made if the definition of P1-relatives [*the class of relatives identified by Aristotle's definition*] at the beginning of Cat. 7 is compared with another definition of relatives which is discussed at the end of the same chapter." (p. 106)

(...)

"Many problems remain. One concerns the nature and meaning of stereotypes. Can they be conceived in the way in which Johnson-Leard has devised them, i.e. as frame systems in which default values are given?(26) And is this view consistent with Aristotle's doctrine about meanings and concepts?

I cannot try to answer these questions here. What my attempt to explain Aristotle's view aims at is to show that his position is far from being trivially false, as it is on the traditional interpretation, and that it can be credited with having some philosophical importance. Moreover, his attempt is stimulating because it approaches a modern problem from a different point of view. Nowadays we are accustomed to consider what is entailed by the fact that substitutivity does not hold in cognitive contexts, and we try to explain why it does not obtain. Aristotle is well aware of these restrictions, (27) but he is more interested in isolating cases in which substitutivity can be safely applied. Perhaps this change of perspective may help to refresh our own patterns of analysis." (p. 126)

(26) Cf. Johnson-Laird, pp. 26-29.

(27) Cf. e.g. *SE [De Sophisticis Elenchis]* 24, 179a35-b5.

#### References

Johnson-Laird, P.N.: "Formal Semantics and the Psychology of Meaning", in Peters, S. and Saarinen, E. (eds.), *Processes, Beliefs, and Questions, Essays on Formal Semantics of Natural Language and Natural Language Processing*, Dordrecht 1982, pp. 1-68.

23. Minio-Paluello, Lorenzo. 1945. "The Text of the *Categoriae*: the Latin Tradition." *Classical Quarterly* no. 39:63-74.  
Reprinted in: L. Minio-Paluello, *Opuscula: the Latin Aristotle*, Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert 1972, pp. 28-39.  
Abstract: "The Latin versions of Aristotle's *Categoriae* have never received much attention from the editors of the Greek text. J. Th. Buhle (*Arist. Op. Omn.* I, Bipont. 1791) and Th. Waitz (*Arist. Organ.* I, Lpz., 1844) availed themselves of Latin texts, but in a very unsatisfactory way; and since then the Latin field has remained unexplored throughout the last hundred years, in which both Hellenists and Orientalists have done much to increase our knowledge of the textual tradition of the *Categ.* It is the purpose of these pages to give a summary account of the Latin tradition and to contribute to a revision of the Greek text by a collation of Boethius' recently discovered translation with the best printed Greek and Oriental sources."
24. Moon, Kyungnam. 2021. "Aristotle's Disturbing Relatives." *Apeiron* no. 54:451-472.  
Abstract: "In *Categories* 7, Aristotle gives two different accounts of relatives, and presents the principle of cognitive symmetry, which seems to help distinguish between relatives and some secondary substances. I suggest that the longdisputed difference between the two accounts lies in a difference in the determination of the categorial status of the object in question, and I formulate the principle of cognitive symmetry such that it plays a crucial role in making explicit how one conceptualizes the categorial status of the object. I then set out some consequences following from this understanding for certain interpretive issues, such as the unity of the *Categories*."
25. Morales, Fabio. 1994. "Relational Attributes in Aristotle." *Phronesis. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy* no. 39:255-274.  
Abstract: "Aristotle's theory of relations involves serious difficulties of interpretation. By attempting to solve some of the problems posed by J. L. Ackrill in his famous commentary on the *Categories* (Ackrill, 1963), I hope to contribute to a better understanding of Aristotle's statements on the nature and status of relational attributes. In general, my procedure has been to analyze the criteria by which entities are supposed to fall under the category of 'the relative'. The following topics will be considered: i) Aristotle's two definitions of relatives in *Categories* 7, ii) the pseudo-relational character of the parts of substances, and iii) the threefold classification of relatives in *Metaphysics* chapter 15. A corollary of these



discussions will be that relations may have played for Aristotle a far more conspicuous role in the 'definition' of substances and attributes than has been hitherto acknowledged."

26. Moravcsik, Julius M. E. 1967. "Aristotle's Theory of Categories." In *Aristotle: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Moravcsik, Julius, 125-145. New York: Anchor Books.  
 "In several of his writings Aristotle presents what came to be known as a "list of categories." The presentation of a list, by itself, is not a philosophic theory. This paper attempts a few modest steps toward an understanding of the theory or theories in which the list of categories is embedded. To arrive at such understanding we shall have to deal with the following questions: What classes of expressions designate items each of which falls under only one category? What is the list a list of? and what gives it unity? To show this to be a worthwhile enterprise, let us consider a few passages in which the list of categories is introduced or mentioned." (p. 125)  
 (...)  
 "Conclusion. The theory of categories is partly a theory about language and partly a theory about reality.  
 With regard to language it states that certain elements of a language have key-designating roles, the full understanding of which requires that we understand the designata as falling within those classes which jointly form the set definitive of that to which a sensible particular must be related. We can see from this that Aristotle did not think of the structure of language as mirroring the structure of reality. But he did believe that there are specific items of language and reality the correlation of which forms the crucial link between the two." (p. 145)
27. ———. 1967. "Aristotle on Predication." *The Philosophical Review* no. 76:80-96. Erratum, *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 4 (Oct., 1967), p. 543.
28. Morrison, Donald. 1992. "The Taxonomical Interpretation of Aristotle's *Categories*: A Criticism." In *Aristotle's Ontology*, edited by Preus, Anthony and Anton, John Peter, 19-46. Albany: State University of New York Press.  
 "In the *Topics*, *Categories*, and *De Interpretatione*, Aristotle is struggling with a variety of problems that span the fields of metaphysics and philosophy of language. Both the problems and the attempted solutions have much relevance to some of the main issues in contemporary British and American philosophy. Thus it is unfortunate that though there is a large number of ancient commentaries on these texts, little has been written on these matters in modern times that is of genuine philosophical significance. Professor Ackrill's new translation and notes (1) make a fine contribution toward remedying this deficiency."  
 (...)  
 "One of the reasons for selecting predication as the nest of problems to be discussed is that though much has been written on this during the past sixty years, we seem far from any adequate solution." (p. 80)  
 (...)  
 "The point of this review is not to show that Aristotle succeeded in answering the general question that contemporary philosophers failed to answer. Aristotle did not attempt to answer that general question.  
 He discusses in the *Categories* -- to which we shall limit our attention several interesting features of predication, and then distinguishes between at least two different types of configuration that underlie predication. The suggestion of this review is that paying attention to these less sweeping problems of predication might be a useful way of adopting a fresh approach to this topic.  
 The following four claims will be discussed. (a) Ackrill interprets Aristotle as holding that general terms and the correlated abstract singular terms, whether in subject or predicate position, introduce the same entity. (b) Aristotle seems to be committed to the view that general terms have meaning both inside and outside of sentences. (c) Aristotle distinguishes at least two different ontological configurations

- underlying predication. (d) Aristotle takes predication to be showing the ontological dependence of the entity denoted by the predicate on the entity denoted by the subject." (p. 82)
- (1) Aristotle's "Categories" and "De Interpretatione," trans. with notes by J. L. Ackrill (Oxford, 1963), pp. VI, 162.
29. Norris, Christopher. 1998. "Deconstruction, ontology, and philosophy of science: Derrida on Aristotle." *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* no. 52:411-449.
- "Jacques Derrida's essay 'The Supplement of Copula' contains of the most detailed and convincing anti-relativist arguments found anywhere in the recent philosophie literature. (1) I have stated the case thus baldly — and italicized the crucial prefix — since claim is likely to conjure scepticism (or outright disbelief) among many readers." (p. 411)
- (...)
- "In 'The Supplement of Copula' Derrida takes issue with some claims advanced by the linguist Emile Benveniste concerning Aristotle's doctrine of the catégories or modes of predicative judgment. (10) According to Benveniste these had their origin in a certain natural language (the ancient Greek) whose lexical resources and grammatical structures are everywhere drawn upon in Aristotle's quasi-universalist mode of argument. (11) Thus: 'Aristotle, reasoning in the absolute, is simply identifying certain fundamental catégories of the language in which he thought'. (12) And the same would apply to those thinkers after Aristotle (Kant among them) who criticized his table of the catégories but who sought to overcome its limitations through a further, more rigorous exercise of reason. For in their case also, as Benveniste contends, there is a failure to grasp that any such claim must rest upon this unconscious transfer of attributes from language to the putative laws of thought or a priori conditions for valid reasoning." (pp. 414-415)
- (...)
- "Rather than summarize Derrida's lengthy and complex response, shall begin by examining one crucial passage from 'The Supplement of Copula'. It is devoted to a single sentence in Benveniste's text, the only place — so Derrida maintains — where the issue comes clearly (if not perhaps consciously) into focus. This question of consciousness is crucial to his argument since it is Benveniste's claim that Aristotle, in his treatment of the catégories, was unconscious of the fact that these supposedly absolute (non-language-relative) necessities of thought were themselves the product of a merely contingent, 'empirical' set of lexico-grammatical constraints pertaining to Greek language." (p. 416)
- (1) Jacques Derrida, 'The Supplement of Copula', in *Margins of Philosophy*, [trans.] Alan Bass (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 175-205.
- (10) Derrida, 'The Supplement of Copula' (op. cit.): all further references given by title and page-number in the text. See also Emile Benveniste, *Problems In General Linguistics*, trans. Mary E. Meek (Coral Gables : University of Miami Press, 1971.
- (11) The passages of Aristotle here referred to are to be found in the *Catégories*, Chapter Four and *Metaphysics*, Chapter Six.
- (12) Benveniste, *Problems* (op. cit.), p. 57.
30. Novak, Michael. 1965. "Toward Understanding Aristotle's *Categories*." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* no. 26:117-123.
- "There are three positions one must gain in order to interpret the first five chapters of the *Categories* and, specifically, the meaning and role therein of 'present in a subject'. The first of these positions is a rejection of univocity; the second is the dual conception of accident; the third is the principle of discrimination on which Aristotle (implicitly) relies in sorting out the strands of his description "of things," (1a20)." (p. 117)
- (...)
- "'Present in a subject' thus operates in *Categories* 1-5 as a definition of accident, inadequately distinguished from secondary substance. It is inadequately distinguished because its meaning (incapable of existence apart from a subject) applies just as well to secondary substance, though for a different reason, and this

reason is never stated by Aristotle. He says (3a8-10) that secondary substances are not present in a subject, while of course (1a24.1) accidents are. But neither accidents nor secondary substances are; capable of existence apart from primary substances (2b5-6). Some unspoken criterion is therefore operating to distinguish the exact natures of secondary substance, accident, and primary substance.

I have argued that the discriminating factor is the differing relation which each bears to the act of intelligence operating with imagination.

Secondary substances are universalizations of the necessity grasped in insight, are essences, apart from particulars, and yet arising exclusively from insight into concrete particulars. They are not 'present in a subject', yet are incapable of existence apart from a subject. Accidents are, on the one hand, incapable of science because, occurring neither always nor for the most part, they are not necessarily relevant to any particular thing; and, on the other hand, are not capable of being pointed to as a 'this'. They alone are properly 'present in a subject.' Primary substance can be pointed to as a 'this', a unity, grasped not, however, by mere sense knowledge, nor imagination, but by intelligence which distinguishes the inessential from the essential, the permanent and independent from the adventitious, in the presentations of sense and imagination. They are not 'present in a subject,' but are subjects." (pp. 122-123)

31. O'Farrell, Frank. 1982. "Aristotle's Categories of Being." *Gregorianum* no. 63:87-131.

"It is no exaggeration to say that the understanding of Aristotle's First Philosophy and hence of his philosophy as a whole depends largely on the interpretation one gives to his categories of being. For as far as they express the theme itself of First Philosophy - being as being - to their understanding can be justly applied Aristotle's oft quoted words: « The beginning is greater in potentiality than in magnitude and therefore a small mistake in the beginning becomes immense in the end » (1).

But though one must agree with Brentano when he writes « Aristotle's division of categories has in a wonderful way defied the change time brings. When one follows the history of the doctrine of the categories, one sees how even their adversaries unconsciously pay homage to them » (2). Yet in the course of the two thousand odd years since Aristotle formulated them they have met with very varied and opposed interpretations. These changing interpretations have acted as a sort of apriori, a kind of pre-judice for each succeeding age trying to reach Aristotle's thought. For they formed part of the history of being in the Heideggerian sense of the word (3), i.e. what has become the universal unquestioned foreknowledge according to which and in function of which in each epoch one encounters reality."

(...)

"Being for Aristotle is not a subsistent idea - *auto to on* - as it is for Plato, but it is the categories (162). And being is the categories because of the plurality implied by *hupokeimenon* in its to be. And *hupokeimenon* in its to be is being as being according to Aristotle's way of conceiving it. Because therefore Aristotle understands being itself as meaning the categories, being is perceived by the ways of necessary predication (163).

Hence it is not the modes of necessary predication which found the categories of being, as Aubenque seems to believe (164), but it is the categories of being which require these modes of predicating to bring themselves to view and to be known in their truth. « For as each thing is as regards to be so is it as regards truth » (165)".

(1) *De Coelo*, 1.5. 271 b 13.

(2) Franz Brentano, *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1862, 193.

(3) Cf. M. Heidegger, *Die Metaphysik als Geschichte des Seins* (1941) and *Entwürfe zur Geschichte des Seins als Metaphysik* (1941) in *Nietzsche*, Bd. 2, 399-457; 458-480.

(162) I. Düring, (*Aristoteles, Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*, Heidelberg, 1966, 60) remarks appositely: « The word *Kategoria* in the sense of predication (*Aussage*) does not occur in Plato: we find it only once (*Theait.* 167 a)

- in this sense. The choice of this word shows that Aristotle wanted consciously to distance himself from his older contemporaries in the Academy».
- (163) E. Tugendhat, *Ti kata tinos*, Freiburg-München, 1958, 23.
- (164) P. Aubenque, *Le probleme de l'être chez Aristote*, Paris, 1962, 170.
- (165) *Met. a* (2), 1, 993 b 32.
32. Oehler, Klaus. 1976. "Peirce *contra* Aristotle: Two Forms of the Theory of Categories." In *Proceedings of the C. S. Peirce Bicentennial international Congress*, edited by Ketner, Kenneth Laine, 335-342. Lubbock: Texas Tech Press.
- "The founder of the theory of categories is Aristotle. He made the word 'category' a technical term in philosophy, and his theory dominated the discussion of categories up to Kant. But even after Kant, Aristotle's influence On some important points persisted, because Kant built his new conception of categories on the old Aristotelian foundations. Not until Peirce did a philosopher develop a radically new theory of categories, and he did this by using a set of new logical instruments that neither Aristotle nor Kant had at their disposal. To this extent it can be said that the form Peirce gave to the theory of categories is a rejection of the whole tradition established by Aristotle in this field. To recognize the fundamental difference between both conceptions, a brief reconstruction of both theories would be helpful. Then the questions of the superiority of Peirce's conception in comparison with the traditional one and its usefulness in the contemporary discussion of categories will be raised." (p. 335)
33. Owen, Gwilym Ellis Lane. 1960. "Logic and Metaphysics in some Earlier Works of Aristotle." In *Aristotle and Plato in the Mid-Fourth Century. Papers of the Symposium Aristotelicum held at Oxford in August, 1957*, edited by Düring, Ingemar and Owen, Gwilym Ellis Lane. Göteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag.
- Reprinted in: G. E. L. Owen, *Logic, Science and Dialectic. Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, Edited by Martha Nussbaum, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986, pp. 180-199.
- "Much of Aristotle's early work in logic sprang from the practice and discussions of the Academy in Plato's lifetime. This is a commonplace, but I have tried to illustrate it here by evidence which throws an unfamiliar light on the development of some of Aristotle's most characteristic theories. The commonplace itself is not to be confused with a narrower thesis about the origins of the theory of syllogism: on that well-worn issue I have nothing to say here. I have confined myself to another part of Aristotle's logical studies, namely that part which shaped his views on the nature and possibility of any general science of *to on hêi on* ('being qua being'), any inquiry into the general nature of what there is. Here his major issues were problems of ambiguity, particularly the ambiguity that he claimed to find in 'being' or *to on* as that expression is used in the different categories. And his problems were shared by his contemporaries in the Academy. By opposition and by suggestion they helped to form the logic that underlay First Philosophy." (p. 180)
- (...)
- "In sum, then, the argument of *Metaphysics* IV, VI seems to record a new departure. It proclaims that 'being' should never have been assimilated to cases of simple ambiguity, and consequently that the old objection to any general metaphysics of being fails. The new treatment of *to on* and cognate expressions as *pros hen kai mian tina phusin legomena*, - or, as I shall henceforth say, as having *focal meaning* - has enabled Aristotle to convert a special science of substance into the universal science of being, 'universal just inasmuch as it is primary." (p. 184)
- (...)
- "Nor does focal meaning find formal recognition in the class of paronyms which is introduced in the *Categories* and recognized in the *Topics*, for the definition of paronyms is merely grammatical. It shows, not how subordinate senses of a word may be logically affiliated to a primary sense, but how adjectives can be manufactured from abstract nouns by modifying the word-ending. Plainly the *Categories* does not and could not make any use of this idea to explain how the



- subordinate categories depend on the first. Nor does it use focal meaning for that purpose (2b4-6). If focal meaning can be seen in the *Categories* it is in the analysis of some one category - clearly enough in the definition of quantity (5a38-b10), ) far more doubtfully in the account of the two uses of 'substance' (2b29-37, 3b18-21) - but not in that logical ordering of different categories and different senses of 'being' which lies at the root of the argument in *Metaphysics* IV." (pp. 188-189)
34. ———. 1965. "Inherence." *Phronesis. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy* no. 10:97-105.  
Reprinted in: G. E. L. Owen, *Logic, Science and Dialectic. Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, Edited by Martha Nussbaum, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986, pp. 252-258.  
"Often in the *Categories* and once in the *Topics* Aristotle draws a distinction between *being in a subject* and *being said, or predicated, of a subject* (*Cat.* 1a20-b9, 2a11-14, 2a27-b6, 2b15-17, 3a7-32, 9b22-24; *Postpred.* 11 b38-12 a 17, 14a 16-18; *Top.* 127b 1-4). Elsewhere he makes no use of the distinction, at least in this form. Once in the *Categories* he blankets it under the formula belonging to something (11b38-12a17). But it has earned a good deal of attention, and there is a fashionable dogma about it that I should like to nail. Hints of the dogma can be seen in older writers such as Porphyry and Pacius. Its modern exponents are Ross, *Aristotle* p. 24 n. 1; Jones, *Phil. Rev.* 1949 pp. 152-170; and most recently Miss Anscombe in *Three Philosophers* pp. 7-10, and Mr. Ackrill in *Aristotle's 'Categories' and 'De Interpretatione'* pp. 74-5, 83, 109." (p. 252)  
(...)  
"To say that if the Idea of man is a substance it cannot exist apart from that of which it is the substance is to say that its existence requires (indeed consists in) the existence of at least one individual falling under the classification human. And to say that pink or a particular shade of pink cannot exist apart from what contains it is to say, as Aristotle always says against Plato, that something must contain it if it is to exist at all." (p. 258)
35. ———. 1965. "Aristotle on the Snares of Ontology." In *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, edited by Bambrough, Renford, 69-95. New York: Humanities Press.  
Reprinted in: G. E. L. Owen, *Logic, Science and Dialectic. Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, Edited by Martha Nussbaum, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986, pp. 259-278.  
"Aristotle's commonest complaint against other philosophers is that they oversimplify. One oversimplification to which he is especially attentive is the failure to see that the same expression may have many different senses. And among such expressions there is one arch-deceiver against which he often issues warnings: the verb 'to be', '*einai*'. I shall discuss part of his attempt to unmask this deceiver, namely his account of the verb in what is ordinarily, and too sweepingly, called its 'existential' use." (p. 259)
36. ———. 1965. "The Platonism of Aristotle." *Proceedings of the British Academy* no. 50:125-150.  
Reprinted in: J. Barnes, M. Schofield, and R. Sorabji (eds.), *Articles on Aristotle*, Vol. 1 (Duckworth, 1975), pp. 14-34 and in G. E. L. Owen, *Logic, Science and Dialectic. Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, Edited by Martha Nussbaum, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986, pp. 200-220.  
"Eight years ago, in a memorable Dawes Hicks Lecture to this Academy, (1) David Ross spoke of Aristotle's development as a philosopher. One theory of that development he singled out as having established itself in the fifty years since it appeared. It was pioneered in this country by Thomas Case and in Germany, with great effect, by Werner Jaeger. It depicts Aristotle, in Sir David's words, as 'gradually emerging from Platonism into a system of his own'. Aristotle's philosophical career began in the twenty years that he spent learning and practising his trade in Plato's Academy, and it ended in the headship of his own school. So it is

tempting to picture him first as the devoted partisan, then as arguing his way free of that discipleship." (p. 200)

(...)

"Next, in saying that Aristotle's logic was bred of discussion in the Academy, I do not imply that it was a donation from his colleagues. There used to be a myth, promoted by Burnet and Taylor, that the theory of categories was a commonplace of the Academy, derived from scattered hints in Plato's writings. This myth was exposed, not simply by the obvious lack of system in the supposed hints, but by the fact that no other Academic known to us endorsed the theory and that Xenocrates, Plato's self-appointed exegete, denounced it as a pointless elaboration and went back to a simpler distinction derived from Plato's dialogues. Nor again do I mean that Aristotle's logic had come to full maturity before Plato's death. The division of the categories and probably the general theory of the syllogism, had been worked out by then; but Aristotle continued to review and develop these doctrines in his later work. The same is true of his theory of definition and, more generally of his theory of meaning. What is beyond question is that these theories were developed in practice and not as an independent exercise. The theory of definition was modified to keep pace with the work of a biologist who had once held that a definition could be reduced to a single differentia and then found himself, when he set out to define any natural species, faced with a set of competing criteria. The theory of meaning, of synonymy and homonymy, was enlarged to allow a value to philosophical inquiries which had been earlier denounced as trading on an equivocation. At every stage Aristotle's logic had its roots in philosophical argument and scientific procedure: it would be an anachronism to think otherwise. So what arguments lie at the root of his early account of substance and the categories?" (p. 207)

37. Owens, Joseph. 1960. "Aristotle on Categories." *The Review of Metaphysics* no. 14:73-90.

Reprinted in J. Owens, *Aristotle, the Collected Papers of Joseph Owens*, Edited by John R. Catan, New York: State University of New York Press 1981, pp. 14-22.

"In particular, the present paper would inquire whether the notion of category construction was intended in its beginnings to be an arbitrary procedure, whether it was meant to categorize words, and how it stands up to later examples of category mistakes. The paper, accordingly, will first examine briefly the doctrine of categories in its original Aristotelian setting; secondly, it will try to determine the type of treatment found there; and finally it will confront the Aristotelian doctrine with some irritant instances of category mistakes." (p. 14)

(...)

"This brief glance at the Aristotelian doctrine of categories and its confrontation with instances of category mistakes will indicate, it is hoped, some pertinent features of the earliest explicit category construction. It was based upon the natures of things and not upon the use of language. Because it was concerned with natures and not primarily with words, it was not at all an arbitrary procedure. The natures of things resist the manipulations of human whims, and keep the universe from becoming a world where everything is nonsense. But these natures exist in two ways, in reality and in cognition. Some predicates will belong to the nature just of itself, no matter where it is found. Other predicates will belong to a nature only in real existence. They are those concerned with its real history in some individual. Still other predicates will belong to it only as it exists in intellectual cognition, for instance that it is a species or a genus. These considerations show why categories are the concern of both the metaphysician and the logician, and why confusion in the three ways in which predicates apply will necessarily give rise to category mistakes. The Aristotelian doctrine likewise shows why the intrinsic principles of things cannot be placed directly in a category.

Its basic grooves of category construction, along with this warning, still serve quite well as dissolvents for such category mistakes as the ghost in the machine, the elephant with the baggage, or murder a relation. The category doctrine as found originally in the Stagirite's works is open to a great amount of development and

elaboration, both to smooth out its own difficulties and to meet problems of current discussion. It offers a solid basis for profitable philosophic construction. It is far from complete, but what is there is very good." (pp. 21-22, notes omitted)

38. Perin, Casey Carlton. 2007. "Substantial Universals in Aristotle's *Categories*." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* no. 33:125-144.  
"Aristotle in the *Categories*, but not elsewhere, presents the distinction between individual substances such as Socrates or Bucephalus and their species and genera as the distinction between primary (πρώται) and secondary (δευτέραι) substances (2A11–19).  
The distinction between primary and secondary substances, in turn, is a distinction between substances that are particulars and substances that are universals.  
(...)  
"Therefore, according to the definitions of 'universal' and 'particular' Aristotle gives in *De interpretatione*, a primary substance is not a universal but a particular. In the *Categories* a secondary substance is the species or genus of a primary substance (2A14–19). The species human being, for instance, is said of, and so predicated of, all individual human beings (Socrates, Callias, Coriscus, etc.). The genus animal is said of, and so predicated of, its species (human being, horse, dog, etc.) as well as all individual animals (Socrates, Bucephalus the horse, Fido the dog, etc.). Since a secondary substance is predicated of more than one being or entity as its subject, it is not a particular but a universal. The question I want to try to answer here is why, according to Aristotle in the *Categories*, certain universals such as the species human being or the genus animal are substances." (pp. 126-127, notes omitted)  
(...)  
"On Aristotle's view in the *Categories*, then, the species or genus of a primary substance is both a subject for inherence, and for this reason a substance, and, being a universal, a predicable predicated of (said of) a plurality of subjects. The non-substantial items that  
inhere in the species or genus of a primary substance are all of those non-substantial items that inhere in the primary substances of which that species or genus is predicated. As a result the species or genus of a primary substance, unlike a primary substance itself,  
is a subject for inherence in which contraries can inhere at one and the same time. This view obviously invites a question that, as far as I know, no commentator has yet answered: what kind of being or entity could *this* be?" (pp. 142-143)
39. Polsky, Elliot. 2022. "Secondary Substance and Quod Quid Erat Esse: Aquinas on Reconciling the Divisions of "Substance" in the *Categories* and *Metaphysics*." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 96:21-45.  
Abstract: "Modern commentators recognize the irony of Aristotle's *Categories* becoming a central text for Platonic schools. For similar reasons, these commentators would perhaps be surprised to see Aquinas's *In VII Metaphysics*, where he apparently identifies the secondary substance of Aristotle's *Categories* with a false Platonic sense of "substance" as if, for Aristotle, only Platonists would say secondary substances are substances. This passage in Aquinas's commentary has led Mgr. Wippel to claim that, for Aquinas, secondary substance and essence are not the same thing and that Aristotle's notion of essence is absent from the *Categories*. This paper—by closely analyzing the apparently contradictory divisions of "substance" in Aquinas's *In V* and *VII Metaphysics*—shows that essence and secondary substance are not altogether distinct for Aquinas. Moreover, when the *Categories* is viewed by Aquinas as a work of logic, it is found largely to cut across the disputes between Platonism and Aristotelianism."
40. Raspa, Venanzio. 2020. "Brentano on Aristotle's *Categories*." In *Franz Brentano's Philosophy after Hundred Years: From History of Philosophy to Reism*, edited by Fisette, Denis, Frechette, Guillaume and Janoušek, Hynek, 185-203. Cham (Switzerland): Springer.

Abstract: "Brentano's dissertation *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles* (*On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*) (1862) is examined in the light of the nineteenth-century debate on the Aristotelian categories. After providing an exposition of the conceptions of the main representatives of this debate, Adolf Trendelenburg and Hermann Bonitz, this paper assesses Brentano's point of view on the meaning and origin of the Aristotelian categories. It shows (i) that Brentano assumes non-Aristotelian elements in his reading of the Aristotelian categories, (ii) that this depends on the fact that he shares Bonitz's thesis, and (iii) that his reading is incomplete in the light of certain Aristotelian statements about non-being."

41. ———. 2025. "Kant and the Debate on Aristotle's Categories in the Nineteenth Century." In *Aristotle's Organon in Old and New Logic 1800–1950*, edited by King, Colin Guthrie and Raspa, Venanzio. New York: Bloomsbury.  
"In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant posed the celebrated question of "the guiding thread to the discovery of all pure concepts of the intellect." Aware of the criticisms traditionally directed at the Aristotelian theory of categories, that is, that the choice is arbitrary and the list incomplete, Kant searches for a principle that will justify both the choice and the number of categories. From this perspective, he accuses Aristotle of collecting his categories in a "rhapsodic" fashion and regards such a procedure as the cause of the defects of his theory.  
Many people reacted to Kant's criticism during the nineteenth century, sparking a lively debate on Aristotle's categories that was to unfold over seven decades. Scholars have detected three main interpretations in these discussions: (1) Trendelenburg's linguistic-grammatical approach; (2) Bonitz's ontological perspective, and (3) Apelt's logical-semantic standpoint. This reconstruction, however, requires some refining and adjusting. Its main flaw lies in that it mixes the problem of the origin of the categories with that of their meaning. For Trendelenburg, who opened the debate, categories have a grammatical origin, but not a grammatical meaning; for Bonitz, categories have an ontological meaning, but not an ontological origin.  
I will argue, first, that Kant not only criticized but also provided an interpretation of Aristotle's theory of categories; secondly, that many interpretations given during the nineteenth century, while intending to respond to Kant, move largely within the conceptual framework outlined by Kant, contain Kantian elements, both conceptual and terminological, or develop hints provided by Kant. In retracing the debate, we will also see that these interpretations are not all reducible to the three mentioned above."