"Τὸ καλόν" is said in many ways.

The homonymy of "καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy

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Abstract

Aristotle bestows great significance upon the teleological role of τὸ καλόν in many areas of his philosophy. Unfortunately, none of his extant works discusses the nature of τὸ καλόν, but he does say that "τὸ καλόν" can be said in different ways and is, therefore, homonymous.

Based on the premise that "τὸ καλόν" is homonymous, and utilising different interpretations of Aristotle's concept of homonymy, scholars have analysed various usages of the term in question in different contexts, and have proposed different meanings for it.

However, none of the interpretations offered about Aristotle's concept of homonymy take into account his methodical approach to identifying a primary meaning of a term "N" when "N" can be said in different and related ways.

In this research, I survey different literary sources to learn ordinary uses of "τὸ καλόν" that were most likely known to Aristotle. Then, I show that Aristotle follows three basic steps for analysing problems involving homonymy of different types:

1. Establishing that it is indeed a case of homonymy (the corresponding meanings of the name "N" as predicated of objects x and y are different).

2. Establishing the type of homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N". I shall elaborate on the different types we can identify throughout Aristotle's works.

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

Based on this interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy, I contend that Aristotle's account in Met. 1078a31-b6 –where he claims that τὸ καλόν is a final cause, and that its greatest forms are order, due measure (due proportion, or symmetry), and definiteness– is quite likely a general account of the nature of τὸ καλόν and can, therefore, provide the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν".

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Abbreviations

Latin	Abbreviation	Work
Analytica Posteriora	An. Post.	Posterior Analytics
Analytica Priora	An. Pr.	Prior Analytics
Categoriae	Cat.	Categories
De Anima	De An.	On the Soul
De Caelo	De Caelo	On the Heavens
De Generatione Animalium	Gen. An.	Generation of Animals
De Generatione et Corruptione	Gen. Corrup.	On Generation and Corruption
De Interpretatione	De Int.	On Interpretation
De Partibus Animalium	Part. An.	On the Parts of Animals
De Sophisticis Elenchis	Soph. El.	On Sophistical Refutations
Ethica Eudemia	Eth. Eud.	Eudemian Ethics
Ethica Nicomachea	Eth. Nic.	Nicomachean Ethics
Historia Animalium	Hist. An.	History of Animals
Magna Moralia	Magna Mor.	Magna Moralia
Metaphysica	Met.	Metaphysics
Meteorologica	Meteor.	Meteorology
Mirabilium auscultationes	Mir. Aus.	On marvellous things heard
Physica	Phys.	Physics
Poetica	Poet.	Poetics
Politica	Pol.	Politics
Rhetorica	Rhet.	Rhetoric
Topica	Top.	Topics

General Introduction

"Fineness" (Τὸ καλόν)[1] is a standard Greek term to express commendation and positive values as beauty, honour, propriety, suitability and the like. Very often, we find it linked to another term of commendation, goodness (τὸ ἀγαθόν) and, together, they convey the idea of honour and nobility, the idea that a person is beautiful both in manners and looks, and –depending on the context– that they have a respectable lineage.

It is therefore no surprise that "fineness" is frequently used by Aristotle for highlighting positive qualities. What is interesting is that he speaks about fineness not only in terms of commendation in a moral and aesthetic sense, but also in terms of it being a cause, namely, a final cause ("that for the sake of which" something else happens or is done).

In an ethical context, fineness can play the role of a value, for things that are such as to be valued can be the final cause of our actions (*e.g., Eth. Nic. 1122b6-7*). In biology, the teleological role of fineness entails that the finest arrangement of organs is the one that guarantees the proper functioning of the organism (*e.g. Part. An. 664a21-36*). The fine city is the one that establishes laws in order to promote and maintain its order (*cf. Pol. 1326a27-b1*). Furthermore, according to Aristotle, fineness is best exhibited by mathematical knowledge (*Met. 1078a31-36*).

Given this variety of usages, one is compelled to question whether Aristotle means "fineness" in the same way when he speaks of actions, organisms, cities, and mathematical objects –among other things. That is to say, the question arises as to whether there is a unified concept of fineness throughout Aristotle's works, or a multiplicity of things that happen to share the same name "fineness". Aristotle himself says that "fineness" can be said in many ways and is, therefore, homonymous (*Top. 106a21-23*).[2]

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[1] "To kalón" is often rendered as "Beauty", "the fine" or even "the noble". However, any translation conveys certain assumption on the context this concept is used. For instance, "Beauty" fits aesthetic purposes. In what follows I shall translate it as "fineness" which is perhaps the most general translation.

[2] Aristotelian homonymy might resemble some aspects of English homonymy, and some other aspects of English polysemy. But these two concepts are defined as properties of words.

In contrast, Aristotelian homonymy is, first and foremost, a relation between two or more different things on account of their bearing the same name "N". By extension, Aristotle sometimes says that "N" is homonymous, but only insofar as "N" is said of different things in different ways. I shall elaborate on this difference in chapter 2.

The basic supposition that "fineness" is homonymous does provide a good starting point for an enquiry into the meaning of "fineness" in Aristotle's philosophy, but it is certainly not enough. For Aristotle distinguishes different epistemic aspects as well as different types of homonymy. In order for us to make sense of the homonymy of "fineness" in Aristotle's philosophy, we need a solid understanding of his concept of homonymy and of how it applies to the case of "fineness".

This sequence of requirements –understanding the concept of homonymy, identifying different types, and applying this knowledge to the concept of "fineness"– guides our endeavours in this research.

In the first chapter, I shall present a survey of different usages of the term "καλόν" and cognates in Ancient Greek literature, particularly in some of Homer's and Aeschylus' works. This survey will provide an insight into the ordinary usages of the term that were most likely known to Aristotle. Likewise, I shall discuss questions of philosophical relevance about the nature of τὸ καλόν that were advanced by Sappho's *Fragment 16* (whether there is a kind of things that merit the predicate "καλόν" above other kinds), Xenophon's *Symposium* (whether there are different kinds of τὸ καλόν), and the Platonic dialogue *Hippias Major* (whether a definition of "τὸ καλόν" makes reference to the response it elicits).

In chapters 2 to 6, I shall discuss Aristotle's concept of homonymy, what it implies and the different types Aristotle distinguishes. What is particular to my approach is that I contend that Aristotle's analyses of problems involving homonymy are methodical, and that they are based on three general steps, described in *Top. 1.15 106a2-8* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30* as follows:

1. Establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy (the corresponding meanings of the name "N" as predicated of objects x and y are different),

2. Establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N",[3] and

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[3] As we shall find out, some cases of homonymy are due to what seems to be a linguistic accident, *i.e.*, two or more different things just happen to bear what seems to be the same name, by chance. In a rather loose sense, I take "chance" as a possible answer to why the two different objects merit what seems to be the same name. See chapter 3, especially section 3.3.
As for the name "N" involved in homonymy, I must clarify that it is the same only in appearance. For Aristotle, a name is a composite of a sound (or a written sign) and a particular λόγος. Since Aristotelian homonymy entails that the account of "N" as said of object x is different from the account of "N" as said of object y, strictly speaking "N" as said of x is not the same name than "N" as said of y (See 2.3).

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

In chapter 2, I discuss the definition of homonymy Aristotle introduces in *Categories 1*, which corresponds to the first step of the method.

In chapter 3, I discuss and classify different types of homonymy. I propose a classification based on the grounds on which two different objects x and y bear the same name "N", which corresponds to the second step of the method.

In chapter 4, I discuss Irwin's interpretation and classification of the different types of homonymy. I shall argue that the difference between Irwin's proposal and mine is due to the fact that he does not consider the possibility that Aristotle has a consistent method for identifying different types of homonymy, and more specifically, to the fact that Irwin's classification does not always answer why objects x and y bear the same name "N" (which corresponds to the second step of the method).

In chapter 5, I engage with the problem of identifying a primary meaning of the homonymous name "N" when "N" can be said in different but related ways, which corresponds to the third step of the method. I shall argue that there are two basic schemas that explain the primary meaning of connected homonyms, either:

-   there is a primary thing N in relation to which other things merit the name "N"; or

-   there is a cluster of primary things N, all of which fulfil a common condition, and in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

The first case resembles Owen's concept of focal meaning, whereas the second case resembles Irwin's concept of a unified sense.

In chapter 6, I shall demonstrate the application of the three steps of the method to the homonymy of the four Aristotelian causes.

Finally, in chapter 7, I discuss Irwin's interpretation of Aristotle's concept of "τὸ καλόν" based on his understanding of Aristotelian homonymy, and compare it to mine.

Ultimately, I contend that the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν or fineness –order, due measure, and definiteness– that Aristotle mentions in *Metaphysics 1078a31-36* constitute the cluster of primary fine things in relation to which other things merit the name "fine".

In order to fully test my hypothesis, it would be necessary to further analyse the different usages of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's extant works. Such an enterprise is beyond the

scope of the present research. But by explaining and illustrating my hypothesis, I expect to lay the foundations for further research in this direction.

I have included two appendices. Appendix A is an *index locorum* of the places where Aristotle explicitly mentions homonymy. In the first part of the appendix, I have classified all the passages according to the context and purpose of the passage referred. For instance, in some passages, Aristotle gives an example of homonymy without further clarification, whereas in other cases, Aristotle offers an example and elaborates on why x and y merit the name "N" homonymously. In the second section of the same Appendix A, I have collected all the names "N" that Aristotle explicitly gives as examples of homonymy, regardless of whether they are explained or not. This appendix accompanies chapters 2, 3, and 4.

Appendix B comprises the forty things that are said in many ways that Aristotle discusses in *Metaphysics V*. In the first section, I list the forty things –distributed in the traditional thirty chapters– together with an indication of the number of ways in which each thing can be said.

In the second section, I have classified the forty things according to whether and how they relate to a primary meaning. This appendix accompanies chapter 5.

Chapter 1. Beauty, nobility, and fineness. An overview of usages of "τὸ καλόν" in Ancient Greek literature

Introduction

The overall purpose of this research is to understand the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy. As we know, many of Aristotle's enquiries start with a critical review of the ordinary understanding of key terms.[4] This does not entail that Aristotle endorses the ordinary usage of the several concepts he discusses. But he finds value in understanding the ordinary usage of terms that, upon further consideration, might prove to be of philosophical importance.

Among Aristotle's extant works, there is no study focused on τὸ καλόν.[5] We do not know his stance regarding ordinary usages of the corresponding term.

But, through a critical survey of literary sources, we can get an approximation of the common usages of the expression "τὸ καλόν" and cognates, as well as of the philosophical questions that most likely were known to Aristotle.

This general background should suffice to alert us to some relevant or problematic nuances in the usage of the term "τὸ καλόν", that we might find as we enquire for the meaning of the term that Aristotle does endorse.

This chapter is divided in three main sections. The first section surveys Homer's and Aeschylus' works in order to pinpoint instances of "καλόν" predicated of objects of different sorts. Through this survey, we can get a sense of the variety of objects and situations that were thought to merit the predicate "καλόν" in Ancient Greek culture. Ideally, we should be able to observe some patterns in the use of the predicate from which we could infer a common meaning; we shall see, however, that identifying patterns and common meanings in this context is not an easy task.

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[4] *Topics I* and *Metaphysics V* offer a few examples of such reviews. More generally, it is known that Aristotle shows some regard for opinions on the matter he is about to engage with. See *Met. 993b12-14*: "It is just that we should be grateful, not only to those whose opinions we may share, but also to those who have expressed more superficial views; for these also contributed something, by developing before us the powers of thought."

[5] The list of Aristotle's writings compiled by Diogenes Laertius includes one book on the fine, but it has not survived (*DL V.24*).

The second section reflects on works that challenge common opinions about the nature of τὸ καλόν, namely, Xenophon's *Symposium* and Sappho's *Fragment 16*. In these works, the authors reflect about the common views on the nature of τὸ καλόν, *e.g.*, whether it refers to physical beauty, and whether it conveys general approbation.

Finally, in the third section we shall analyse the Platonic dialogue *Hippias Major*, focusing on the problem of whether an account of τὸ καλόν must make reference to the response it elicits in the observer.

This survey is not meant to be exhaustive. All of the works selected for this survey were probably known in intellectual circles, and some of them –Homer's and Aeschylus' at least– were most likely known to any well-educated citizen of the time. It is fair to assume that the use of the predicate "καλόν" and cognates that we see in these works was commonly known. Likewise, it is to be noted that the works selected for this chapter belong to different literary genera, which might have an impact in the nuance given the use of the predicate "καλόν". That is to say, reviewing a variety of literary genera will enrich this overview.

None of the works above offers a definition of "καλόν", and the ones that explore problems about the nature of τὸ καλόν do not offer solutions. But, as I have said, together they offer a good background that allows us to know what problems and discussions on the matter Aristotle was most likely familiar with.

1.1 Examples of usages of "τὸ καλόν" and cognates in Ancient Greek Literature

a) Homer

Throughout the *Iliad*, we find around 140 passages where things of different sorts are qualified as καλόν. In the *Odyssey*, this number goes up to more than 180. Let us focus on the *Iliad* to have a rough classification of the type of objects that Homer qualifies as καλόν:

1. Behaviour, speech or attitudes. For instance, Hephaestus says that Thetis' hospitality is καλή (*18.408*) whereas boasting is condemned as not καλόν (*17.19*). And Argeiphontes tells Priam καλά things about his son (24.388).[6]

2. People. Nireus is qualified as the κάλλιστος man (*2.673*). Hector reproaches Paris for not facing the war he has caused, and says that Achaeans are laughing because Paris'

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[6] See also 6.326, 8.400, 9.615, 13.116, 19.79, 21.440, 22.73, and 24.52.

excellence is to be καλός in appearance, but a coward inside (3.44). Trojan women are also referred to as καλαί (9.140, 9.272, 9.282). Sometimes, a body part is qualified as καλόν (e.g., skin 5.858, 11.352, 14.177; or Aethe's hair 23.525).[7]

3. Heroes. There is an Achilles' self-description of him as a hero and καλὸς καὶ μέγας (21.108)

4. Divinities. Ares and Pallas Athene, depicted in Achilles' shield, are described as καλὼ καὶ μεγάλω (18.518). Likewise, the goddesses Charis (18.383), Dawn (9.707), and Iris (5.354) also bear the attribute καλαί.

5. Natural objects. There is a καλή plane tree from whence flowed bright water (2.307). King Rhesus' horses are described as κάλλιστος (10.436). There is a καλός star to which Hector's son is compared (6.401). A cloud (14.351), a stream of water (16.229), and a river (21.361, 21.365) also merit the predicate.[8]

6. Places and dwelling. We have magnificent and καλαί palaces in 6.314 and 11.77. There are also καλαί cities mentioned in 9.152, 9.294, and 18.491. Καλαί Battlements appear in 22.3, and we read about καλά orchards in 6.195, 12.314, and 20.185.

7. Crafts. Approximately, half of the occurrences of the term "καλόν" and cognates refer to a craft or artefact. This is a broad category that can we can further divide in:

   a. A piece of art or performance. There are three passages where Homer talks about καλή music: 1.473, 1.604, and 18.570.

   b. Kitchenware, furniture and daily objects. We find some καλά cups, like the one Bellerophon gave Oeneus in return for his hospitality (6.220. See also 11.633); καλά baskets used for storing bread (9.217), a καλός cauldron (23.268), a καλός mixing bowl (23.742), dinner tables (11.629), chairs (18.390) and a chest (16.222). There are also some musical instruments, like Achilles' καλά lyre, in Il 9.187.

   c. Clothing. Footwear is often highlighted by Homer; there are καλά sandals in 2.43 and 24.340. We also find some καλά cloaks and tunics (2.43); and sometimes generic raiment is also called καλόν (3.388). We find some

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[7] See also 3.169, 3.392, 5.389, 8.305, 9.130, 9.556, 13.432, 16.175, 16.180, 19.285, 20.235, 21.398, 22.155, 22.323, 23.805.

[8] See also 2.850, 9.152, 9.294, 11.727, 17.55, 18.528, 18.562, 18.588, 20.8, 21.158, 21.238, 21.244, 21.352, 21.382, 22.318, 23.533.

accessories as well, like the καλός belt Oeneus gave Bellerophon to show him hospitality (6.219) and a καλαί chaplet (18.597).[9]

d. War gear. This is the commonest kind of item within this broad category, referred to as being καλόν. We can further split it into:

    i. Weapons. Shields are mentioned in 11.33 and 12.295; specifically, Achilles' shield is mentioned in 18.597, 19.380, and 22.315. There are blades in 15.713 and an axe in 13.611. We might include here the chariots (5.194) and even the bridles and breast straps for the horses (5.730, 19.393). Also, there is Hector's ship (15.705). And generic battle gear appears in 10.472, 11.110, 11.755, and 21.301.

    ii. Armour. Sometimes the armour as a whole is qualified as καλόν (Menelaus' 10.34; Agamemnon's 11.247; Achilles' 11.798, 17.187, 18.84, 19.11; Idomeneus' 13.241, 13.510; Sarpedon's 17.162; Hector's 21.317).[10] Sometimes, specific parts are mentioned, like the greaves (Paris' 3.331, Patroclus' 16.132, Achilles' 19.370; also 11.18, 1 8.459); and Achilles' helm (18.612).

This survey offers a first perspective on the usage of the term –mainly as an adjective, but also as an adverb. The rough classification I offer suggests that there is no obvious connection between the types of things that Homer qualifies as καλόν. This observation is relevant in the context of the search for the conditions for a correct application of the term "καλόν" and cognates, for no clear pattern has emerged as yet. The types of objects we have surveyed are so diverse that we can advance the hypothesis that, when Homer qualifies a given thing as being καλόν, the qualification is probably not intended to highlight the type to which the object belongs. That is to say, from the classification above, it seems as though the correct application of the predicate "καλόν" does not depend upon the type of object it is predicated of.[11]

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[9] See also 6.294, 10.22, 10.132, 14.185, 24.340, 24.588.

[10] See also 3.328, 5.621, 7.103, 17.91, 17.130, 17.760, 18.130, 18.137, 18.191, 18.466.

[11] For instance, the predicate "fast" is correctly applied only to motion –and, by extension, to objects capable of motion.

The type of object on its own does not shed much light onto the conditions for the correct application –nor on the meaning– of the term "καλόν". We can look, instead, for a quality or property upon which the predicate is applicable. For instance, many of the objects qualified as καλόν in the *Iliad* are made out of gold: a yoke (5.730), cups (6.221, 11.633, 24.101), Priam's treasures (18.290), the throne Hera promises to the God Sleep (14.238), sandals (24.340), the carvings on Achilles' shield (18.478-608), among others.

We can see that gold was highly appreciated –assuming that "καλόν" conveys appreciation– for it is said of things that are, most likely, not literally made out of gold. For instance, Aphrodite is said to be καλή and golden (19.282); and there is also a καλή golden cloud.

Maybe, we can extend the hypothesis to precious metals in general, for there are things that are not made out of gold and yet, they are said to be καλά. For instance, the ankle-pieces of Agamemnon's greaves are made out of silver (11.18). And Hephaestus forged Achilles' shield using bronze, tin, gold, and silver; apparently, he used bronze due to its resistance, whereas gold was used throughout the details of the carving (18.474).

As we keep looking, however, we notice that a type of material cannot be the ultimate grounds for the correct application of the predicate "καλόν". We cannot assume that Homer implies a metaphor every time he predicates καλόν of a person –as he does with golden Aphrodite (19.285).

Furthermore, a whole array of objects that are not made out of precious metals are, nonetheless, qualified as καλά, *e.g.*, a tree (2.307), a star (6.401, 22.318), animals (10.436, 11.727), water (16.229). And we even read about immaterial things said to be καλά, *i.e.*, music (1.473, 1.604, 18.570). All in all, the predicate "καλόν" does not seem to highlight the material out of which things are made.

Another possibility is that Homer uses the term "καλόν" to highlight not a property, but a certain character, say, nobility. We must note that none of the 140 passages in the *Iliad* where Homer qualifies something as καλόν refers to menial tasks or objects. For instance, none of the passages where Homer talks about καλά war gear refers to hoplites' weapons. Homer talks about kings and heroes' armour: Agamemnon's (11.18, 11.110, 11.247),

Menelaus' (22.315), Patroclus' (16.132), Sarpedon's (12.295, 17.162), Paris' (3.328, 3.331), and the Cretan archon Idomeneus' (13.241, 13.510).[12]

Household goods might be thought as a counter-example of the nobility highlighted by the predicate "καλόν". As I have said, Homer mentions plenty of cups, baskets, bowls, rugs, and the like. But we must bear in mind that every cup, every basket, every piece of furnishing in general that Homer mentions in the *Iliad*, belongs to a king, a hero, or a god. It seems as though every object is carefully placed to add up to the depiction of what, as a whole, conveys nobility.

All the characters are put in a constant battle where both wealth and royal honour are in dispute. The only servant that merits the predicate "καλή" is the wool-comber that meets Helen at the walls of Troy to tell her that Paris was safe at his chamber and waiting for her; this wool-comber turns out to be Aphrodite, and Helen sees through the disguise as soon as she notices the wool-comber's beautiful neck, her lovely bosom and her flashing eyes –an overall beauty proper of a goddess (3.395).

It is not an exaggeration to say, therefore, that every cup, every basket and every person that Homer regards as καλόν, is a royal cup, a royal basket, and a royal person –or a god.

Perhaps we can extend this hypothesis to behaviour. "Καλόν" predicated of an attitude or an act might imply that it is proper of royalty. For instance, when Achilles and Agamemnon make amends, so that Achilles can return to the combat, Agamemnon addresses the Danaans, saying that it would be καλόν to attend to Achilles' words, and not καλόν to disregard him (19.79).

To sum up, we can probably read "καλόν" in the *Iliad* as relating to what is proper of aristocracy or majestic. Sometimes, it seems to signal physical beauty in people or in objects. But even in those cases, Homer is talking about kings and even gods.

There are, however, three caveats. First, sometimes, one way of being καλόν can compete with another. For instance, in 3.39, we find an angry and offended Hector, scolding his youngest brother, Paris, who has just shrunk from facing Menelaus in a face-to-face

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[12] See also 15.713, were Homer describes a face-to-face combat where all weapons in general are qualified as καλά. The weapons in question are blades, φάσγανα, which are not the customary weapons for hoplites (like the spear δόρυ, or the short knife κοπίς).

combat; Hector tells him that it is shameful to have a prince on the grounds of his physical beauty instead of his courage.

Second, perhaps we should not assume that everything related to either gods or kings is, *ipso facto*, καλόν. For instance, in 24.50 onwards, Zeus and Hera are discussing whether Achilles' vengeance upon Hector has been "honourable" (κάλλιον, 24.52) and profitable; Zeus says it has not been so, because everybody –all gods, including himself– loved Hector; Hera says it was so, because Hector was merely human, whereas Achilles was of a divine birth. The truth is, gods themselves do not have a clear paradigm of what constitutes a καλόν behaviour.

Third and last, we probably should not over-read any meaning or implication of the usage of the expression "τὸ καλόν" in Homer's work as if Homer were offering a theoretical account. It is true that Homer is capable of making us feel like the most minimal object in a royal house is of the highest importance, like a cup (δέπας). In many cases, a cup is explicitly said to be καλόν, but not always,[13] and there is no explanation for this difference. We must bear in mind that we are contemplating poetry and that metrical conditions must be met.

b) *Aeschylus*

The term "καλόν" is sparsely used by Aeschylus. In some of his plays, we find hardly three occurrences (*e.g.*, *Persae* and *Prometheus vinctus*), and in no case there are more than ten. In fact, out of the three Athenian tragic poets, Aeschylus is the one who uses the expression "τὸ καλόν" and cognates the least. Given that Aeschylus' works also talk about royalty, heroes and divinities –just as Homer's– it is somewhat striking that this general term of commendation is rarely used, and it is worth reflecting upon why this could be so. I suggest we look at the *Agamemnon*, where we find eight passages that include the term "καλόν" or cognates.

Let us recall the characters and the plot. Agamemnon is king of Argos and Menelaus' brother; hence, he was one of the leaders for the expedition against Troy. He is married to Clytemnestra, Helen's sister.

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[13] Here are the 28 cups: 1.471, 1.584, 3.295, 4.262, 4.3, 6.220, 7.48, 8.162, 9.176, 9.203, 9.224, 9.656, 11.632, 12.311, 15.86, 15.88, 16.225, 16.254, 18.545, 23.196, 23.219, 23.656, 23.663, 23.667, 23.699, 24.101, 24.234, 24.285. The δέπας is explicitly καλόν only in 6.220, 11.632, 24.101 and 24.234.

Aegisthus is Agamemnon's cousin, only child left to Thyestes, whose other 12 children were butchered and served him for dinner by Atreus –Agamemnon's father– who sent Thyestes and Aegisthus into exile because Thyestes was a threat to Agamemnon's sovereignty.

Other important characters are Cassandra, a princess and prophetess whom Agamemnon brought from Troy as part of his booty; and the Chorus, formed by twelve old men from the Council.

Aegisthus starts an affair with Clytemnestra and puts together a plan to kill Agamemnon, so that both Aegisthus and Clytemnestra avenge the offences received. He wanted to avenge the murder of his siblings and the exile he had to suffer; she wanted to avenge the murder of her daughter Iphigeneia, whom Agamemnon sacrificed on the way to Troy.

We see that this play talks about vengeance, treachery, plotting, and its characters display mostly the hypocritical and wicked side of human nature. It is not a play about καλόν behaviour.

Aeschylus seems to make a rather loose and general use of the term "καλόν". Throughout the play, we find common Greek expressions such as "to do well".

For instance, in line 620, the Herald says that it is not possible for him to tell "τὰ καλά" that are lies; instead he will say the truth, namely, that Menelaus is likely to be dead. Here "τὰ καλὰ λέγειν" probably means simply "tell good news".

Likewise, in line 846, Agamemnon uses the expression "καλῶς ἔχειν" in his reply to the Chorus. The Chorus tells Agamemnon that it is time to discuss who has been loyal to him in his absence. Agamemnon agrees to the suggestion and adds that, as they consider public affairs, they must consider measures to maintain those things that are in good order ("καλῶς ἔχειν"), and remedy those that are not.

We read a similar usage in line 1044. Clytemnestra is greeting Cassandra, who comes to her household as part of Agamemnon's booty. Clytemnestra commands Cassandra to approach Zeus' altar. She says that she herself and Agamemnon will be gentle towards her – as mistress and master– because they know how to behave in prosperity, given that they both come from wealthy families, whereas people who are newly wealthy tend to be cruel to slaves:

> *one should feel much gratitude at having lords whose wealth is ancient;*   *1043*
>
> *for those who have reaped a fair harvest which they never hoped for*   *1044*
>
> *(οἵ δ᾽ οὔποτ᾽ ἐλπίσαντες ἤμησαν καλῶς)*
>
> *are cruel to slaves in all things…*   *1045*

Here, "καλῶς" qualifies the harvesting and probably suggests abundance. Clytemnestra says that those who obtain large profits unexpectedly, are not used to wealth and do not know how to show grace.

Other instance of the use of "καλόν" where it seems to signal general approbation is in line 447. Here, the Chorus is telling how people lament the loss of those who died in Troy, every time they receive an urn full of ashes instead of welcoming the man who headed out to the war. Then, the Chorus adds:

> *And they lament them, praising this man*   *445*
>
> *as skilled in battle,*   *446*
>
> *and that as having died a noble death amid the slaughter*   *447*
>
> *(τὸν δ᾽ ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ᾽)*

Even though the loss of those men is to be lamented, the Chorus' words show that dying in battle is, nonetheless, praiseworthy and noble.

We can compare this usage of "καλόν" with the one we read in line 1610. There, Agamemnon has been killed and hence Aegisthus is avenged. Clytemnestra has just unveiled her reasons for the murder and affair with Aegisthus. Then Aegisthus reveals his own motives, after which he says that, having taken revenge by plotting the murder, "even death would be καλόν to me now" (οὕτω καλὸν δὴ καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν ἐμοί). Aegisthus seems to be expressing merely his own satisfaction, and not necessarily that his death would be a noble one.

In line 447, we hear the Council in the Chorus say that dying in battle is καλόν. This is presumably the socially correct view, and since "καλόν" is paired with praiseworthiness, it probably conveys nobility and admiration. In line 1610, in contrast, we hear Aegisthus' words of satisfaction. He has avenged the murder of his siblings and his own exile; in his mind, balance has been restored. The intricate aspect of Aegisthus' situation consists in the way he

has restored the balance, namely, by betraying his king, which is not a noble action. In his case, dying might be καλόν but not praiseworthy.

Aegisthus might be suggesting that even under his circumstances, there might be some nobility in his death, were he to die then. But it is also possible that "καλόν" here points only to Aegisthus' personal approbation, conveying not nobility but pleasantness (hence, Aegisthus does not say that dying then would be ἀγαθόν).

Another passage where we read a similar ambiguity for "καλόν", where it might convey either general approbation (*e.g.*, nobility) or some aesthetic quality (*e.g.*, pleasantness) is in line 922, where Agamemnon mentions the fine embroideries (ποικίλος καλός) and purple carpets while he is asking his wife to stop the big entrance she prepared for him. He says that such a deployment of resources is not proper for mortals. Agamemnon might be simply describing the rich embroideries, in which case "καλόν" might convey an aesthetic quality (*e.g.* that the embroideries are beautiful). But Agamemnon points out that the scene is worthy of gods, which suggests that "καλόν" could also convey nobility, praiseworthiness, or general approbation. Agamemnon is well-aware that stepping on the path prepared by his wife will show his arrogance, for the καλός embroidery and purple carpet are proper for gods and those blessed by them. And he adds that the greatest blessing from the gods is not to think even of doing something bad, but he has already committed a terrible crime. Hence, he knows he is not entitled to any reception that suggests he is noble and praiseworthy.

It is to be noted that, in order to highlight physical beauty, Aeschylus seems to prefer the term "εὔμορφος", as it happens in line 454, where the Chorus praises the soldiers who died in their beauty's bloom and are buried in Troy.

The only individual who is qualified as καλός is not a human, but a goddess, namely, Artemis. Early in the play, the Chorus is reporting what the Greek army's prophet told the Greeks. The prophet speaks in lines 126-155. He says that Artemis is angry at the Greeks and favours Troy. In line 140, the prophet refers to the goddess as well-minded (εὔφρων) ἁ καλά. As a result of Artemis' enmity towards the Greeks, the prophet suggested calling for Apollo's support (150).

That "καλόν" conveys a sense of general approbation and nobility can be best seen in the fact that, besides the goddess Artemis, nobody deserves the title "καλός". The main characters of the play are shown as faulty in one way or another, in a higher or lesser degree.

Agamemnon, Aegisthus, and Clytemnestra are clearly wicked. But even the Chorus and Cassandra are incapable of showing their worthiness, given their unfortunate circumstances (for the Chorus is old and uncapable of saving the king, while Cassandra is in a state of slavery). Nobody in the play is in conditions of performing noble actions.

As a consequence, while some people get to be called κακός (*e.g.*, in 1665, the Chorus calls Aegisthus κακός) nobody in the play is called καλός.

1.2 Problems and questions about τὸ καλόν in Ancient Greek Literature

a) *Xenophon*

In the previous section, we have surveyed some uses of the expression "καλόν" and cognates in Homer's and Aeschylus' works. We have found that the term in question can be used to qualify a variety of objects, *e.g.,* household items, war gear, people, divinities, landscapes, among others. Both Homer and Aeschylus –at least in the works we reviewed– strongly suggest that "καλόν" conveys nobility, praiseworthiness, and general approbation. But there are passages –even if only a few– where "καλόν" seems to refer to physical beauty. For instance, in the *Iliad* (3.44) we heard Hector reproaching Paris for his lack of courage; Hector tells Paris that the Achaeans are laughing because he is a prince only in virtue of his physical attractiveness, for he is not brave.

We can find a similar contrast between "καλόν" as referring to physical appearance and as conveying nobility –either in a moral or in a social way– in other places. I suggest we look at it from the perspective of Xenophon's *Symposium.*

Xenophon introduces his work as a reflection about common practices of noble men:

> Well, what gentlemen do in their serious moments is very much worth recording, but so too, in my view, are the activities of their lighter moments, and I want to show you the people I was with when I came to this conclusion.

> Ἀλλ᾽ ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ τῶν καλῶν κἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἔργα οὐ μόνον τὰ μετὰ σπουδῆς πραττόμενα ἀξιομνημόνευτα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐν ταῖς παιδιαῖς. οἷς δὲ παραγενόμενος ταῦτα γιγνώσκω δηλῶσαι βούλομαι. (I.1)

We can start by noting that, in Xenophon's opinion, the activities of noble men are worthy of being remembered. We notice also that Xenophon qualifies the people he is about to describe

as "καλοί κἀγαθοί", *i.e.*, noble and excellent men, or simply, gentlemen.[14] That is to say, the adjective "καλοί", is being used here in the conventional phrase that highlights aristocratic connotations.

But we should not assume that this is the dominant meaning conveyed by the use of "καλόν". As I said, this dialogue actually brings in the contrast between "καλόν" as referring to the physical beauty and as referring to nobility of character or lineage. Two scenes in the dialogue are remarkable in this regard.

Xenophon's *Symposium* is the recollection of a drinking party hosted by Callias. At the party, the entertainment included a spectacle with music, songs, and dancing. The overall appreciation is that the entertainers are καλοί and it provokes pleasure in the onlookers. People take delight (ἡδονή) in the appearance of the performers, which is easy to understand: youth together with good proportions in a body nicely shaped by exercise and dancing.

But the guests at the party take pleasure also in the spectacle. The sensory aspect of τὸ καλόν – physical beauty, perhaps– seems to involve a complex appreciation: spectators take pleasure in the music, songs, and dancing, in addition to the good proportions of the dancing boy.

One can certainly ask to what extent Socrates and the other guests perceive the dancing boy as good looking merely because he is handsome, or because he is a dancer and his body is well suited for dancing:

> Then the boy did a dance. Socrates said, "Did you notice? He's a good looking boy, but he looks even better when he's dancing than when he's at rest."
>
> ἐκ τούτο ὁ παῖς ὠρχήσατο. Καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης εἶπεν· Εἴδετ᾽, ἔφη, ὡς καλὸς ὁ παῖς ὢν ὅμως σὺν τοῖς σχήμασιν ἔτι καλλίων φαίνεται ἢ ὅταν ἡσυχίαν ἔχῃ; (II.15)

This question helps to introduce the distinction I have mentioned before, between "καλόν" as referring merely to sensory beauty, and as referring to more complex aspects (*e.g.,* the artistic virtuosity of the dancing boy). The dialogue does not offer enough resources to work thoroughly this distinction, but Socrates certainly puts his finger on it.

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[14] We'll find in II.4 and III.4 καλοκἀγαθία, translated by Bowen as "the essence of gentleman". (Bowen, 1998)

It is interesting to note that, in other passages, Socrates refers to physical beauty in terms of "μορφή" (VIII.15), or "εἶδος" (VIII.26), whereas he refers to the character with the expression "καλὸς κἀγαθός". For instance

> So too with the beloved: as soon as he knows that mere presentation of **good looks** will bring his lover under control, he's likely to take things easy in all other respects; by contrast, anyone who realises that he won't keep a friendship unless he too is **a gentleman** is bound to mind his behaviour.

> Καὶ μὴν καὶ τῶν παιδικῶν ὅς μὲν ἂν εἰδῇ ὅτι ὁ **τοῦ εἴδους** ἐπαρκῶν ἄξει τοῦ ἐραστοῦ, εἰκὸς αὐτὸν τἆλλα ῥᾳδιουργεῖν· ὃς δ᾽ ἂν γιγνώσκῃ ὅτι ἂν μὴ **καλὸς κἀγαθὸς** ᾖ, οὐ καθέξει τὴν φιλίαν, τοῦτον προσήκει μᾶλλον ἀρετῆς ἐπιμελεῖσθαι. (VIII.26)

The sharp contrast between the mere appearance and the character —with the term "καλόν" reserved for the latter, helps us emphasise also the contrast between this use and the previous one, where "καλόν" is meant as a commendation of the physical appearance of the dancing boy.

The second scene in the dialogue that insists on contrasting "καλόν" as referring to physical attractiveness, and as referring to the character is in chapter V, where Critobulus and Socrates engage in a beauty contest. In the end (V.10), everyone voted for Critobulus as the handsomest of the two, despite the fact that, according to Critobulus' description of what it is for the eyes, a nose, and a mouth to be καλά, Socrates would have won the beauty contest (V.4).

The competition, however, is not settled until the last chapter of the dialogue, where we hear Lycon —Autolycus' father— addressing Socrates:

> By Hera, Socrates! You seem to me to be a truly noble and excellent man.

> Νὴ τὴν Ἥραν, ὦ Σώκρατες, καλός γε κἀγαθὸς δοκεῖς μοι ἄνθρωπος εἶναι. (IX.1)

It seems as though, despite the votes having favoured Critobulus in the beauty contest, Lycon wanted to highlight that Socrates is καλός in the important way, namely, the one that refers to the character (*i.e.*, the one that is closely linked to being ἀγαθός).

Yet again, we should not assume this to be Xenophon's conclusion. In the last scene of the dialogue, there is a second performance, this time a play portraying Dionysus and Ariadne as lovers. As the performance reaches the climax and the actors embrace and kiss, Xenophon says that the spectators saw that the boy featuring the role of Dionysus —the same dancing boy as before— was truly καλός (IX.5).

The party is over and everybody leaves. Xenophon has described a discussion that repeatedly contrasts "καλόν" as referring to physical appearance, and as referring to moral character. There is no conclusion as to whether these –physical attractiveness and nobility of character or lineage– are two types of the same thing, with some aspects in common. In both cases, we can notice the general sense of commendation. But it seems as though Xenophon wanted to emphasise the differences. For instance, both the dancing boy and Socrates merit the predicate "καλός"; all the guests at the drinking party seemed to think so. But the way in which they both merit the predicate is clearly different. Perhaps, in some deeper level, the two ways in which a thing can merit the predicate "καλόν" can be related; but Xenophon left this possibility unexplored.

b) Sappho

Thus far, we have learned that the use of "τὸ καλόν" and cognates conveys a general sense of commendation. In the first section of this chapter, we learned that in Homer's and Aeschylus' works, τὸ καλόν is closely linked to nobility and aristocracy. In this section, we already learned that the general sense of commendation can refer sometimes to physical beauty. Now we are about to learn that "τὸ καλόν" can also be used to express a private attitude.

Sappho's Fragment 16 is a declaration of love in which Sappho sets the object of her affection as the thing that merits the predicate "καλόν" in the highest degree, in contrast with more traditional views. Here we have the fragment:

Some say thronging cavalry, some say foot soldiers, others call a fleet the most beautiful of things the dark earth offers, but I say it's whatever you love best.	16 ο]ἰ μὲν ἰππήων στρότον οἰ δὲ πέσδων οἰ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπ[ὶ] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὄτ- [_]τω τις ἔραται·

| And it's easy to make this understood by everyone, for she who surpassed all human kind in beauty, Helen, abandoning her husband—that best of men—went sailing off to the shores of Troy and never spent a thought on her child or loving parents: when the goddess seduced her wits and left her to wander, she forgot them all, she could not remember anything but longing, and lightly straying aside, lost her way. | 16.5
πά]γχυ δ' εὔμαρες σύνετον πόησαι
π]άντι τ[ο]ῦτ', ἀ γὰρ πόλυ περσκέθοισα
κάλλοσ [ἀνθ]ρώπων Ἐλένα [τὸ]ν ἄνδρα
[_]τὸν [   ].στον
καλλ[ίποι]σ' ἔβα 'ς Τροΐαν πλέοι[σα

16.10
κωὐδ[ὲ πα]ΐδος οὐδὲ φίλων το[κ]ήων
πά[μπαν] ἐμνάσθη, ἀλλὰ παράγαγ' αὔταν
[_]σαν
[   ]αμπτον γὰρ [
[   ]...κούφως τ[   ]οη.[.]ν |
| But that reminds me now: Anactoria, she's not here, and I'd rather see her lovely step, her sparkling glance and her face than gaze on all the troops in Lydia in their chariots and glittering armour.[15] | 16.15
..]με νῦν Ἀνακτορί[ας ὀ]νέμναι-
_σ' οὐ] παρεοίσας,
τᾶ]ς <κ>ε βολλοίμαν ἔρατόν τε βᾶμα
κἀμάρυχμα λάμπρον ἴδην προσώπω
ἢ τὰ Λύδων ἄρματα †κανοπλοισι

16.20
[_   μ]άχεντας.[16] |

Two things in Sappho's poem are relevant for our research: first, that she uses the superlative "κάλλιστον". This usage shows Sappho's recognition that the predicate in question might not refer to an absolute attribute, but to one that can come in different degrees. The second thing is that Sappho sets herself aside from the common opinions, not only regarding the thing she deems as κάλλιστον, but also regarding how to decide the matter. Allow me to elaborate.

In the previous section, we found that "καλόν" is predicated of a wide variety of objects, which suggested the possibility of it having different meanings. This possibility seems confirmed by the contrast we read in Xenophon's *Symposium,* between "καλόν" as referring to physical beauty, and as referring to moral character.

Now we read in Sappho not a comparison between different types of καλόν –or different meanings of "καλόν"– but a comparison regarding the degrees to which things merit the predicate "καλόν".

The second thing that is remarkable is that Sappho departs from what was, perhaps, the traditional view about things that merit the predicate "καλόν". Sappho recalls three things

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[15] Anne Carson's translation, (Carson, 2003).
[16] There are actually 32 lines, but from lines 21-32, the poem is so fragmentary that it hardly adds anything relevant to what interests this paper.

that are normally regarded as καλόν: a cavalry, foot soldiers, and a fleet. The three of them are military related situations. But it is not obvious the way in which any of these things merit the predicate "καλόν" in a superlative degree. It is not even clear whether Sappho means those things from the spectator's point of view –*e.g.*, watching a military parade– or from the perspective of someone who belongs to the military corps.

In the first case, perhaps Sappho points at the admiration elicited by watching a display of power and might. From the perspective of the one who belongs to the military corps, perhaps Sappho is alluding to the value bestowed on the military way of life. In any case, "κάλλιστον" could convey not only approbation, but also an evaluation, that is to say, we deem κάλλιστον that which we value the most.

If this were so, then lines 3-4 could be read as Sappho's saying that, in her view, one values the most whatever one loves.

Sappho's stance in the matter is interesting not only because she departs from traditional views. She also changes the way to identify the κάλλιστον object.

Thus far, we have learned that "καλόν" conveys a general sense of commendation. We found all sorts of items belonging to royal households, heroes, and divinities, that merit the predicate "καλόν" on account of their belonging to such a noble context –a characteristic that was publicly acknowledged. We also found that "τὸ καλόν" can refer to physical beauty, and even in this respect, public acknowledgement is shown. It seems as though "τὸ καλόν" referred to a property or set of properties that belonged undoubtedly to the object bearing the predicate. As a result, the object would be perceived and judged as καλόν by the community. Thus, all the guests at the drinking party recalled by Xenophon are agreed on the fact that the dancing boy is καλός.

In Sappho's proposal, in contrast, we find a shift from identifying the property of an object to the private act of bestowing value. With this shift, Sappho calls attention to the fact that different people might regard different things as καλά. The fragment above starts by appealing to common views on the matter, but Sappho makes clear that even within common views, not everybody regards the same thing as the κάλλιστον.

The perspective advanced by Sappho entails that "τὸ καλόν" does not necessarily express an objective property; it could express the experience of the onlooker, which introduces a rather subjective element. Given that the experience might differ from one person to another, then it is possible that we predicate "καλόν" as a result of a personal

preference. Thus, Sappho says that, in her view, the κάλλιστον thing is whatever one loves the most.

In addition to the emphasis on the subjective side of the phenomenon, Sappho also casts light on the manifestation: loving and valuing something arouses one's desire. Thus, in lines 15-20, we hear Sappho longing for her beloved Anactoria. Sappho wished to see Anactoria, rather than any military parade.

All in all, regarding the usage of the predicate "καλόν" and cognates, we find in Sappho a departure from traditional views, and a shift from a sense of general approbation to the private act of bestowing value and thus establishing personal preferences between what is καλόν and what is κάλλιστον.

1.3 The Platonic approach to the question, "What is τὸ καλόν?"

Over the course of this chapter, we have seen that the predicate "καλόν" is fairly common in Ancient Greek, and that it can be said of a vast array of types of objects. From this basic survey, it is clear that the predicate is used to convey:

- Artistic virtuosity

- Nobility of character and lineage

- Physical beauty,

- General approbation,

- And personal taste and preference.

Likewise, the variety of uses and situations we have encountered has brought to our attention some questions. For instance, Is there a specific property or set of properties on account of which objects merit the predicate "καλόν"? Is general approbation of an object enough indication of the presence of τὸ καλόν in it? What is the relation between the object and subjective aspects of being καλόν?

It is no surprise that some of these questions should permeate into the Socratic tradition of enquiring about ethical and evaluative matters. In particular, the platonic

dialogue *Hippias Major* addresses the question What is τὸ καλόν?[17] Here are Socrates and Hippias' attempts to answer it:

- A beautiful maiden (287e2-289d5)

- Gold (289d6-291c9)

- Wealth, health, honour, being able to afford a suitable burial for one's parents and getting a suitable burial by one's children (291d1-297d9)

- The appropriate (293c8-294e10)

- The able and the useful (295a1-296d3)

- The beneficial (296d4-297d9)

- Pleasures through sight and hearing (297d10-303d10)[18]

That Aristotle was acquainted with the dialogue –or at least with the discussion of the nature of τὸ καλόν in the terms presented in the dialogue– can be seen in the fact that some of the possible answers discussed here are mentioned by Aristotle in different contexts. For instance, in *Top. VI.7* Aristotle discusses how to analyse definitions; among his examples, we read, "[when one defines] for instance, "τὸ καλόν" as what is pleasant to the sight or the hearing…" (*146a21-146a33*), which resembles the seventh answer proposed in the *Hippias Major* (297d10-303d10). Likewise, in *Top. V.5* Aristotle discusses how to criticise faulty arguments and, among his examples, he says, "A man who has said that the appropriate is a property of τὸ καλόν has assigned the thing itself as its own property (for the appropriate and τὸ καλόν are the same thing)…" (135a12-14), and the appropriate is the fourth candidate to account for the nature of τὸ καλόν in the *Hippias Major*.

In what follows, I do not intend to analyse whether the proposed answers are successful. Instead, I want to call attention to one of the problems the speakers face in the course of their quest, namely, whether a correct definition of "τὸ καλόν" must include a reference to the response τὸ καλόν elicits in the observer.

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[17] There is an inconclusive discussion about the authorship of the dialogue. Dorothy Tarrant proposed that the dialogue was written by a well-accomplished student who shows a tendency to combine metaphysical with logical issues, assuming an incomplete Theory of Ideas (Tarrant, 1928, p. lxiv). Paul Woodruff, in contrast, favours the interpretation of the *Hippias Major* as Plato's work, entailing the Theory of Ideas in its earliest stages (Woodruff, 1982, p. xii)

For the purpose of this research, we do not need to assume a stance in either direction. As Cooper says in his edition of Plato's works, "… the philosophical content seems genuinely Platonic." (Cooper, 1997, p. 899).

[18] The above is Woodruff's proposed structure (Woodruff, 1982). Hoerber, however, analyses the dialogue in threesomes and, in order to preserve this arrangement, takes "The able and the useful" together with "The beneficial" (Hoerber, 1964). I shall follow Woodruff's didactic sectioning of the dialogue.

I shall approach the matter in two steps. First, I shall point at the opening scene of the dialogue, where Socrates introduces not only the question, but also the conditions for a satisfactory answer. Next, I shall show how the speakers arrive at the problem of whether the definition of "τὸ καλόν" must make reference to the response it elicits in the observer. I shall focus my analysis on lines 294a1-5, where Socrates asks whether the appropriate makes things be fine, seem fine, or neither. I shall discuss how Hippias and Socrates disagree on whether noticing the presence of τὸ καλόν is essential to its nature and therefore part of its definition.

a) The opening scene and the question

The dialogue starts with an encounter between Hippias and Socrates. As they greet each other, Hippias explains that he is come to Athens to deliver a speech –which he does for a living– this time on the subject of fine activities (καλὰ ἐπιτήδευμα 286b1).

Having heard that, Socrates recalls a discussion he held with an acquaintance of his, whose name we do not get to know (at least not initially), who reproached Socrates that he criticises speeches as either fine or faulty. Here is Socrates' account:

> S: He questioned me this way, really insultingly, "Socrates, how do you know what sorts of things are fine (καλόν) and ugly (αἰσχρόν)? Look, would you be able to say what the fine is? (286c5-286d1)

Socrates tells Hippias that he was unable to answer and thus he left the gathering being rather upset, and resolved to ask for help to the first wise man he happened to encounter. As it happens, Hippias is the first wise man Socrates has encountered since that discussion. Hence, Socrates asks for his aid:

> S: Teach me enough about what the fine is itself, and try to answer me with the greatest precision possible, so I won't be a laughing stock again for having been refuted a second time. (286d5-286e2).

As Hippias agrees to offer the solicited help, Socrates proceeds to the question that purportedly, he had received from the Questioner, "What is the fine?" (τί ἐστι τὸ καλόν;) (287d4, 287e1).

According to this opening scene, there are three characters in the dialogue: Hippias, Socrates, and an anonymous Questioner. The main question to be discussed is "What is the

fine?". There are a couple of aspects in the opening scene of the dialogue that are worth bearing in mind in order to get a better grasp on the problem I shall discuss in the next section.

First, it is worth noting the two questions the Questioner posed to Socrates:

1. How do *you* know –so that you can tell *me*– what sorts of things are fine and ugly? (πόθεν δέ μοι σὺ οἶσθα ὁποῖα καλὰ καὶ αἰσχρά;)

2. Would you be able to say what the fine is? (ἔχοις ἂν εἰπεῖν τί ἐστι τὸ καλόν;)

In addition, Socrates qualifies the way the Questioner addresses him as rather insulting (ὑβριστικῶς).

The first of these two preliminary questions poses a translation challenge. The sentence emphasises two pronouns, unnecessary in Greek: σύ (you, in nominative) and μοί (to me, in dative).

I can see at least two possible paraphrases than can convey the emphasis on both pronouns while keeping the tone indicated by the adverb.

For the first option, we can read the pronouns and the adverb as entailing a sarcastic reference to Socrates' ugliness, or to his confessed ignorance, or to both. We could paraphrase the question as, "What could you, of all people, possibly teach me, of all people?". It would certainly be ironic to see Socrates –who claims to know nothing, and is such an ugly man– discussing the nature of τὸ καλόν, especially understood as physical beauty.

At this moment in the dialogue, the opposition between Socrates and the Questioner –*i.e.*, between the σύ and the μοί– could be read as underscoring Socrates' lack of authority on the matter, in contrast with some purported authority on the Questioner's side. However, towards the end of the dialogue, it is revealed –or at least, it is strongly suggested– that the anonymous Questioner is no other than Socrates himself (304d3). Therefore, the relation σύ-μοί does not necessarily mark an opposition between Socrates and the Questioner.

Another possible way to read the first of the preliminary questions is to read the pronoun σύ as a way to emphasise that the Questioner is asking for Socrates' first-hand knowledge, as opposed to, say, a report of what Socrates has heard from the experts or from the crowd. The Questioner would be asking, "How do you yourself know what fineness is?". The pronoun μοί could be read as the Questioner's requiring that, whatever Socrates knew about fineness, it had to be communicable.

This way of reading the pronoun μοί connects nicely with the second of the preliminary questions, "Would you be able to say what the fine is?". In this second question,

the main verb is "to say" (εἰπεῖν). By adding this second question, the Questioner would be making clear that he demands that Socrates' knowledge should be transferrable by words, which might entail two things: that speaking is the way for Socrates to share with the Questioner what he knows about fineness; and that this is a way to test if and to what extent Socrates really knows anything about fineness.

It must be noted that there does not seem to be a restriction on the type or source of knowledge the Questioner has in mind, for οἶδα is a standard Greek word for "knowledge". Socrates could refer to a definition, to knowledge grounded on sense perception, to the grasping of a Platonic Form. Any type of knowledge is admitted, provided that Socrates is able to translate his grasping or experience into words and that Socrates refers to a first-hand knowledge of fineness (*i.e.*, his own intellectual grasping, or his own appreciation).

Now that we are aware of the restrictions for a satisfactory answer, we can proceed to discuss how the speakers in the dialogue arrive at the problem of whether a satisfactory definition of "τὸ καλόν" must include a reference to the response that τὸ καλόν elicits in the observer.

b) *Seeming fine and being fine*

Towards the fourth attempt to answer the question, "What is fineness?", the speakers reach a fundamental disagreement on whether the account of the nature of τὸ καλόν must make reference to the response it elicits.[19]

> The fourth proposal to account for the nature of τὸ καλόν is that it is the appropriate:

> Soc: See here, then. What do we say about the appropriate: is it what makes –by coming to be present– each thing to which it is present be seen to be fine, or be fine, or neither?

> Hip: I think it is what makes things be seen to be fine. For example, when someone puts on clothes and shoes that suit him, even if he's ridiculous, he is seen to be finer. (294a1-294a5)

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[19] The fourth attempt to account for the nature of fineness bears significance also from a dramatic point of view. It is the first proposal that makes no appeal to popular opinion. And more importantly, it is the first time that Socrates and Hippias engage into the conversation because they are actually looking for fineness, as opposed to the previous attempts, in which Socrates is looking for a way to refute the Questioner (286d5-286e2). In Ludlam's words, "This passage marks the transition from eristic to dialectic debate, with the Questioner changing from opponent to ally in the common search for truth." (Ludlam, 1991, p. 107)

Notice how Socrates' question offers three alternatives to describe the relationship between the appropriate and the objects it comes in:

i)   The appropriate makes things seem fine (φαίνεσθαι καλά)

ii)   The appropriate makes things be fine (εἶναι καλά)

iii)   Neither

The question for us, readers, is whether the first option –that the appropriate makes things seem fine– refers to mere appearances. It must be noted that the verb "φαίνεσθαι" conveys the idea of being seen or thought. It points towards the state of awareness achieved by experiencing the object that has been revealed (*i.e.,* the passive sense of "φαίνω"). This experience can result in getting either evidence or just a mere impression. In any case, it refers to a first-hand experience, in the sense of seeing by oneself, hearing by oneself, one own's comprehension, and the like –as opposed to hearing about the matter, or reading about the matter, and the like.

In reply to Socrates' question, Hippias says that, in his opinion, the appropriate makes things be noticed as finer, a claim that is immediately refuted by Socrates:

> Hip: I think the appropriate is what makes things be seen to be fine. For example, when someone puts on clothes and shoes that suit him, even if he's ridiculous, he is seen to be finer.
> Soc: Then if the appropriate makes things be seen to be finer than they are, it would be a kind of deceit about the fine, and it wouldn't be what we are looking for, would it, Hippias? I thought we were looking for that by which all fine things are fine. (294a4-294b2)

Hippias' answer seems rushed and is easily dismissed by Socrates, which creates the impression of Hippias being frankly unskilled. Socrates refutes Hippias' answer on two grounds: first, that Hippias is suggesting that the appropriate makes things seem finer than they actually are; and second, that Hippias is thereby suggesting that the appropriate affects things only in appearance, not in reality. Since they are looking for that which makes things be fine –and not seem finer than they really are– then the appropriate cannot be what accounts for the nature of τὸ καλόν.[20]

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[20] It seems as though Socrates understands the verb "φαίνεσθαι" in Hippias' answer as referring to mere appearances, disregarding an ambiguity in its use. Completed by an infinitive, "φαίνεσθαι καλά" means that the appropriate makes things seem fine; completed by a participle, it means that the appropriate makes things be plainly fine. Hippias' answer does not necessarily refer to mere appearances.

The answer offered by Hippias, however, follows the indications that Socrates has established throughout the analyses of the previous attempts to answer the question, "What is τὸ καλόν?". In Hippias' answer, we can observe the following structure: whatever Φ accounts for the nature of τὸ καλόν, it affects object x in such a way that when Φ is in x, Φ makes x be seen as fine (φαίνεσθαι καλόν). This structure was first introduced during the discussion of gold as a way to account for the nature of τὸ καλόν –which is the second attempt in the dialogue (289d1-291c9).

At 289d3, the Questioner qualifies the fine itself as that "...by which everything else is beautified (κοσμεῖται) and seen to be fine (καλὰ φαίνεσθαι) when that form is added to it".[21] Hippias proposes that gold is what best answers to the Questioner's requirement, and he uses the same structure in his answer.

As they progress in their analysis, Hippias suggests that gold makes things fine only when it is appropriate. The Questioner sums up the discussion with the following question, "Don't ivory and gold make things seem fine (καλὰ ποιεῖ φαίνεσθαι) when they're appropriate, but ugly when they are not?" (290d1). Hippias agrees and adds, "What is fitting to a thing, this makes the thing fine (καλὸν ποιεῖ)" (290d5-6). Hippias changes "to make things seem fine" (καλὰ ποιεῖ φαίνεσθαι) for "to make things fine" (καλὸν ποιεῖ). Neither Socrates nor the Questioner object to this change, which indicates that, at this point in the dialogue, "φαίνεσθαι καλά" is not considered as referring necessarily to mere appearance.

It is not that Hippias is oblivious to the difference between mere appearance and reality. The relationship between being fine and seeming fine is an issue that arises early in the dialogue and builds up in complexity until Socrates calls attention to it on 294a1. His example is certainly not the most successful; for he appeals to the clothes as means to making a person finer; but he is following the previous teachings of the Questioner, who has said that the fine itself is what beautifies (κοσμεῖται) the object it impinges on. Hippias' promptness in replying means that he has been attentive to the conversation, not that he is unskilled in arguing.

Socrates has stated that they are concerned with whatever makes things be fine (εἶναι καλά) and not with whatever makes things seem fine (φαίνεσθαι καλά). Even though the first part of his refutation suggested that Socrates assumed Hippias' answer to imply that τὸ καλόν

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[21] Likewise, it is Socrates who first introduced the comparative "καλλίων"during the analysis of the second attempt to account for the nature of τὸ καλόν (291a5-b6).

is a matter of mere appearances, and thus it was the wrong answer, the second part of Socrates' refutation aims at showing that seeing an object as fine is irrelevant to decide whether such an object is indeed fine. Here is his argument:

> Soc: Is it impossible for things that are really fine not to be seen to be fine, since what makes them be seen is present?
> Hip: It's impossible.
> Soc: Then shall we agree to this, Hippias: that everything really fine –customs and activities both– are both thought to be and seen to be (καὶ δοξάζεσθαι καλὰ εἶναι καὶ φαίνεσθαι), fine always, by everybody? Or just the opposite, that they're unknown, and individuals in private and cities in public both have more strife and contention about them than anything?
> Hip: Much more the latter, Socrates. They are unknown.
> Soc: They wouldn't be, if "being seen to be" had been added to them. And that would have been added if the appropriate were fine and made things not only be but be seen to be fine. Therefore, if the appropriate is what makes things fine, it would be the fine we're looking for, but it would not be what makes things be seen to be fine. Or, if the appropriate is what makes things be seen to be fine, it wouldn't be the fine we're looking for. Because that makes things be; but by itself it could not make things be seen to be and be, nor could anything else. Let us choose whether we thing the appropriate is what makes things be seen to be, or be, fine.
> Hip: It's what makes things be seen to be, in my opinion, Socrates.
> Soc: Oh dear! It's gone and escaped from us, our chance to know what the fine is, since the appropriate has been seen to be something other than fine.
> Hip: God yes, Socrates. And I think that's very strange. (294c5-294e10)

Since Socrates and Hippias are looking for the fine –which is what makes things be fine– it is obvious that they are not concerned with whatever makes things only appear as though they were fine. But it is not obvious why being seen as fine is not relevant in deciding whether the object thus seen is, in fact, fine. We know that appearance alone is not enough to decide on the matter. But we would have expected fine objects to be seen as fine.

Socrates makes the point that, if being fine were necessarily related to actually appearing fine –so that any observer would see the fineness– then not only the appearance of fineness would be enough to decide on whether an object is actually fine, but also people would agree on whether an object is fine (for fineness would be noticeable) which does not seem to be the case.

It is worth noting that Socrates broadened the discussion to include both to seem and to be thought (καὶ δοξάζεσθαι καὶ φαίνεσθαι). The new examples –customs and activities– are not based on sense perception. This way, Socrates suggests a connection between mere appearance and opinion. If appearance is not reliable in judging whether an object is fine, neither is opinion. Socrates' stance is clear, and his argument is solid.

There are two observations that I would like to make. First, Socrates' argument assumes that, if fineness were noticeable, then everybody would be equally able to notice fineness, always, which is not necessarily the case. Socrates makes no concession as to whether some people can be better fit to judge whether an object is fine. Accordingly, Socrates and Hippias would be equally qualified to judge whether an object is fine, even though the assumption at the beginning of the dialogue was that Hippias was the expert and Socrates was a layman on the matter.

Socrates' argument does not take into account that there might be special requirements to appreciate the fineness of an object. For instance, assuming that the statue of Athena is a fine object, Socrates makes no reference to the need to adopt a certain perspective to appreciate the fineness.

The second observation I want to make is that Socrates' stance implies a big departure from all traditional views on the nature of τὸ καλόν. Throughout this chapter, we have seen that, either as referring to physical beauty or as referring to moral character, "τὸ καλόν" conveys approbation; it seems to convey a positive evaluation, and even commendation, all of which refer to the response or attitude that τὸ καλόν elicits in the observer. It would be quite difficult, to say the least, to propose a definition of a term that implies commendation –what it is to be commendable– without a reference to the attitudinal aspect.

As we know, the discussion in this dialogue is not settled. Socrates is left disheartened by the idea of getting insulted again by the Questioner (304d1). Hippias, on his side, comes back to his original idea of relying on what people can perceive and appreciate to decide whether something is fine, namely, the fine thing is being able to present a speech so finely that one can persuade people (304b1). Hippias' assumption is that the fineness of a speech depends on the way it affects the listeners. His conclusion is consistent with his previous examples; recall that, during the discussion of the appropriate, he explains that a man appears finer when he is properly dressed. Hippias points at the reaction the man arouses in the observers: when fineness is not present in the man, he is a laughingstock (394a3).

The dialogue has shown that the discussion about the nature of τὸ καλόν cannot ignore entirely whether fine things are such as to be seen as fine. This is the fundamental disagreement Socrates and Hippias cannot overcome.

1.4 Final Remarks

In this chapter, we have seen that the predicate "καλόν" and cognates are fairly common in Ancient Greek literature. In fact, the objects and situations "καλόν" is predicated of can be so different that there is not a straightforward meaning that can cover such a variety of uses.

There is a general sense of commendation attached to it that can be predicated of moral character as well as of physical appearance. But we have not found a property or set of properties on account of which things clearly merit the predicate "καλόν".

This situation gives rise to a number of questions about what is involved in being καλόν, questions that have been taken up by thinkers of the time. Xenophon, for instance, casts light on a distinction between "τὸ καλόν" as referring to nobility of lineage and moral character, on the one hand, and to physical beauty, on the other. Whether one of these aspects is thought to take priority over the other, is not settled by Xenophon. Nor is it settled whether there is a deeper property common to both aspects.

Sappho highlighted the subjective aspect of τὸ καλόν, and the response it elicits in the observer, namely, desire and even love. Likewise, the subjective aspect gives rise to disagreement in the appreciation and judgement on whether an object truly merits the predicate "καλόν".

Finally, in the *Hippias Major*, we found a similar tension between the objective and subjective aspects of τὸ καλόν. Ultimately, Hippias and Socrates cannot reach a conclusion regarding the definition of "τὸ καλόν" because they disagree on whether such a definition must make reference to the response τὸ καλόν elicits in the observer.

We now have a solid background of the usages of the predicate "καλόν" and cognates that were common in Ancient Greek literature, as well as of some problems and discussions about the nature of τὸ καλόν that were most likely known to Aristotle.

As I have suggested in the introduction to this chapter, we cannot assume that Aristotle endorsed any of the views we have discussed here. But it is to be expected that Aristotle was aware that the predicate "καλόν" conveys more than one meaning, and that it is problematic, to say the least, to account for the grounds of the approbation we grant as part of the meaning of "τὸ καλόν", be it as nobility, as beauty, or as any of the meanings we have identified. In the following chapters, we shall study Aristotle's method to deal with problems that involve a predicate that can be said in many ways.

Chapter 2. Aristotelian multivocity and Aristotelian homonymy

Introduction

In Chapter 1, we learned that the term "καλόν" and cognates are widely used in Ancient Greek to express commendation in different respects. It can be used to qualify physical, psychological and behavioural traits. Thus, we learned that this expression can point at the following features: "handsome" when said of the appearance of people; "precious" when said of a garment; "skilful" when said of an artistic performance; "noble" when said of a lady of high status; "truthful" or "opportune" when said of a speech.

There is no need to assume that Aristotle endorses all these usages. But we do know two things: one, that Aristotle admits that "τὸ καλόν" can be used to qualify different sorts of things, *e.g.*, an orderly city, an accomplished piece of poetry, a well-functioning living organism, or a mathematical object. The variety across these things makes highly debatable (although not necessarily impossible) the assumption that Aristotle is pointing at the same feature –or even at the same type of features– throughout.

The second thing we know is that Aristotle himself claims that "τὸ καλόν" can be said not only of different things but also in different ways (*i.e.*, it is multivocal). In *Top. 1.15 106a21-23*, Aristotle says that "τὸ καλόν" can be said as the opposite of "ugly" (αἰσχρόν) when said of an animal (*i.e.*, τὸ αἰσχρὸν ζῷον vs τὸ καλὸν ζῷον) and as the opposite of "mean" (μοχθηρόν) when said of a house (*i.e.*, ἡ μοχθηρά οἰκία vs ἡ καλὴ οἰκία). This reveals that "τὸ καλόν" is said homonymously.

Therefore, understanding the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in the context of Aristotle's philosophy requires for us to understand Aristotle's concept and practices regarding multivocity and homonymy.

Aristotle's remarks on homonymy are scattered throughout his works, and we shall see in this and the following chapters that Aristotle was not particularly concerned with precision in his use of technical language in this regard. This situation is conducive to disagreement over several passages about which scholars deliberate on the type of homonymy involved, or even on whether the passage in question involves homonymy at all.

The interpretation I shall suggest addresses this lack of precision in Aristotle's use of technical language around homonymy, under the assumption that there is consistency in

Aristotle's understanding and use of the concept of homonymy.[22] Moreover, I shall contend that Aristotle had a clear method for analysing problems that involved homonymy. The grasping and application of this method will shed new light upon the unsolved disagreements I have referred to, and which I shall discuss in detail in the following chapters.

This method is not discussed as such in any of the extant works. However, there are two key passages that support my view:

a) … we must not only deal with those terms which are used in another way, but also try to assign their definitions. For example, we must not only say that in one sense "good" is said to be "justice" and "courage", in another sense "good" is said to be "conducive to soundness" and "conducive to health", but we must also say that some things are called "good" because they possess certain qualities in themselves, while other things are "good" because they are productive of a certain result and not because they possess certain qualities in themselves. And so likewise in the other cases also. (*Top. 1.15 106a2-8*)

b) …after distinguishing the various ways in which each thing is said, we must then explain by reference to what is primary in each term, saying how they are related to it. (*Met. IV 1004 a28-30*)

I shall come back to the first passage in chapters 3 and 4; and to the second passage, in chapter 5. For the time being, I want to advance the claim that the two passages together describe a three-steps method. A thorough analysis of a given problem involving homonymy entails:

1. Establishing that it is indeed a case of homonymy (the corresponding meanings of the name "N" as predicated of objects x and y are different),

2. Establishing the grounds for the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

The depth of the analysis might vary according to our purposes. Rhetorical purposes often stop at step 1, for all the speaker needs to know is whether the name "N" is said of object x in the same way as it is said of object y, so that one does not erroneously conclude of y what can be said only of x (*Cf.* "Homonyms are useful to enable the sophist to mislead the listeners" *Rhet. 1404b35ff*). Whereas scientific purposes often demand all three steps, for the scientist

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[22] This interpretation is more charitable than assuming that the passages in conflict that we shall discuss reflect doctrinal inconsistency.

needs to know not only that "N" is said of x and y in different ways; but also, if the different ways in which "N" is said are related, the scientist will need to identify the nature and order of those relations, so that he can achieve a definition of "N" that takes into account this complexity (*e.g., Met. V*).

In this chapter, I shall focus on step 1. In order to establish whether we have a case of homonymy, we need to assess whether the case in question fits into the definition of homonymy. Therefore, I shall dedicate this chapter first to discussing what Aristotelian homonymy is, and how it relates to synonymy on the one hand and to multivocity on the other.

I shall discuss the definitions of synonymy and homonymy that Aristotle introduces in *Categories*. Given two objects x and y bearing the same name "N", Aristotelian synonymy entails that the accounts of "N" as correctly said of x and y are also the same. Whereas, given two objects x and y bearing the same name "N", in Aristotelian homonymy, the accounts of "N" as said of x and of y are different.

The main point of contention is whether the definitions of synonymy and homonymy are meant to exhaust all the ways in which the same name "N" can be said of different objects x and y. For the definition of homonymy does not indicate whether the accounts of "N" as said of x and y have to be utterly unrelated. If the definition of homonymy required that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y were utterly unrelated, then there would have to be a third kind of relation between synonymy and homonymy, namely, the relation in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but related. My stance is that the distinction between synonymy and homonymy, indeed, exhausts all the possible ways in which two different objects x and y can bear the same name "N".

Next, I shall discuss whether "being said in many ways" or multivocity is the same as or entails homonymy. I shall contend that multivocity is a linguistic phenomenon that covers a variety of figures of speech, including homonymy –insofar as language is one of the aspects involved in Aristotelian homonymy. But language is not the only aspect involved in homonymy; therefore, homonymy is not simply a type or subset of multivocity.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to get an insight into the complexity of Aristotle's concept of "τὸ καλόν" given that it can be said homonymously. The concept of homonymy is, in Aristotle's works, a tool for researching in different areas, and thus we need to prepare the

terrain for our enquiry into the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" by clarifying what is entailed in the claim that "τὸ καλόν" can be said homonymously.

2.1 Aristotle's definition of homonymy. The Categories

The opening lines of Aristotle's *Categories* define two types of relationships between things that arise on the basis of the names borne by those things. We read:

> Things whose name only is in common, but whose account of the being that corresponds to this name is different, are called homonymous [...]
> Things whose name and the account of the being corresponding to this name are in common, are called synonymous. (*Cat.* 1a1-8)[23]

I choose to translate the Greek "ὁμώνυμον" simply as homonymous/homonym despite the fact that Aristotelian homonymy is not the same as homonymy in contemporary English –as we shall discuss shortly.

The most common alternative translation is "equivocal". For instance, Cooke renders the first sentence as "Things are equivocally named, when they have the name only in common, the definition (or statement of essence) corresponding with the name being different" (Cooke, 1938).

From a grammatical point of view, Cooke's translation suggests that Aristotle is pointing at a way of speaking, *i.e.*, we speak equivocally. Whereas the Greek suggests that Aristotle is pointing at something that things display when they are in a specific situation, *i.e.*, when two (or maybe more) things are in the situation Aristotle describes, then those things – not our way of speaking– are homonymous.

In addition to the above clarification based on the grammar of the sentence, it is worth noticing that the Latin root for "equivocally" is quite close to the Greek ὁμώνυμον, namely, "equal names". But the English "equivocal" has the connotation of something being doubtful. We see that this is Cooke's interpretation, as he adds, in a footnote, that another possibility to translate "ὁμώνυμα" is "ambiguous". Cooke's translation leads us into reading Aristotle's definition of homonymy as though a given word had two (or maybe more) meanings, and we

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[23] We read the same definition of synonymy in *Topics VI 148a23*: "For things the description corresponding with the name is one and the same are synonymous…"

were at the risk of not picking the right meaning. The Greek, however, states that homonymy is a matter of things.

The downside of the translation I propose is, perhaps, that it does not immediately illuminate what Aristotle says, for saying that things that have the name in common are called "equally-named things" is just a pleonasm. The advantage of this translation is, on the other hand, that it allows us to focus better on things and how they stand with respect to each other. Homonymy is a relation between things. Now we need to figure out what the terms of this relation are. In Aristotle's definition, things are related both by their names and by the ὁ κατὰ τοὔνομα λόγος τῆς οὐσίας, *i.e.,* the account of the being corresponding to the name.

This is a good time to contrast Aristotelian homonymy with homonymy in contemporary English. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a homonym is "Each of two or more words having the same spelling or pronunciation but different meanings and origins." The definition is illustrated with "pole" as referring to a long, slender, rounded piece of wood or metal, typically used with one end placed in the ground as a support for something; and "pole" as referring to either of the two locations (North Pole or South Pole) on the surface of the Earth (or of a celestial object) which are the northern and southern ends of the axis of rotation.

The former comes from the Germanic *pāl* (in early use without reference to thickness or length), related to the Dutch paal and the German *Pfahl*, based on the Latin *palus* 'stake'. Whereas the origin of the latter is the Latin *polus* 'end of an axis'.

The English homonymy, therefore, refers to a strict coincidence in the morphology of what are, in principle, two (or more) distinct words.

In contrast, both Aristotelian homonymy and synonymy are relations between numerically different things bearing the same name. Let us see how Aristotle elaborates on his definitions. He illustrates the definition of synonymy as follows:

> Both a human and an ox are animal (ζῷον). For both a human and an ox have in common the name "animal", and the account of the being [that corresponds to this name] is the same. For if someone were to explain the account of each, what it is "to be animal" in each of these, he would give the same account. (Cat. 1a8-12)

From the example, we gather that Aristotelian synonymy means that two (or maybe more) things x and y are synonymous when they bear the same name "N" (perhaps, when the same predicate can be correctly applied to both) and the account of what it is "to be N" is also the

same. In this example, we have a human and an ox. We can correctly predicate "animal" of both of them (*i.e.*, both of them merit the name "animal"). We also know that, for Aristotle, "to be an animal" is the same for both the human and the ox, namely, "to be an animal" is to have a soul not only with the capacity of nutrition but also with the capacity of sense perception (*De An. 413 b2*). Thus, we have two (or more) numerically different things x and y that bear the name "N" for the same reason despite the fact that x and y are of a different type.

> The example that corresponds to Aristotle's definition of homonymy reads as follows:

>> For example, 'ζῷον' is both a human and a piece of drawing. For the name of these is common, but the account of the being that corresponds to this name is different. For if someone were to explain what it is ' to be ζῷον' for each of these, he would give an account particular to each of them. (Cat. 1a2-6)

Yet again, we have two numerically different things x and y bearing the same name "N". But this time, what it is for each of them "to be N" is different.

At this point in the analysis of the definition of homonymy we face a difficulty. Notice that, in the example for synonymy, I have translated "ζῷον" as animal, for the context makes clear enough that "animal" is the predicate Aristotle has in mind. But the case of homonymy is not as straightforward, for "ζῷον" can also refer to a picture, which is a kind of drawing (γεγραμμένον).

The example that illustrates homonymy highlights that the definition does not state clearly whether the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be completely unrelated, or alternatively can be related albeit different.

How we read the definition and example of homonymy will have an impact on the way we understand the relation between synonymy and homonymy. For the definitions and examples offered by Aristotle make clear that synonymy and homonymy are mutually exclusive, and thus two different objects x and y bearing the same name "N" cannot be both synonymous and homonymous –at least not in the same respect.[24] But it is less clear whether synonymy and homonymy exhaust all the possible relations between two different objects x and y that bear the same name "N".

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[24] In b) below, as well as in Chapter 3, we shall see that general justice and particular justice are both synonymous and homonymous, but not in the same respect. (*Eth. Nic. 1129a26-31*)

That is to say, if Aristotelian homonymy entails that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but can be related, then the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is exhaustive. Whereas, if Aristotelian homonymy demands that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y be not only different but also unrelated, then the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is not exhaustive.

Both readings can be supported by other passages in which Aristotle uses the concept of homonymy. By way of example:

1. … some homonyms are far removed from one another, some have a certain likeness, and some are related either by their genus or by analogy, with the result that they seem not to be homonyms though they really are. (Phys. VII 249a23-25).

This passage states that there are different kinds of homonymy, in some of which the homonymous objects x and y are related. Therefore, this passage supports the view that Aristotelian homonymy entails that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y have to be different but can be related. In contrast:

2. There are many senses in which a thing may be said to "be", but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous. (Met. IV 1003a34)

This second passage suggests that the case in which two different objects x and y bear the same name "N" (in this case, "being") and the corresponding accounts of "N" are different but related, is not a case of homonymy. Therefore, homonymy would entail that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be different and unrelated.

Both views have partisans who offer more detailed arguments based on these and other passages. We shall examine both views in more depth and the passages they are based on, showing how each view reflects on the definition and example of homonymy from the *Categories.*

a) *The distinction between homonymy and synonymy is not exhaustive*

On the basis of a developmentalist interpretation of Aristotle's work, G.E.L. Owen contends that the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy is not exhaustive.

For Owen, it is clear that there are cases in which the accounts of the name "N" as said of x and of y are different but connected. He calls this type of relation Focal Meaning.[25] For Owen, "to establish a case of focal meaning is to show a particular connexion between the definitions of a polychrestic word." (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 25)[26]

The particular connection Owen refers to is the one described by Aristotle with the expressions πρὸς ἕν/ἀφ᾽ ἑνός λεγόμενα or things being said "by affiliation" (Owen, (1960) 1979, pp. 5, footnote 7).

Focal Meaning means that a word is not univocal, "…it has various definitions answering to its various senses, but one of these senses is primary, in that its definition reappears as a component in each of the other definitions." (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 15) The stock example is "medical": "If to be a medical man is to be XY, to be a medical knife is to be of the sort used by a man who is XY" (*Ethic. Nic. 1236a15-22*) (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 15).

We can observe that "medical" as said of the doctor has a different meaning from "medical" as said of a scalpel. In principle, this case could fit into Aristotle's definition of homonymy. But Owen's view is that Aristotle contrasts this type of relation with homonymy. The following passages are used in support of this interpretation (my emphasis):

a) <u>There must, then, be three kinds of friendship, not all being so named for one thing or as species of one genus, nor yet having the same name quite by a complete homonymy.</u> For all the senses are related to one which is the primary, just as is the case with the word "medical"; for we speak of a medical soul, body, instrument or act, but properly the name belongs to that primarily so called. The primary is that of which the definition is contained in the definition of all; *e.g.*, a medical instrument is one that a medical man would use, but the definition of the contained is not implied in that of "medical man". Everywhere, then, we seek for the primary. But because the universal is primary, they also take the primary to be universal, and this is an error. (*Eth. Eud. VII 1236 a17-25*)

b) <u>There are many senses in which a thing may be said to "be", but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous.</u> Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves health, another in the

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[25] In Chapter 5 below I shall discuss in more detail Owen's concept of focal meaning. In this chapter, I only intend to state that he interprets the distinction between homonymy and synonymy in *Categories* as not exhaustive, for focal meaning is neither synonymy nor homonymy, but something in between.
Owen assumes that Aristotle is talking about different senses of words with different meanings according to their different uses.
In sections 2 and 3 below I shall elaborate more on why I defend that Aristotle's homonymy is also about names, and accounts of the being that correspond to those names.
[26] The paper was originally published in 1960, by During & Owen (ed), in Aristotle and Plato in the Mid-Fourth Century, Papers of the Symposium Aristotelicum held at Oxford in August, 1957 (Goeteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1960), 163-90. Page numbers quoted correspond to the 1979 print.

sense that it produces it, another in the sense that it is a symptom of health, another because it is capable of it. And that which is medical is relative to the medical art, one thing in the sense that it possesses it, another in the sense that it is naturally adapted to it, another in the sense that it is a function of the medical art. And we shall find other words used similarly to these. So, too, there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one starting-point; some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substance, others because they are a process towards substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of some of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say even of non-being that it is non-being. As, then, there is one science which deals with all healthy things, the same applies in the other cases also. (*Met. IV 1003 a34-1003b12*)

c) For it must be either homonymously that we say these are, or by making qualifications and abstractions (in the way in which that which is not known may be said to be known), –the truth being that we use the word neither homonymously nor in the same sense, but just as we apply the word "medical" when there is a reference to one and the same thing, not meaning one and the same thing, nor yet speaking homonymously; for a patient and an operation and an instrument are called medical neither homonymously nor in virtue of one thing, but with reference to one thing. . (*Met. VII 1030 a32-1030b2*)

In the three passages above, we read that certain words –*e.g.*, friendship, to be– can be said of different things neither in the same way, nor homonymously, but as "medical" is said, namely, as being said in different but related ways. Whether "friendship" and "to be" are said in many ways in the same manner as "medical", is not relevant for the time being. All we need to focus on is the fact that, for Owen, being said in many different but related ways is not under the scope of Aristotelian homonymy.

Owen does not elaborate on how he understands the definitions and examples of synonymy and homonymy in *Categories*.[27] However, on the basis of the passages above, he contends that the concept of homonymy we find in *Categories* and the rest of the *Organon* is "simple ambiguity" and that the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy in those early works is unsophisticated and does not take into account the *tertium quid,* focal meaning (Owen, (1960) 1979, pp. 20, 21, 23, 24).

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[27] In a later work, *Aristotle on the Snares of Ontology (1965)*, Owen does have a paraphrase of *Cat. 1a1-11,* "Thus in the *Categories* (1a1-11) he explains that two things (or kinds or thing) are called *syn*onymous if they both answer to some such name as 'animal', and if the *logos* which corresponds to the name, i.e., the appropriate definition or paraphrase, is the same in each case. They are called *hom*onymous if both answer to the name, but the appropriate *logos* differs in the two cases." Here too, there is no further elaboration on the definitions, except for an example of homonymy, namely, "cape" as said of a sleeveless cloak, and of a land jutting into the sea, from which we can see that Owen's interpretation here has not changed from the 1960's paper. (Owen, (1965) 1986, p. 262) (Page numbers correspond to the 1986 print).

Not only does Owen not consider focal meaning a case of homonymy, but he even considers it closer to synonymy (Owen, (1960) 1979, pp. 16, 18).[28]

Let us see how Aristotle's example for homonymy in the *Categories* looks under Owen's interpretation. Allow me to recall the example:

> For example, 'ζῷον' is both a human and a piece of drawing. For the name of these is common, but the account of the being that corresponds to this name is different. For if someone were to explain what it is ' to be ζῷον' for each of these, he would give an account particular to each of them. (Cat. 1a2-6)

Under Owen's interpretation, the example reads as follows: both a human and a piece of drawing merit the name "ζῷον". We then explain that "ζῷον" as said of a human refers to its being a living creature with the capacity of sense perception; whereas "ζῷον" as said of a piece of drawing refers to a picture, which is a particular kind of drawing. That is to say, the corresponding accounts of "ζῷον" as said of a human and as said of a piece of drawing are different and unrelated.

All in all, Owen takes the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy as non-exhaustive, for he reads that Aristotelian homonymy entails that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and unrelated.

In agreement with his developmentalist reading of Aristotle's works, Owen does not overtly contend that in his early works, Aristotle was not aware of cases in which the different accounts of "N" as said of x and of y are different but related. But he does contend that, in any case, Aristotle was not concerned with those cases (which Owen identifies as focal meaning) in the *Organon*, and that in other early works –*e.g.*, *Eudemian Ethics*– "[Aristotle] has not seen its application to such wholly general expressions as 'being' or 'good'." (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 17)[29]

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[28] Owen reads *Met. 1003b13-14* ("For not only in the case of things that are said according to one thing (τῶν καθ᾽ ἕν λεγομένων) does the investigation belong to one science, but also in the case of things which are related to one nature; for even these in a sense are said according to one thing (καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα τρόπον τινὰ λέγονται καθ᾽ ἕν)") as asserting that "to be" is said "…not homonymously, but even, in a way, synonymously (tropon tina kath' hen), since all its senses can be explained in terms of substance and of the sense of 'being' that is appropriate to substance" (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 16). Elsewhere we read the same idea, namely, that "things said in relation to one thing and a single nature" are, "in a sense synonymous (Meta 1003a33-1003b15, cf. EE 1236a15-20)". (Owen, (1966) 1986, p. 168) (Page numbers correspond to the 1986 print).

[29] In a later work, *The Platonism of Aristotle (1966)*, Owen insists in that establishing the criteria for synonymy and homonymy was primarily a concern about logic –not ontology. (Owen, (1966) 1986, pp. 201, 207) (Page numbers correspond to the 1986 print).

b) *The distinction between homonymy and synonymy is exhaustive*

Offering slightly different arguments, both Terence Irwin and Christopher Shields contend that Aristotle's distinction between homonymy and synonymy is meant to exhaust all the possible ways in which two different objects x and y can share the same name "N".

Both Irwin and Shields start their discussion of Aristotelian homonymy by analysing the definition presented in *Categories*. Both of them conclude, as I do, that the definition admits two readings, and that even with the aid of the examples provided by Aristotle, it is not possible to decide conclusively in favour of either option.

We already saw the reading under which the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is not exhaustive, which is defended by Owen. Let us recall again the example for homonymy and see now the reading under which the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is exhaustive:

> For example, 'ζῷον' is both a human and a piece of drawing. For the name of these is common, but the account of the being that corresponds to this name is different. For if someone were to explain what it is ' to be ζῷον' for each of these, he would give an account particular to each of them. (Cat. 1a2-6)

Under Irwin and Shields' interpretation, we read that both a human and a piece of drawing – a portrait, perhaps– merit the name "animal". We then explain that "animal" as said of a human refers to its being a living creature with the capacity of sense perception; whereas "animal" as said of a piece of drawing refers to the fact that it is meant to represent an animal.

We can see that this is Cooke's reading, as he actually translates "τὸ γεγραμμένον" as "portrait" and "ζῷον" as "animal". But even Ackrill's translation suggests this reading, as he also translates "ζῷον" as animal, and it is not clear how "animal" can be correctly said of a picture (which is how Ackrill translates "τὸ γεγραμμένον") if not by assuming that we are talking about a picture that is meant to represent an animal. (Ackrill, 1984/1995)

Under this reading, a human and a piece of drawing have a name in common, "animal". In addition, the corresponding accounts of "animal" as said of a human and of a piece of drawing, despite being different, are somewhat related, for "animal" is said of a human because it is an animal, and it is said of a piece of drawing because it is meant to represent an animal. A human and a piece of drawing are homonymous because they bear the same name "animal" but not in the exact same way.

As I said, Irwin and Shields support this reading and interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy. I too shall adhere to it. I shall now discuss in more detail their analyses of *Categories 1*, and how they find support for their views in other passages.

Irwin and Shields' analyses of Aristotelian homonymy coincide in essential aspects, although they use different terminology. Both Irwin and Shields contend that Aristotelian homonymy is not a linguistic phenomenon, but a relation between things. Shields even explains that, "If two things are homonymous only if they have the same name, then trivially two words are homonymous only if they have the same names." (Shields, 1999, p. 12)

As for how to understand the difference in the accounts of the name "N" as said of x and y, Irwin contends that the difference in account or definition entails difference in meaning, but not necessarily in sense. We shall discuss in more detail the distinction Irwin points at, in Chapter 5 below. For the current chapter, it suffices to say that, for Irwin, a difference in sense results in completely different and unconnected uses of a word "N", that would even appear in separate dictionary entries (Irwin, 1981, pp. 534-537). Accordingly, cases in which the definitions of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected, can be described as saying that "N" has different meanings but not different senses.

For Shields, in contrast, "meaning" is a semantic relation. He prefers to describe Aristotelian homonymy as involving difference in signification, for signification involves "essence specification in definition" (Shields, 1999, p. 2). However, he grants that he makes "… no hard distinction between senses of words and essences of real features of the world: meanings will be, for natural kinds, essences." (Shields, 1999, pp. 12, footnote 7). That is to say, for Shields, to give the account of "N" as said of x, can be described as saying that one gives the sense of "N", the meaning of "N", or the essence of N. Up to this point, the difference between Irwin and Shields' analyses is only a matter of terms, for both of them agree that Aristotelian homonymy entails that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be different but can be connected.

Let us see now in more detail Irwin's analysis of Aristotle's definition of homonymy. Irwin starts his discussion by offering a translation of *Cat. 1* (his translation, my emphasis):

> "Those things are called homonymous of which the name alone is common, but the account of being corresponding to the name is different… Those things are called synonymous of which the name is common and the account of being corresponding to the name is the same"

Irwin rephrases the definition as follows: "x and y are homonymously F if and only if the name 'F' applies to both x and y, but a different definition ("account of being") must replace 'F' in 'x is F' and in 'y is F'." (Irwin, 1981, p. 524).

As for the examples offered by Aristotle to illustrate both synonymy and homonymy, Irwin does not elaborate on how to read them. He does point out that there is an ambiguity in the Greek "ζῷον", meaning either "animal" or "picture", so that the example for homonymy "… may mean (1) we call both a man and a picture of an animal "animal"; or (2) we call a man and a picture (of anything) a *zõon*" (Irwin, 1981, p. Footnote 3). But this ambiguity in the example is not at the centre of Irwin's analysis.

The core of Irwin's analysis stems from the phrase "the name alone is common" (ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν). Irwin suggests that depending on how we read this phrase, we can have either an extreme or a moderate reading.[30]

Under the extreme reading, "alone" has an unrestricted scope, *i.e.*, two different objects x and y have only the name in common and nothing more. Homonymous objects are, under this reading, unconnected. For the definition of "F" in "x is F" and the definition of "F" in "y is F" have nothing in common.

Under the moderate reading, in contrast, "alone" has a restricted scope, *i.e.*, for the two different objects x and y to be homonymous, the only thing they must share is the name. This reading allows that the definitions of "F" as said of x and y can overlap or be related.

Let us recall that Aristotle's definition of homonymy in *Cat. 1* is paired with the definition of synonymy, which reads: "Things whose name and the account of the being corresponding to that name are in common, are called synonyms" (*Cat. 1a 6-8*). Following Irwin's terminology, x and y are synonyms if and only if the name "F" applies to both x and y, and the same definition ("account of essence") must replace "F" in "x is F" and in "y is F".

Under the extreme reading, the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy is not exhaustive. For then there would be cases of synonymy ("F" has the same definition as said of both x and y), cases of homonymy ("F" has different and unconnected definitions as said of x and y), and a third case of neither synonymy nor homonymy ("F" has different but

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[30] Irwin calls them extreme and moderate "views", perhaps because the reading of this passage we decide to favour will result in an interpretation of the concept of homonymy. But at this point of the analysis, Irwin is talking about the scope of the phrase within the structure of the whole sentence, that is to say, the analysis is still about the grammar of the sentence. Hence, I call them extreme and moderate readings. (Irwin, 1981, p. 524)

connected definitions as said of x and y). This reading would probably be supported by Owen, as I have discussed in a) above.

Under the moderate reading, in contrast, the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy is exhaustive. For then there would be cases of synonymy ("F" has the same definition as said of x and y), and cases of homonymy ("F" has different definitions as said of x and y). And then there would be at least two types of homonyms: homonyms in which the definitions of "F" as said of x and y are unconnected, and homonyms in which the definitions of "F" as said of x and y are connected to an extent.

Irwin leans towards the moderate view, mainly because, in his opinion, the extreme view requires a stronger statement than the one Aristotle uses for his definition of homonymy, *i.e.*, the extreme view of homonymy would require for Aristotle to have said that x and y share the name "F" and *nothing else*, whereas the definition, as is actually stated, says that x and y share only the name "F", but not the definition of "F".[31]

As I already said, Shields' analysis and conclusion about Aristotelian homonymy are essentially the same as Irwin's, although he uses different terminology. He also starts with the definition of homonymy and synonymy, and points at the two possible readings of the former. Irwin's extreme reading of the definition of homonymy results in what Shields calls "Discrete Homonymy"; whereas Irwin's moderate reading is labelled by Shields as "Comprehensive Homonymy". Shields adopts the latter. (Shields, 1999, p. 11)

The view that Irwin and Shields defend is, therefore, that the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy is exclusive and exhaustive. For there are cases of synonymy (in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are the same), cases of unconnected homonymy (in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and unconnected) –for which Shields will keep the name Discrete homonymy– and cases of associated homonymy (in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected).

It is interesting to note that, in a later work, Shields refers to associated homonymy as "...a tertium quid between univocity and what we may call rank non-univocity" (Shields, 2007, p. 140), which suggests the same interpretation as Owen's. However, Shields has previously

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[31] I agree with Irwin in this remark about Aristotle's statement in *Cat. 1a 1-2* not being as strong as to support the extreme reading. For this reason, it seems to me that Irwin reads too much into the definition of homonymy; in my opinion, the ambiguity becomes apparent only when we look at the example of a human and a picture being called "ζῷον".

made clear that, under his interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy as comprehensive homonymy, there are at least two major types of it, namely, cases of discrete homonymy and cases of associated homonymy, and therefore the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy is exhaustive (Shields, 1999, pp. 10, 11).

The main point of contention between Owen's interpretation on the one hand, and Irwin and Shields' on the other, is not whether there are cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected. The dispute is on whether these cases are regarded, by Aristotle, as cases of homonymy. We already know that, for Owen, the answer is negative.

In contrast, Shields claims that "if Aristotle did not recognize homonymy beyond those DH [discrete homonymy] admits, he should not worry terribly about anyone's ever overlooking cases of homonymy" (Shields, 1999, p. 18). This sensible observation gets plenty of support. Shields' argument is that, if Aristotelian homonymy were limited to cases in which there is no connection between the accounts of "N" as said of x and y, then all cases of homonymy would be easy to notice. However, it is fairly common to find Aristotle warning us on cases of homonymy that are not obvious. For instance, *Topics* 1.15 offers a collection of tests to help identifying cases of homonymy. And in the *Sophistical Refutations*, Aristotle tells us that deceit comes from not noticing cases of homonymy (*Soph. El. 169a22-25*) because the simplest fallacy involves the use of homonymy (*Soph. El. 182b12-14*).[32]

Furthermore, if Irwin and Shields are right in their interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy –as I think they are– then we can expect that there is more than one type of homonymy, and we should expect Aristotle to distinguish them. Here is an example of Aristotle's introduction of several types of homonymy, recalled by Irwin (Irwin, 1981, p. 526):

> … some homonyms are far removed from one another, some have a certain likeness, and some are related (ἐγγύς) either by the genus or by analogy, with the result that they seem not to be homonyms though they really are. (Phys. VII 249a23-25)

Aristotle says that homonymy comes in different kinds, which has an epistemic impact on our ability to identify them. We even read that Aristotle says that there are cases of homonymy in which the two objects x and y can be related by their genus. If this is so, then we should expect some overlap in the accounts of "N" as said of x and of y. Fortunately, we do have an

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[32] Owen is aware of these warnings, but draws no major conclusion from them. See (Owen, (1965) 1986, p. 261)

example from Aristotle in which x and y are related by their genus, namely, general justice and particular justice (*Eth. Nic. 1129a26-31*). Irwin explains that "There are two homonymous types of justice, general and particular. They have different definitions, but are so closely connected that some people miss the homonymy […] Particular justice is a species of general justice; since the definition of the genus applies to the species, they have to that extent the same definition…" (Irwin, 1981, p. 527)

Thus far, it seems as though both positions, Owen's on the one hand and Irwin and Shields' on the other, find support in the way Aristotle mentions and uses his concept of homonymy in different works. However, the two positions are incompatible. Therefore, we need to find further reasons to prefer one over the other.

Shields argues that what he calls the Comprehensive Homonymy view (the moderate view, in Irwin's terminology) has the advantage of having a broader scope, which would include discrete homonymy as a special case of the Comprehensive Homonymy view (Shields, 1999, p. 15).

The advantage pointed by Shields is attractive. But more importantly, Irwin points out that Aristotle sometimes opposes plain homonymy (πάμπαν ὁμωνύμως) to other types of homonymy. For instance:

> Necessarily, therefore, there are three sorts of friendship, and they are not all so termed in respect of one thing or as species of one genus, nor yet are wholly homonymous. For all of them are called friendship in relation to one friendship which is primary… (*Eth. Eud. 1236a17-19*)

Now we know that Aristotle does acknowledge different types of homonymy, and that he sometimes refers to some of them as "wholly homonymy", as opposed to cases of homonymy in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are somehow connected. Most likely, "wholly homonymy" refers to the cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and unconnected.

The three passages we discussed in the previous section (*Eth. Eud. VII 1236a17-25; Met. IV 1003a34-1003b12; and Met. VII 1030a32-1030b2*), which Owen reads as opposing homonymy to cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected, can be read instead as opposing two types of homonymy: connected and unconnected (or simple homonymy, wholly homonymy).

Based on this observation, Irwin suggests that "The simplest explanation, then, of Aristotle's different claims about homonymy and multivocity implies no doctrinal conflict between different works. Sometimes he says 'connected and not completely homonymous', making the point of contrast explicit. Sometimes he says 'connected and not homonymous', relying on the context to show that by 'homonymous' he means 'completely homonymous'." (Irwin, 1981, p. 532)[33]

Indeed, Irwin's explanation is the simplest, namely, that the apparent conflict between different works is not a doctrinal conflict about homonymy, but a lack of precision in the use of technical language. For sometimes, cases of homonymy in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and unconnected, are called simply "homonymy"; whereas cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected are not always explicitly called "homonymy".

The point of view suggested by Shields and the textual support pointed out by Irwin are strong reasons to prefer their interpretation over Owen's.

The view that Aristotelian homonymy includes both cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and unconnected, as well as cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected, is simpler and can offer a cohesive reading of all the passages we have reviewed thus far. I shall, therefore, adhere to it. Accordingly, I take the dichotomy between synonymy and homonymy introduced in *Categories* as exclusive and exhaustive.

Hereafter, I shall use "homonymy" to refer to Aristotelian homonymy (unless otherwise stated) and assume that it includes both cases described above, to which I shall refer simply as unconnected homonymy and connected homonymy.

Given that the interpretation of the definition of Aristotelian homonymy I am adopting entails that there are different types of homonymy, then when Aristotle says that "τὸ καλόν" is homonymous (*Top. 1.15 106a21-23*), a natural question is, what type of homonymy does Aristotle mean here? Notice that this question does not arise if we adopt Owen's interpretation, for he does not admit different types of homonymy.

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[33] Owen is also aware of Aristotle's further qualification of homonymy –sometimes as chance homonymy, Eth. Nic. I 1096b26-27. He does not elaborate on this, but it seems as though, instead of reading chance homonymy as a subtype of homonymy, Owen reads it as emphasising that all cases of homonymy are the result of chance. (Owen, (1965) 1986, p. 278)

In Chapters 3 and 4, I shall comment in more detail the different types of Aristotelian homonymy that I have identified.

2.2 Multivocity, Amphiboly and Homonymy

It is quite common for Aristotle to describe cases involving homonymy –either connected or unconnected– with the expression "things are said in many ways" (πολλαχῶς λέγεται). I shall refer to this expression simply as multivocity.

The question we must address now is, what is the relation between Aristotelian homonymy and multivocity?

Shields takes multivocity and homonymy to be co-extensive, as suggested by *Top. 1.15, Top. 5.2 129b31, Top. 6.1 148a23, An. Pr. 1.3 32a18-21 and An. Pr. 1.3 25a37-b2.* (Shields, 1999, pp. 10, footnote 2, and pp. 22-28)

On the other hand, Irwin considers that homonymy is a type of multivocity and, since homonymy is contrasted with synonymy, Irwin concludes that synonymy is also a type of multivocity.

I shall suggest that homonymy is, indeed, a type of multivocity, as Irwin contends. This explains that in the passages pointed to by Shields (with the exception of *Top. 5.2 129b31*, which I shall discuss below) Aristotle seems to use the expression "said in many ways" and "said homonymously" interchangeably.

However, multivocity is mostly a linguistic phenomenon that is expressed as a figure of speech. Whereas synonymy and homonymy are defined by Aristotle as relations between things, not words.

The interpretation I want to advance is that Aristotelian homonymy presents a dual aspect. On the one hand, it is a relation between different kinds of things bearing the same name "N". When we provide an explanation of what it is to be "N", we are not concerned with a definition of "N" in the abstract; we are concerned with the explanation of what it is to be N for object x and for object y.

On the other hand, Aristotelian homonymy has a linguistic aspect insofar as it involves names. It has to do with the way we talk about things.

Neither Irwin nor Shields take into account this dual nature in homonymy. As a result, Irwin erroneously concludes that, when Aristotle contrasts homonymy with other forms of multivocity, he means synonymy. Likewise, Shields concludes, erroneously, that homonymy and multivocity are coextensive.

In this section I shall discuss homonymy in the context of multivocity and contrast it with amphiboly –the other type of multivocity. In so doing, I shall comment in more detail how my interpretation departs from both Irwin's and Shields'.

We have already seen that homonymy occurs when the accounts of the name "N" as said of two (or more) different objects x and y are different.

Given a name "N", if we are unsure as to whether it allows for homonymy, we need to know what it is said of –either x or y– and the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of x and y.

But Aristotle says that we must distinguish cases of homonymy from cases in which the whole sentence can be said in many ways:

> Next, for destructive arguments, you must see whether any of the names assigned to a property is said in many ways or if the whole sentence (ὁ λόγος) has several significations. (Top. 5.2 129b30-32)[34]

Aristotle refers to this kind of sentences that can be said in more than one way as amphiboly.[35] Here is an example of the way Aristotle analyses amphiboly (*Soph. El. 1.4 166a14-15*):

<div align="center">

Is speaking of the silent possible?
ἆρ᾽ ἔστι σιγῶντα λέγειν;

</div>

This sentence can be read in two different ways:

a) We can read "the silent" as the object of "speaking". If so, "σιγῶντα" is present participle active neuter accusative plural. In this case, the question asks whether one can speak about silent things. Or

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[34] I am not saying that having several significations (πλείω σημαίνει) is the same as being said in many ways (πολλαχῶς λέγεται). But the latter seems to entail the former. For when one explains each of the different ways in which either a name or a whole sentence is said, one explains what it signifies. See *Phys.* 1.3 186a25-b12.

[35] In *Soph. El. 1.4*, Aristotle discusses homonymy, amphiboly, combination, division, and accent as styles of refutation. However, he refers only to homonymy and amphiboly as involving multiple signification (πλείω σημαίνει) and multivocity (πολλαχῶς λέγεται) (*Soph. El. 177a10-15*).

b) We can read "the silent" as the subject of "speaking" (Aci). If so, "σιγῶντα" is present participle active masculine accusative singular. In this case, the question asks whether it is possible for the person who is silent to speak (*i.e.*, while being silent!)

The grammatical structure of the sentence "ἆρ᾽ ἔστι σιγῶντα λέγειν;" creates a word play. For it clearly is not possible for the person who is silent to speak while being silent.

We can see that the structure of homonymy includes two (or more) different objects x and y, a name "N" that we know is correctly said of both x and y, and two different significations of "N" expressed in the account of "N" as said of x and the account of "N" as said of y.

In contrast, amphiboly involves one sentence "S is P" and two different significations,[36] expressed by the fact that "S is P" might be grammatically construed in two different ways. In the example above, "σιγῶντα" might refer to either the subject or the object, not because it has different meanings, but because the grammar of the sentence allows both readings. There is multivocity because "σιγῶντα" can be said in different ways, but there are no different accounts or definitions involved in amphiboly.

In both cases we may need to enquire how the name "N" and how the sentence "S is P" are said. We may need to enquire whether the name "N" is said of x or of y, just as we may need to enquire whether the sentence "S is P" describes x or y. But only in the case of homonymy will we need to enquire into the different accounts of "N" as said of x and of y.[37]

I have said that Irwin does consider homonymy as a type of multivocity, but that he concludes that synonymy is the other type of multivocity. In principle, this conclusion can be dismissed if we understand that synonymy entails that the name "N" is said of different things but in the same way, whereas multivocity entails that a thing is said in different ways. But it is worth examining how Irwin arrived at that conclusion, for the confusion stems from not taking into account what I have called the dual nature of homonymy (as referring to things and as a linguistic phenomenon), a mistake that Shields also makes.

In *Top.2.3 110b16-25*, Aristotle says that the sentence "The science of many things is one" (ἐπιστήμη μία πλειόνων) is multivocal but not by homonymy.

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[36] The remarks about amphiboly are not exclusive of sentences with nominal predicate. We should take "S is P" to stand for a whole sentence of any kind.
[37] I mean to say that there is no definition of the sentence as a whole. Of course, the different parts of the sentence might be themselves names that allow for homonymy.

Both Irwin and Shields point out that the "many things" can refer to different collections of things, and that the "one science" can refer to different sciences. And they both point out that both "many" and "one" retain their corresponding definitions despite their different applications.

But they differ in their conclusion. Since the definitions of "many" and "one" do not vary throughout the different applications, Irwin concludes that the sentence "The science of many things is one" is synonymous. Since Aristotle says that this sentence is a case of multivocity but not by homonymy, then Irwin concludes also that synonymy is a type of multivocity. (Irwin, 1981, pp. 529-530)

Shields, in contrast, concludes that "The science of many things is one" is homonymous, given that it can be applied to different sciences, and to different collections of things. Yet again, since Aristotle says that the sentence is a case of multivocity but not by homonymy, Shields concludes that Aristotle's assertion is one of those instances in which he says "not homonymy" as in "merely homonymy" (*i.e.*, unconnected homonymy). Hence, Shields concludes that the sentence "The science of many things is one" is a case of connected homonymy. (Shields, 1999, p. 28)

My stance is that their analyses are correct, and yet their corresponding conclusions are mistaken. For synonymy is the phenomenon in which the accounts of the name "N" as said of x and of y are the same. If the name is the same, and the accounts are also the same then, how can synonymy be a type of multivocity? For multivocity requires for some name – or sentence, as I contend– to be said in different ways. Therefore, Irwin's conclusion cannot be right because the definition of synonymy does not fit the description of multivocity.

On the other hand, if it is correct –as I think it is– to say that "many" and "one" retain their corresponding definitions throughout the different possible applications then, how can they be homonymous? For even in connected homonymy, there must be either a difference in the definitions of "many" throughout the applications, or a difference in the definitions of "one" throughout the applications. Therefore, Shields' conclusion cannot be right because the analysis of the sentence –*i.e.*, that "many" and "one" retain their definitions– does not fit the definition of homonymy.[38]

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[38] Shields remarks that the multivocity, in his opinion, stems from "one", *i.e,* for the different ways in which a science might have unity: by studying the ends and means, or by studying things that are one by accident. Yet, he insists that the account of "one" is the same throughout. (Shields, 1999, pp. 27-28) I contend that, ultimately,

The main problem for both of their analyses and conclusions is that they do not seem to take into account other forms of multivocity. Thus, when they read that Aristotle says that the sentence "The science of many things is one" is multivocal but not by homonymy, they both analyse this claim in the context of the discussion of whether the distinction between synonymy and homonymy is exhaustive. They both offer their corresponding conclusions in support of the view that there is no *tertium quid* in between synonymy and homonymy.

I, however, consider that the sentence in question is not a case of homonymy precisely because it is multivocal as a sentence, whereas homonymy is a type of multivocity based on a name.

I suggest that the source of the amphiboly in this sentence is the "of", which is expressed in the Greek not by a separate word but by the genitive in "πλειόνων":

The science of many things is one.
ἐπιστήμη μία πλειόνων (*Top.2.3 110b17-18*)

Aristotle says that things about which a science might be one are (*Top. 110b19-26; 110b33-38*):

- Ends and means,

- Ends, or

- An essential and an accidental attribute.

And then, Aristotle explains the multivocity of the sentence by comparing it to the ways in which desire (ἐπιθυμία) is said to be "of" a thing, say, of wine (οἴνου): the desire of it as an end, or as means to an end, or as an accidental attribute (*Top. 111a1-4*). In any case, "wine" retains the same account –just as "many" retains the same account in the case of "the science of many things is one". But the genitive can be of different types.

That is to say, the sentence "he feels a desire for wine" can actually refer to different dispositions of the subject. For instance, he desires the wine itself; or he desires something sweet and wine happens to be at hand (*i.e.*, the desire for wine is accidental, because he desires an attribute that happens to be in the wine, but his desire could be satisfied by a different thing); or he desires wine because it is medicinal (*i.e.*, the desire for wine is as means to health). The three situations are expressed in the same way, ἐπιθυμία οἴνου, desire for

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Shields is right in saying that "one" retains the same account throughout its applications; therefore, I conclude that it is not homonymous.

wine. The nuances are not obvious, but the competent speaker is likely to grasp them from the context.[39]

Aristotle invites us to read the sentence "The science of many things is one" in a similar manner. The most plausible interpretation is that the grammar of the sentence –not a particular word– is what allows for different readings. We might want to say, simply, that health and sickness are both studied by medicine. Or we might want to point out that the science of medicine has many parts: health as end, and diet as means to health. Or we might want to point out that both the knowledge of health as well as the knowledge of sickness result in the science of medicine.[40] Yet again, the three situations are expressed in the same way, "ἐπιστήμη μία πλειόνων". The nuances are debatable, and we might need the context to decide how to read the genitive.

The interpretation of the multivocity of "The science of many things is one" relies heavily upon grammatical aspects that are peculiar to the Greek, *i.e.*, it is not about things and accounts of the names in the sentence ("one", "many"). But that is because multivocity is a linguistic phenomenon. Aristotle says that the sentence is multivocal but not by homonymy, and I contend that the multivocity stems from the different readings allowed by the grammar of the sentence.

To sum up, from the point of view of names that can be shared by different things, homonymy is contrasted with synonymy. But, from the point of view of multivocity, the multivocity based on a name –homonymy– is contrasted to the multivocity based on the grammar of a sentence taken as a whole –amphiboly.

Owen articulates the contrast I am suggesting by saying that amphiboly stands for a characteristic of a whole sentence, whereas homonymy stands for a characteristic of a name (Owen, (1965) 1986, pp. 263, 264). And both amphiboly and homonymy are types of multivocity (Owen, (1965) 1986, pp. 261, footnote 3).[41]

This research is not concerned with synonymy, except as a counterpart of homonymy; amphiboly is not of our concern either, except as a counterpart of homonymy. We shall

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[39] Smyth remarks that, in the case of verbs of emotion, it is hard to distinguish between genitive as partitive, as cause and as source. (Smyth, 2010, pp. 879, 881, 883, 887, 900, 906)

[40] The first results from reading an objective genitive; the second, partitive genitive; the third, genitive of cause.

[41] Owen actually says that amphiboly is a characteristic of a "phrase or sentence". But I contend that this is inaccurate. Phrases might be better grouped with names, and thus with homonymy. I shall explain more in Section 3 below, where I discuss what Aristotle means by "name".

discuss neither synonymy nor amphiboly in more detail. But it is important to bear them in mind because, when Aristotle says that a thing is said in many ways but not by homonymy, we need to assess carefully what the point of contrast is.

Likewise, it is important to bear in mind the dual nature of homonymy because Aristotle might emphasise one aspect or another, according to the argument. Thus, it makes perfect sense to express the example that illustrates the definition of homonymy in *Categories* as either: a) a human being and a portrait are homonymous insofar as they both bear the name "animal"; or b) "animal" is multivocal (*i.e.*, it is said in many ways), for it is said of a human being in a different way as it is said of a portrait.

Likewise, in *Top.. 1.15 106a21-23*, when Aristotle says that "τὸ καλόν is homonymous", it makes perfect sense to read it as either:

- The house and the animal are homonymous insofar as they both merit the name "τὸ καλόν", but in different ways; or

- The name "τὸ καλόν" is multivocal because it has a different meaning when predicated of a house than when predicated of an animal.

2.3 A very brief note on Aristotle's notion of "name"

Throughout this chapter I have insisted in that Aristotelian homonymy marks a relationship between two different things x and y on the basis of their bearing the same name "N". First and foremost, it is the two objects that are homonymous –unlike homonymy in modern English, which is about words. I have argued, however, that Aristotelian homonymy is also a linguistic phenomenon, insofar as it involves names. It is important for us, therefore, to be clear on Aristotle's concept of "name". I would like to point out four ideas: first, that a name is the basic unit of meaning; second, that for Aristotle, the name is different from the vocal-sound we utter; third, that the relation between things and names is, for Aristotle, a close one; and fourth, that "name" is a flexible term, so to speak, that can refer to a variety of linguistic entities.

In *On Interpretation*, Aristotle explains the nature of names as follows:

a) First one must put down what a name is and what a verb is, then what denial is and affirmation and declaration and articulation.
The things in vocal-sound, then, are symbols of affectedness in the soul, and ones written are symbols of ones in vocal-sound. And as letters are not the same for all,

neither are vocal-sounds the same. But those of which these are signs firstly –the affectednesses of the soul– are the same for all, and those of which these [affectednesses] are likenednesses –the things– are already the same. (*De Int. 16a1-8*)

Πρῶτον δεῖ θέσθαι τί ὄνομα καὶ τί ῥῆμα, ἔπειτα τί ἐστιν ἀπόφασις καὶ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφανσις καὶ λόγος.
Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. Καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί. ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτως, ταῦτὰ πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα, πράγματα ἤδη ταῦτά.

b)   A name is a vocal-sound that is meaningful according to convention… (*De Int. 16b20*)

Ὄνομα μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ κατὰ συνθήκην…

c)   … no part of [a name] has any meaning, considered apart from the whole. Take the proper name 'Good-steed', for instance. The 'steed' has no meaning apart, as it has in the phrase 'a good steed'. (*De Int. 16b21-23*)

ῆς μηδὲν μέρος ἐστὶ σημαντικὸν κεχωρισμένον. ἐν γὰρ τῷ Κάλλιππος τὸ ἵππος οὐδὲν αὐτὸ καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸ σημαίνει, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ καλὸς ἵππος.

d)   No name is such by nature, but by convention, whenever they become a symbol, seeing that inarticulate noises also show something, as those of brutes, but none of those is a name. (*De Int. 16b27-29*)

Τὸ δὲ κατὰ συνθήκην, ὅτι φύσει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδέν ἐστιν, ἀλλ᾽ ὅταν γένηται σύμβολον, ἐπεὶ δηλοῦσί γέ τι καὶ οἱ ἀγράμματοι ψόφοι, οἷον θηρίων, ὧν οὐδέν ἐστιν ὄνομα.

Let us start in c). Aristotle says that names are meaningful as a whole, even though they can be split into smaller pieces. This idea is further elaborated in *Poet. 20 1456b20-1457a15*, where we read that names are composite sounds, for they are formed from syllables which in turn are formed from letters. But neither letters nor syllables are meaningful. Names are, so to speak, the smallest unit of speech that are meaningful. If we take a name, say, "Peter", the "Pe" has no meaning. For the whole name "Peter" refers to Peter, but we cannot say that the syllable "Pe" refers to a part of Peter.

The example of Κάλλιππος is interesting because one might think that this name is a composite of two parts – καλός and ἵππος– both of which are meaningful (because both of them are names, namely, "beautiful" and "horse"). In *Poet. 1457a13-14*, we read "in the name Θεόδωρος ("Theodorus"), for instance, the δωρος means nothing." Again, one might think that this is not true, for taken on its own, δῶρον refers to a gift. But the name "Κάλλιππος" as a whole refers to one single thing (a person), and so too the name

"Θεόδωρος". Even though "ἵππος" taken on its own is a name, taken as part of "Κάλλιππος" it has no meaning because we cannot say that it refers to some part of Κάλλιππος; therefore, it has no meaning. Likewise, the "δωρος" in "Θεόδωρος" does not refer to a part of Theodorus; therefore, it has no meaning. Names are composite sounds but no part of a name has meaning on its own.

The second idea I want to highlight is that Aristotle distinguishes between names and the vocal-sounds we utter. In b) above, we read that "A name is a vocal-sound that is meaningful by convention…". It seems as though Aristotle said that names are vocal-sounds. But if we look at a), we read that "The things in vocal-sounds are symbols of affections in our souls…" (Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα). As Matthew Walz indicates, the "Things" (τὰ) seems to pick up the things listed in the line immediately above, namely: name, verb, denial, affirmation, declaration, and articulation. Accordingly, a) above states that linguistic entities and vocal-sounds are different; linguistic entities are *in* vocal-sounds. (Walz, 2006, p. 231)[42]

The distinction is relevant because the human being is the only animal capable of uttering linguistic entities (names, verbs and the like), whereas vocal-sounds can be uttered by many kinds of animals, including the human being. Aristotle explains that a φωνή or vocal-sound is the kind of sound that has pitches and articulation (*De An.* 420b9), and is produced by the striking of the animal's inner air in the throat (*De An*. 420b23).

These two conditions of φωνή dismiss noises produced by other parts of the body (hence the translation "vocal-sound"). However, the human being is not the only kind of animal that produces vocal-sounds. In *Gen. An.*, Aristotle largely discusses how, when and why some animals have voices (φωναί) of higher pitches than others (786b8-788b3).

The articulation of the vocal-sound refers to the range of movements the animal produces with the tongue (*De An*. 420b19; *Hist. An*. 535a31). These movements are responsible for differences between letters (*Poet.* 1456b30-34). Animals with the appropriate shape of tongue are, therefore, well suited for emitting articulated sounds: "More than any other animals, and second only to man, certain kind of bird can utter 'lettered' (γράμματα) sounds" (*Hist. An.* 504b1); whereas the dolphin "possesses a voice, since it has both lungs and

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[42] In contrast, Cooke translates the same line 16a4 as follows, "Words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul…" (Cooke, 1938). Cooke's translation does not distinguish between vocal-sounds and what is *in* vocal-sounds (purportedly, names, verbs, and so on).

windpipe; but as its tongue cannot move freely, and as it has no lips, it cannot utter any articulated (ἄρθρος) voice" (*Hist. An.* 536a2). It is fairly clear, therefore, that many kinds of animals other than human beings are capable of uttering vocal-sounds.

Being meaningful is not what distinguishes names from vocal-sounds either. Aristotle grants that all vocal-sounds (not only the ones produced by humans) and even other sounds and unarticulated noises (οἱ ἀγράμματοι ψόφοι) produced by animals are meaningful, as stated in d) above.[43]

What is distinctive of names and other linguistic entities is that they are meaningful by convention (κατὰ συνθήκην), and this happens when the vocal-sound becomes a symbol. Aristotle does not elaborate on what he means by "σύμβολον". He might refer to the contractual aspect (*i.e.*, the agreement in the usage of a given sound to symbolise a given thing); or he might refer to the fact that symbols are tokens that represent something else (as in the case of coins, which also entails a contractual aspect). We don't know how the conventional aspect is achieved either.[44]

Elsewhere, Aristotle states that the vocal-sound is the material for the speech (*Gen. An. 786b2, "*τοῦ δὲ λόγου ὕλην εἶναι τὴν φωνήν"*). And it makes sense, in the context of Aristotelian philosophy, to conclude that the main difference between a vocal-sound uttered by a human being and one uttered by another kind of animal is that the former bears reason (λόγος).

The third idea to be discussed is the relation between things in the world and names. Despite the fact that, as stated in a), different people express the affections of their soul through different names –which is a consequence of the fact that the relation between the

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[43] Aristotle explains that vocal-sounds in general are meaningful because they bear imagination (*De An. 420b33*). And he seems to grant some kind of purpose even to voices not as articulated as the human voice, for he describes that voices of different animals change according to the circumstances (*e.g.*, at breeding time) (*Hist. An. 536a11*).

[44] Some scholars suggest that the conventional aspect refers to the fact that the relation between a given name and the sound we use to express it is not necessary (hence, different peoples in different places use different vocal-sounds to express what is, in principle, the same "affection in the soul"). (Walz, 2006, pp. 237, 240, 245) (Ackrill, 1963, p. 113)

But if being meaningful by convention is what distinguishes names from other vocal-sounds, then that cannot be the meaning of "conventional". For Aristotle recounts how the specific tune uttered by birds is trained and is not the same for all, even if they are of the same species (Hist. An. 536b9).

Most likely, "by convention" in d) above is meant to state that the vocal-sounds are not emitted at random, but with specific intention.

vocal-sound (material) and the name (the form, the λόγος) is not a necessary one– Aristotle seems to think that linguistic entities are ultimately linked to things in the world.

Things in the world affect our souls. Yet again, Aristotle does not elaborate here in *On Interpretation* how this affection happens. [45] But in a different treatise (*De An. II, III*), Aristotle explains that all humans have basically the same type of soul, equipped with the same capacities (which differ in quantity and degree of sophistication from the capacities of other animals). Under this premise, it makes sense that Aristotle claims that the same thing in the world would affect us all in the same way (it also makes sense to assume that things affect other kinds of animals in a different way, given the different capacities in their souls).

Even though the specific vocal-sound we use to express a given affection is not necessarily attached to this affection, this relation is not arbitrary and does not change from one individual to another within the same community. For Aristotle has asserted that there is a convention, *i.e.,* that there is agreement (even if just tacit) on which vocal-sound is used to mean which affection in the soul.

The relation between things in the world and names is not direct, and it is not necessary. However, Aristotle does not seem to conceive linguistic entities as abstract entities, whose meaning is arbitrarily decided.

Albeit indirect, Aristotle does establish a relation between things in the world and names. This relation has two processes. The first process refers to the fact that things in the world affect our soul –without mediation. The second process refers to the fact that we express the affections of our souls through vocal-sounds that we use as symbols. The first process is natural; the second is conventional. If I know the symbol you utter, then I can know

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[45] Ackrill, for instance, suggests that Aristotle has in mind visual images as grounds for thoughts, and assumes that Aristotle claims that we all have the same thoughts; then Ackrill concludes that this account is wrong because we do not necessarily think with visual images, and more importantly, it is not true that we all have the same thoughts about a given object (Ackrill, 1963, pp. 113-114).

Likewise, Deborah Modrak presents this difficulty by a series of questions, "Is the internal state an intentional content, a meaning, or is it a psychological state, an image? Is the thing of which the state is a likeness to be construed as the external referent of the internal state? If the internal state explains how phonemes bear meanings, why does the problem of scepticism not arise for Aristotle? If there is a necessary connection between the internal state, the meaning, and the external referent that determines the content, why does this not make the content inaccessible to the subject?" (Modrak, 2001, p. 2). Each of her questions expresses a separate problem, that we do not cover in this research.

In my opinion, the affections in the mind Aristotle talks about might cover not only visual images, but any kind of image, and any kind of affection our soul is capable of. But this discussion, as I say, is beyond the scope of this research.

the affection in your soul and, therefore, I can know the thing in the world that has caused that affection.

The fourth and last idea I want to bring in is that "ὄνομα" or "name" is a broad category that includes all sorts of nouns (either common or proper), but also words that in English, correspond to a different grammatical category, such as adjectives. In the next chapter, we shall see that even verb forms (infinitive and participle) can take the role of a name in the making of a metaphor (*Poet. 1457b10-30*)

Moreover, in his discussions that deal with the role of names in several contexts, Aristotle includes not only composite names (as in *De Int. 16b21-23* above; see also *Poet. 1457a3231-35*), but also phrases that function as a name, *i.e.* a name-like expression (*An. Post. 93b31*, "τὸ ὄνομα ἢ λόγος ἕτερος ὀνοματώδης").

Cooke translates "ὄνομα" as "noun" throughout *On Interpretation*, which might be appropriate for that specific context. (Cooke, 1938)

I, however, favour "name", so that we can be aware of all the types of ὄνομα mentioned by Aristotle, and all its nuances. For all this complexity can be present in problems involving homonymy, even when Aristotle is not explicit about that.

To sum up, for Aristotle, a vocal-sound is not enough to have a name, but it is the material we use to express it.[46] The compound vocal-sound+λόγος becomes a name (or another linguistic entity). Names signify things, because they signify the affections in the soul caused by things. Despite the fact that the material vehicle –the vocal-sound– is incidental to the name itself, this does not entail that the relation between names and things is arbitrary; for the relation between things in the world and affections in the soul is natural, and the relation between affections and names gets established by convention.

As we move forward in our analysis of Aristotelian homonymy, it is of upmost importance that we bear in mind this duality in the nature of names, because we shall find that some cases of homonymy indeed seem to be the result of coincidence (given that the vocal-sound is incidental to the name). Moreover, the definition of homonymy does not seem to be prescriptive; for most cases, Aristotle describes how we name things, not how we should name things (the making of a metaphor in poetry is an exception).

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[46] Another material vehicle could be, of course, the written sign.

2.4 Indirect ways of establishing homonymy. Topics 1.15

I have argued that the first step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy consists in establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy. This is achieved by showing that the problem in question fits the definition of homonymy, that is to say, that the account of "N" as said of object x is different from the account of "N" as said of object y. The examples we have discussed thus far –and most of the ones to be discussed in the following chapters– are assessed through a comparison of the account of "N" as said of object x and the account of "N" as said of object y. But it is important to know that step one of the method does not necessarily require giving the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of objects x and y in order to show that these accounts are different.

In *Topics 1.15*, Aristotle offers fourteen different ways to test whether a name "N" is being said homonymously, none of which requires to give the accounts of "N" as said of objects x and y. Which test is the most appropriate, depends upon the information available.

For instance, let us say that we want to know whether the name "sharp" (ὀξύ) can be said homonymously. One ought to understand that this question cannot be assessed in the abstract, that is to say, we need to know what "sharp" is being predicated of.

Five of the fourteen tests proposed by Aristotle include "sharp" among the examples. "Sharp" is predicated of a note, a bulk, a flavour, an angle, and a knife; and the tests are as follows:

1. When the contraries of "N" as said of object x and y are different, then "N" as said of x and y is homonymous. The contrary of "sharp" as said of a note is "flat"; whereas the contrary of "sharp" as said of a bulk is "dull"; therefore "sharp" as said of a note and of a bulk is homonymous. (106a14-18)

2. When "N" is said of objects x and y, and objects x and y belong to different kinds, then "N" as said of x and y is homonymous. The contrary of "sharp" as said of a flavour and as said of a bulk is "dull"; both a flavour and a bulk are objects of perception (*i.e.*, they belong to the same genus), but are of a different kind, for the flavour is perceived by taste, whereas the bulk is perceived by touch. Therefore, "sharp" as said of a flavour and of a bulk is homonymous –even though their contrary is the same! (106a33-36)

3. When "N" is said of objects x and y, and objects x and y belong to different genera, then "N" as said of x and y is homonymous. "Sharp" (ὀξύ) can be correctly said of a note, of an angle (*i.e.*, acute angle), and of a knife; a note, an angle, and a knife belong to different genera. Therefore, "sharp" as said of a note, of an angle, and of a knife is homonymous. (107a14-18)

4. When "N" as said of object x cannot be compared in degree with "N" as said of object y, then "N" as said of objects x and y is homonymous. "Sharp" can be correctly said of a flavour and of a note; but a flavour cannot be said to be sharper than a note. Therefore, "sharp" as said of a flavour and of a note is homonymous. (107b14-19)

5. When "N" refers to the differentia of object x's genus, and "N" refers to the differentia of object y's genus, and objects x and y belong to different and non-subaltern genera, then "N" as said of objects x and y is homonymous. One note differs from another in sharpness; likewise, a bulk differs from another in sharpness; in both cases, "sharpness" refers to their differentiae, but notes and bulks belong to different and non-subaltern genera. Therefore, "sharp" as said of a note and of a bulk is homonymous. (107b23-26)

Notice that none of the examples above requires to know the corresponding accounts of "sharp" as said of a note, a bulk, a flavour, an angle, and a knife. All of these are indirect ways to test whether the problem in question fits the description of homonymy –*i.e.*, whether the corresponding accounts of "sharp" are different from one another– without having the accounts.

Notice also that 1 and 5 seem to be the same problem, namely, whether "sharp" as said of a note and as said of a bulk is homonymous. But we have different information available, and therefore we perform a different test. In the former, we compare the contraries of "sharp" as said of a note and as said of a bulk; in the latter, we know that a note and a bulk belong to different and non-subaltern kinds.

When Aristotle states that τὸ καλόν allows for homonymy, in *Top. 106a21-23*, he is illustrating the test marked as 1 above. We know that the contrary of "τὸ καλόν" as said of a house is "mean", and that the contrary of "τὸ καλόν" as said of an animal is "ugly"; therefore, we know that "τὸ καλόν" as said of a house and as said of an animal is homonymous. We have

established that this problem does involve homonymy; yet, we have neither the account of "τὸ καλόν" as said of a house, nor the account of "τὸ καλόν" as said of an animal.

2.5 Final Remarks

This research aims at grasping the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy. We know that Aristotle predicates it of different sorts of things and in different contexts, and that he actually says that τὸ καλόν is homonymous (*Top. 1.15 106a23*).

This remark and its implications for the possibility of grasping the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" call for a careful analysis of Aristotle's concept of homonymy, which I undertake in this and the next four chapters.

My approach to the matter assumes that Aristotle has a three-steps method that he applies in his analyses of problems involving homonymy, as follows:

1. Establishing that the case in question is, indeed, a case of homonymy,
2. Establishing the grounds for the homonymy, and
3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which other objects are called "N".

This chapter was dedicated to the study of the first step. The way to determine whether we have a case of homonymy or not is by assessing whether it falls under the definition of homonymy.

The definition offered by Aristotle tells that two objects x and y are homonymous if and only if the account of "N" as said of x is different from the account of "N" as said of y. That is to say, both x and y merit the same name "N", but in different ways.

I have discussed that this definition allows for two possible interpretations: a) that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be totally different (*i.e.*, unconnected); or b) that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be different but can be connected.

Both interpretations find support in different passages scattered throughout Aristotle's works. Whichever interpretation we decide to follow, it is clear that Aristotle is not consistent with the use of technical language about homonymy, and so the interpretation we follow must face this lack of consistency.

I shall adhere to the second interpretation, that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be different but can be somewhat connected. This interpretation is supported by

Phys. VII 249a23-25, where Aristotle states that there are different types of homonymy, in some of which the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of x and y are connected.

Moreover, this interpretation is more advantageous than the first one because the first interpretation (the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be totally different) is a special case of the second (the accounts of "N" as said of x and y ought to be different but can be connected). This means that the second interpretation offers a way to account for Aristotle's inconsistency in the use of technical language without assuming that there is doctrinal inconsistency. On this interpretation, the passages where Aristotle refers to cases in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but connected, as not homonymy (*Eth. Eud. VII 1236a17-25; Met. IV 1003a34-1003b12; and Met. VII 1030a32-1030b2*), can be explained if we assume that Aristotle means that they are not wholly homonymy (but can be of a different type of homonymy).

If we follow this interpretation, and bear in mind that there can be different ways in which two different objects x and y can be homonymously "N", then we see why the analysis of homonymy is not complete. This interpretation makes it easy to see why Aristotle establishes more steps to the analysis of homonymy.

Another aspect that I have discussed in this chapter is the fact that homonymy is a phenomenon of a dual nature. On the one hand, Aristotle says that homonymy is a relationship between things (*i.e.*, x and y are homonymous insofar as they both merit the same name "N"). On the other hand, homonymy is a linguistic phenomenon, for it involves names and the way in which we talk about things (*i.e.*, "N" is said in many ways).

Insofar as it is a relationship between things, homonymy is contrasted to synonymy. Insofar as it is a phenomenon of language, homonymy is a type of multivocity –the other type being amphiboly.

This dual nature stems from the fact that homonymy involves names. For Aristotle, the relationship between names and things is not a necessary one –insofar as the material vehicle (the vocal-sound) is not necessarily linked to a name. However, this does not entail that the relationship between things and names is arbitrary: it has a natural aspect (the relation between things in the world and affections in the soul) and an aspect established by convention (the relation between the affection and the name). Knowing the convention (*i.e.*, understanding the meaning of a given name) allows us to grasp the affection in the soul it signifies which, presumably, will allow us to know the thing in the world that has caused the

affection. Aristotle does assume that there is a relation between names and things. But for the most part, Aristotle's analyses of problems involving homonymy is descriptive, not prescriptive.

Lastly, we have also learned that in order to know whether "N" as said of objects x and y is homonymous, we need to know whether the corresponding accounts of "N" are different, but we do not necessarily need to know the actual accounts. Aristotle has taught us that there are other ways to assess the situation, *e.g.*, knowing whether the contrary of "N" as said of object x is different from the contrary of "N" as said of object y.

The complexity in the act of naming, to an extent, explains the possibility of homonymy as a linguistic phenomenon. And more importantly, explains to an extent that there are different types of homonymy, as we shall study in the next two chapters.

Chapter 3. Types of Aristotelian Homonymy

Introduction

It has already been stated that this research aims at understanding the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy. We already know that "τὸ καλόν" can be said in different ways, *i.e.*, it is homonymous. Therefore, in order for us to organise and analyse the different ways in which "τὸ καλόν" can be said, we need to understand Aristotle's concept of homonymy and how he applies it to the analyses of problems involving homonymy.

As I said earlier, for the discussion of Aristotle's concept of homonymy, I contend that Aristotle has a methodical approach to the matter, which can be described in three general steps, as follows (*Cf. Top. 1.15 106a2-8* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30*):

1. Establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy,
2. Establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and
3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

In the previous chapter, I focused on step 1, which requires to show that the problem to be analysed fits the definition of homonymy (stated in *Categories 1*), that is to say, step 1 consists in showing that the corresponding accounts of the name "N" as said of objects x and y are different from one another. I have argued that this definition allows at least two types of homonymy: one in which the accounts of "N" are different and unconnected; another in which the accounts of "N" are different but connected.

In this chapter, we shall discuss the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy, namely, establishing the grounds for the homonymy. In *Top. 1.15 106a* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30*, Aristotle says that, when dealing with homonymy, it is necessary not only to show that the name "N" is said of objects x and y in a different way, but also to explain how or why two different objects x and y bear the same name "N". The second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy consists in answering the question, Why do objects x and y merit the same name "N"? The different ways in which this question gets answered result in different types of homonymy.

As we know, none of Aristotle's extant works includes a consolidated study on the nature of homonymy.[47] Aristotle's remarks on the matter are scattered throughout his works. There are approximately 110 occurrences of the term "homonymous" and its cognates.[48] We shall look into four passages that point at different reasons or ways in which two different objects x and y merit the same name "N":

- Nicomachean Ethics V, 1129a25-1130a35 (1 occurrence)

- Physics VII, 248a14-249a25 (4 occurrences in the same argument)

- Nicomachean Ethics I, 1096b26-29 (1 occurrence), and

- Eudemian Ethics VII, 1234b19, 1236a17-b25 (2 occurrences)

As we shall see, Aristotle highlights different aspects of homonymy, offering thus what seem to be different criteria for classifying cases of homonymy. I shall argue that the specific aspect of homonymy highlighted by Aristotle in a given passage depends upon the specific problem he is analysing. Bearing this in mind allows us to account for apparent discrepancies in the classification of homonymy as we compare different passages.

In addition to the types identified in the four passages stated above, we shall discuss in some detail Aristotle's concept of homonymy based on transference of name (or metaphor) and analogy.

As I said, none of Aristotle's extant works is dedicated to the study of homonymy. All the passages we shall discuss in this chapter address other problems (*e.g.*, whether there is more than one kind of justice, whether there is more than one kind of friendship, and so on). None of these passages is concerned with offering an exhaustive classification of homonymy, and perhaps achieving such a thing is not possible. My expectation is simply to offer a somewhat reasonably tractable classification of Aristotelian homonymy that we can apply to the analyses of other concepts and problems and, in particular, to the case of the homonymy in the use of "τὸ καλόν".

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[47] Diogenes Laertius includes a book *On things said in many ways*. As we shall see in chapter 5, this is not necessarily a work on homonymy.

[48] I am considering one occurrence = one sentence. In very few places the word "homonymy" or any of its cognates appear more than one time in the same sentence (*e.g.*, Soph. El. 175 a37, 178 a 26). Those few cases I count as one appearance as well. This means that, sometimes, a single argument that stretches over several pages includes more than 1 occurrence of the word "homonymy".

For a reference on all the places where Aristotle mentions homonymy, see Appendix A section I).

3.1 Nicomachean Ethics V

In Eth. Nic. V, 1129 a25ff, Aristotle discusses the nature of justice as virtue. There, Aristotle warns us about an important distinction. When we speak of justice –and its counterpart, injustice– we do it in either of two ways, namely, the general justice and the special justice.

This situation fits the general description of homonymy from *Cat. 1*: object x "general justice" and object y "special justice" share the same name "justice" but not for the same reason (*i.e.,* x and y are not justice in the same way). Here we have highlights of Aristotle's argument:

a) (1129 a25) Now it would seem that justice and injustice are both spoken of in more ways than one, but since their homonymy is close, the difference is unnoticed, and is less clear than it is with distant homonyms where the distance in appearance is wide (for instance, the bone below an animal's neck and what we lock doors with are called κλείς, homonymously).

b) (1129 a34) Both the lawless man and the grasping and unequal man are thought to be unjust, so that evidently both the law-abiding and the equal man will be just.

c) (1129 b11) Since the lawless man was seen to be unjust and the law-abiding man just, evidently all lawful acts are in a sense just acts…

d) (1129 b20) And the law bids us do both the acts of a brave man (*e.g.,* not to desert our post or take to flight or throw away our arms), and those of a temperate man (*e.g.,* not to commit adultery or outrage), and those of a good-tempered man (*e.g.,* not to strike another or speak evil), and similarly with regard to the other excellences and forms of wickedness, commanding some acts and forbidding others and the rightly framed law does this rightly, and the hastily conceived one less well.

e) (1129 b31) … justice is complete virtue to the highest degree because it is the complete exercise of complete virtue. And it is the complete exercise because the person who has justice is able to exercise virtue in relation to another…

f) (1130 a10) This type of justice, then, is the whole, not a part, of virtue, and the injustice contrary to it is the whole, not a part, of vice.

g) (1130 a15) But we are looking for the type of justice, since we say there is one, that consists in a part of virtue, and correspondingly for the type of injustice that is a part of vice.

h) (1130 a33) It is evident, then, that there is another type of injustice, special injustice, apart from injustice as a whole, and that it is synonymous with injustice as a whole, since the definition is in the same genus. For both have their area of competence in relation to another, but special injustice is concerned with honour or wealth or safety (or whatever single name will include all these), and aims at the pleasure that results from making a profit, whereas the concern of injustice as a whole is whatever concerns the excellent person.

Let us set aside scholarly debates on Aristotle's position on the nature of justice, and focus on the structure of the argument and on the remarks that include homonymy.

As I already advanced, Aristotle contends that there are two objects we know by the name of "justice". On the one hand, there is object x "general justice"; on the other, there is object y "special justice". The passage that stretches through 1129 a25-1130 a35 is meant to prove that x and y are, indeed, two different objects despite their bearing the same name.

Aristotle's strategy is to show that the contrary of x (xCon) differs from the contrary of y (yCon).[49] Both xCon and yCon are called "injustice". Within the set of behaviours that we considered unlawful, we identify unfairness. The person who aims at pleasure that results from making a profit is one of the things we know as "unjust" and its contrary is the just person (1129 a34 ff, and 1130 *a33 ff*). On the other hand, it is also true that, in general, we say that the person who is engaged in any kind of vicious behaviour is an unjust person (1129 b20 *ff*). Therefore, injustice is, in general, related to vicious behaviour; thus, its contrary, justice in general, is related to the exercise of virtue in general (1129 b31 *ff*). Aristotle states that justice has to do with the exercise of virtue in relation to another, as opposed to the exercise of virtue in relation to oneself (1129 b31 *ff*, and 1130 a33 *ff*).

To sum up, we have that there is one object x "justice" which is opposite to injustice understood as unlawfulness in general, since Aristotle defends the view that good laws are set to conduce towards virtuous behaviour (1129 b20 *ff*). There is also object y "justice" which is opposite to injustice understood as unfairness, which is in turn a part of unlawfulness in general (1130 a33 *ff*). Therefore, there is object x "general justice" and object y "special justice", which is what Aristotle wants to prove (1129 a25 *ff*, and 1129 a34 *ff*).

The point that matters to us regarding homonymy is that general justice and special justice are not entirely different. Quite the opposite, special justice is part of general justice. Both of them rightfully share the same name "justice" insofar as both of them refer to the exercise of virtue in relation to another. To this extent –and only to this extent, which does not exhaust all there is to say about either of the two– the object x and the object y are synonymous (1130 a33 *ff*), *i.e.*, they are called justice for the same reason. But regarding their

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[49] The strategy that consists in identifying things that share the same name as homonymous through the analysis of their corresponding contraries is introduced and discussed in *Top.1.15* 106 a9ff:
"Whether a term is used in one kind of sense only or in many, can be seen by the following observation. First, examine the case of its contrary and see if it is used in several ways…"

scope, general justice refers to the exercise of the whole of virtue in relation to another, whereas special justice refers to the exercise of a part of virtue in relation to another, and in this regard they are homonymous (1129 a25 *ff*).

It is precisely the fact that, in this case, object x and object y are so closely related which makes it hard to notice that the name "justice" might refer to either general justice or to special justice. Based on this difficulty for telling apart the case in which the name "N" is said of object x from the case in which "N" is said of object y, Aristotle feels compelled to provide a test for homonymy.

In contrast, Aristotle says that there are some other cases in which the homonymy is so obvious that there is no need for a test. The example offered is the Greek "ἡ κλείς" which is the name for both object c a collarbone and object d a locking bolt.

The good news for us readers is that, since the difference between object c and object d is so obvious, we are not at the risk of mistaking when "ἡ κλείς" is being said of a collarbone for when it is being said of a locking bolt. The bad news is that, since the difference between c and d is so obvious that there is no risk of missing the homonymy, Aristotle thinks it is not necessary to elaborate on the example. The only thing he says is that c and d are "distant homonyms". This is the only passage where Aristotle gives an example of what he calls distant homonymy.

One thing that Aristotle might be implying is that in an ordinary conversation, context might be enough for grasping whether the speaker says "ἡ κλείς" as in the locking bolt or as in the collarbone. Whereas in an ordinary conversation, context might not be enough to grasp whether the speaker says "justice" as unlawfulness in general or alternatively as the part of unlawfulness that has to do with fairness. In the case of "justice", the speaker might have to add a clarification because the listener might even be unaware altogether of such a difference. Or it might be that the listener is aware of such a difference but does not understand whether the speaker means x or y as he speaks of justice. In any case, the speaker might be in need of a further clarification.

This is an epistemic consequence to which Aristotle draws attention. But it does not fully explain why the homonymy takes place.

We can observe that general justice and special justice are close in nature, for both of them refer to the exercise of virtue in relation to another, and special justice is part of general justice. This closeness in nature is reflected in a closeness in definition, for the definition of

justice as said of object x is partly the same as the definition of justice as said of object y (*i.e.*, the definition of the genus is the same for both object x and object y, but object y's definition adds the specific difference). We can probably argue that this is the reason why x and y share the same name "justice".

In accordance with this line of reasoning, one would have expected a similar explanation regarding "ἡ κλείς". One would have expected, perhaps, to find that a collarbone and a locking bolt are distant homonyms since the two are utterly different in nature –which seems to be true– and their corresponding definitions have no connection.

The focus of my suggestion is not so much the fact that the definition of collarbone shares nothing with the definition of locking bolt, which might be true. But rather, the focus is on whether the reason why we call "ἡ κλείς" a collarbone is in any possible way related to the reason why we call "ἡ κλείς" the locking bolt. And this latter is the very thing that is not explained by Aristotle. The only thing he says is that collarbone and locking bolt are distant homonyms.

From this passage, therefore, the provisional conclusion we can draw is that, indeed, Aristotelian homonymy comes in a variety of types. Also, that one criterion for distinguishing different types of homonymy is by appealing to how closely related the homonymy is. We must be careful not to lose focus on the homonymy and interpret this as though it meant that two different objects x and y are close in their nature (for other virtues p, q, r etcetera, are also part of justice in general; yet, they have different names). The homonymy takes places only when these objects share the same name "N". Therefore, close homonymy means that the reason why we say "N" of x is close to the reason why we say "N" of y. Closeness in nature might be the grounds for closeness in homonymy; but we are not in a position to conclusively decide on this matter solely based on *Eth. Nic. V*.

The same token is applicable to distant homonyms, namely, given two different objects c and d that share the same name "M", the reason why we say "M" of c is distant from the reason why we say "M" of d.

As we compare a case of distant homonymy against a case of close homonymy, the difference might become apparent. However, it is not clear that, taken in themselves and without comparison, there is a conclusive way to decide the degree of closeness of a given case of homonymy. That is to say, perhaps the degree of relation can be observed only by comparison to other cases of homonymy.

3.2 Physics VII

In *Phys. VII*, Aristotle discusses the nature of motion and in particular whether anything that is in motion must be moved by something (241b30) and its implications with respect to a first mover (242a54).

Then, in 248a10, Aristotle poses the question on whether any motion is commensurable with every other or not. He concludes that motions that are not of the same species are not commensurable. We must recall that Aristotle distinguishes three types of motion (κίνησις): motion according to place (κατὰ τόπον, locomotion), motion according to quality (κατὰ τὸ ποιόν, alteration), and motion according to quantity (κατὰ τὸ ποσόν, increase or decrease) (243a36). It is somewhat clear that locomotion is not commensurable with alteration (248a15). But Aristotle draws the same conclusion even for different species of locomotion. He concludes that "things that are not synonymous are all incommensurable" (248b7). This argument will continue for the rest of VII.4, exploring different examples we do not need to examine in detail. It is enough for us to focus on how all the examples work together to show that homonymous things are not commensurable, and more importantly for our purposes, that there are different types of homonymy.[50] Here are the highlights of the discussion:

A) (248 a14) If one thing alters and another accomplishes a locomotion in an equal time, we may have an alteration and a locomotion equal to one another: thus an affection will be equal to a length, which is impossible […] Therefore there cannot be an alteration equal to or less than a locomotion; and consequently not every motion is commensurable.

B) (248 a19) But how will our conclusion work out in the case of the circle and the straight line?

C) (248 b6) But these [i.e. a straight line and a circle] are not commensurable; and so the corresponding motions are not commensurable either, and things not synonymous are all incommensurable. *E.g.*, a pen, a wine, and the highest note in a scale are not commensurable: we cannot say whether any of them is sharper than any other; and why is this? They are incommensurable because they are homonymous. But the highest note in a scale is commensurable with the leading-note, because the term "sharp" has the same meaning as applied to both. Can it be, then, that the term "quick" has not the

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[50] The corresponding test for homonymy can be seen in *Top. 1.15 107a3-18*, "You must examine the kinds of the things designated by the name, and see if they are the same in every case." As we shall see, the predicates "fast" and "slow" have different meanings when said of different kinds of motion. The argument for incommensurability in homonymy is described in *Top. 1.15 107b14-19*, "[…] For every synonymous term is comparable; for it will be used either of a similar degree or of a greater degree in one thing than another." Aristotle combines both tests in his argument.

same meaning in the two cases [i.e., locomotion in straight line and locomotion in circle]? If so, far less will it have the same meaning as applied to alteration and locomotion.

D) (248 b12) Or shall we in the first place deny that things are always commensurable if they are not homonymous? For the term "much" has the same meaning whether applied to water or to air, yet water and air are not commensurable…

E) (249 a3) Must we then say that, if things are to be commensurable, not only must they be non-homonymous, but there must also be specific differences either in the attribute itself or in that which contains the attribute –that these, I mean, must not be divisible in the way in which colour is divided into kinds? Thus in this respect one thing will not be commensurable with another, *i.e.*, we cannot say that one is more coloured than the other where only colour is meant; but they are commensurable in respect of whiteness.

F) (249 a7) Similarly in the case of motion: two things are of the same velocity if in an equal time they perform a certain equal amount of motion. Suppose, then, that in a certain time an alteration is undergone by one half of a body's length and a locomotion is accomplished by the other half: can we say that in this case the alteration is equal to the locomotion and of the same velocity? That would be absurd, and the reason is that there are different species of motion.

G) (249 a15) [As for the locomotion in the straight line and locomotion in a circle] if the lines are specifically different, the locomotions also differ specifically from one another; for locomotion is specifically differentiated according to the specific differentiation of that over which it takes place.

H) (249 a19) Thus things are of equal velocity if in an equal time they traverse the same magnitude; and when I call it "the same" I mean that it contains no specific difference and therefore no difference in the motion that takes place over it.

I) (249 a21) So we have now to consider how motion is differentiated; and this discussion serves to show that the genus is not a unity but contains a plurality latent in it and distinct from it…

J) (249 a23) …and that some homonymous things are far removed from one another, and some have a certain likeness, and some are nearly related either by their genus or analogically, with the result that they seem not to be homonymous though they really are.

The lines we need to focus on are 249 a23 *ff*. There, Aristotle brings in the fact that there are different types of homonymy, depending on how closely related the reason why we say "N" of object x is to the reason why we say "N" of object y. That is, the homonymy between two different objects x and y might be distant, somewhat similar, or close.

Just as we found in *Eth. Nic. V*, here too we find an epistemic concern of missing the fact that we do not predicate the name "N" of x in the same way as we predicate it of y, *i.e.,* there is a concern that the homonymy might go unnoticed. Here too, Aristotle says that this lack of awareness is due to the fact that some homonymous things are close, which makes us treat them as though they were of the same kind when in fact they are different. In contrast,

we should infer that in cases in which the homonymy is distant, we are not at the risk of mistaking "N" as said of x for "N" as said of y.

In addition to the distinction between close and distant homonymy that we found in *Eth. Nic. V.*, here in *Phys. VII* Aristotle says that, in between, there is a somewhat similar homonymy (249 a23 *ff*). Aristotle is not explicit regarding the epistemic consequences of this "in between" state of homonymy. Maybe sometimes we identify the homonymy, but some other times we miss it; maybe we always identify it but need an explanation as to what the relevant difference between the way in which we say "N" of x and y is; the sort of explanation that, presumably, we would not need in the case of a collarbone and a locking bolt that share the same Greek name "ἡ κλείς".

But more importantly, I think, is the fact that this third in between type of homonymy supports the reading I advanced in the analysis of *Eth. Nic.V*, namely, that distant homonymy and close homonymy are not so much ways to define a type of homonymy, as ways to describe a degree of closeness between the reason we say "N" of x and the reason we say "N" of y. To say that objects x and y are close homonyms, or distant homonyms, gives no information as to the grounds for the homonymy.

I have suggested that the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy consists in answering to the question, Why do two different objects x and y bear the same name "N"? The distinction between distant homonymy, close homonymy, and somewhat similar homonymy, is useful to describe epistemic aspects of the situation (*i.e.*, whether the homonymy is difficult to notice), but it does not answer the relevant question that helps in establishing the type of the homonymy.

In this regard, *Phys. VII* offers more information than *Eth. Nic. V*, for here Aristotle adds that two different objects x and y might be close homonyms on the grounds of their being related by genus, or by analogy. We can see how the example of general justice and special justice from *Eth. Nic. V* fits into the category of homonymy grounded by the genus of x (general justice) and y (special justice), which makes them so close that, given that x and y bear the same name "justice", we might not realise that there is homonymy involved and sometimes "justice" refers to x, but some other times it refers to y. As for an example of homonymy grounded on analogy, we shall come to it in the following sections of this chapter.

Now, if we want to contend that Aristotle is talking here about degrees of homonymy, then we will be faced with the problem of identifying a scale for the gradation. How close

does the homonymy between object x and object y need to be in order for it to qualify as distant, as close, or as somewhat similar homonymy?

Aristotle does not offer a straightforward answer, but he does apply the concept of homonymy and this difference in degree to solve the problem posed at the beginning of the chapter, namely, the problem of whether any motion is commensurable with any other motion (248 a10). Understanding how the problem gets solved will shed light onto the idea that there are different degrees of homonymy.

I suggests we start with the solution. Aristotle concludes that the answer is "No": it is not the case that any motion is commensurable with any other motion (248 a14 *ff*). For instance, if we were to measure one motion against other, regarding their velocity, we would expect to conclude that motion 1 is faster than, slower than, or equal to motion 2. But Aristotle says that we cannot measure any motion against any other. The reason is that within the genus "motion" there are different species of motion and, therefore, the categories of velocity –namely, "fast", "slow", and "equal in velocity"– do not always refer to the same kind of object; that is, there is homonymy in the way we use the names "fast motion", "slow motion" and "equal velocity of motion" (248 b6 *ff*).

When Aristotle asks in 248 a14 *ff* whether an affection is commensurable with a locomotion, he concludes promptly that it would be absurd. This absurdity is, in Aristotle's mind, so clear that it does not require a detailed argument.

Aristotle seems to think that it is easy to see that "velocity of motion" does not refer to the same phenomenon in the case of an affection and in the case of a locomotion. In the former, "velocity of motion" refers to the time it takes for an alteration in the state of a thing to be completed (*e.g.* the time it takes for a living entity to go from being unhealthy to being healthy); in the latter, "velocity of motion" refers to the time it takes for a change in the location of a thing to be completed (*e.g.* the time it takes for an object to travel from point o to point p). This is what Aristotle points to, in 249 a21 *ff*, when he says that the genus is not a unity, but that it contains a plurality, and this plurality gives rise to homonymy.

In contrast, the question of whether motion in a circle and motion in a straight line are commensurable is more challenging. In principle, it seems as though the answer should be affirmative, given that both motion in a circle and motion in a straight line are types of locomotion. Recall that the genus motion generates three species: affection, locomotion and increase/decrease (243 a35). Both motion in a circle and motion in a straight line fall under

the same genus motion and under the same species locomotion. This makes us believe that "velocity of motion" refers to the same kind of thing when said of motion in a circle and when said of motion in a straight line, since in both cases it refers to velocity in a locomotion, which might make us conclude erroneously that they are commensurable.

But Aristotle points out that we need to take into account not only the genus motion and the species locomotion in abstract, but also the subspecies –if there are any– until the species in question admits no further division, as stated in 249 a3 *ff*, for an attribute said of a genus will be differentiated according to the different species –and subspecies (249 a15*ff*).

Accordingly, an object traveling along a circumference describes a circle, whereas an object traveling along a straight line describes a straight line. Since a circle and a straight line are not the same, locomotion in a circle and locomotion in a straight line are not commensurable despite the fact that both of them belong to the same genus motion and to the same species locomotion.

Let us go back to 249 a23 *ff* and discuss how the above arguments explain Aristotle's distinction between distant, somewhat similar, and close homonymy. Let us recall that close homonymy is characterised by the epistemic consequence of being difficult to spot, and therefore requires explanation. From the problems proposed by Aristotle in *Phys. VII*, the most elaborate argument corresponds to whether locomotion in a circle is commensurable with locomotion in a straight line; the reason seems to be that the homonymy of "velocity of motion" as said of motion in a straight line and motion in a circle is the most difficult to spot.

Aristotle says that motion in a circle and motion in a straight line are not commensurable regarding their velocity because, since motion in a circle and motion in a straight line are not the same, then "velocity of motion" as said of motion in a circle is not the same as "velocity of motion" said of motion in a straight line; given the homonymy, they cannot be commensurable (248 b6 *ff*). The challenge then is to bring to light the relevant differences between motion in a circle and motion in a straight line, and this is the purpose of the entire argument we have analysed. Spotting the relevant difference between motion in a circle and motion in a straight line is difficult because it requires from us to take into account not only the type of motion we are discussing, namely locomotion, but also other factors involved in the execution of each concrete motion that result in subspecies of locomotion.

For instance, a thing moving in a straight line travels from point o to point p in a certain time t; whereas a thing moving in a circle travels from point o back to point o in a certain time t. Accordingly, "velocity of motion" refers, in the former case, to the time in which a thing travels the distance from point o to point p; in the latter case, "velocity of motion" refers to the time a thing goes from point o back to point o in a circle of a given size.[51]

In contrast, it seems as though the relevant difference between affection and locomotion is more easily noted; so much so, that it would be absurd to ask whether a given affection has happened faster or slower than a given locomotion.

If it is absurd to measure affection against locomotion regarding their velocity, does that mean that "velocity of motion" as said of an affection and of a locomotion is a case of distant homonymy? It certainly does not seem to be as distant as the homonymy between a collarbone and a locking bolt that share the same Greek name "ἡ κλείς", which we found in *Eth. Nic. V*. After all, affection and locomotion do belong to the same genus motion, whereas a collarbone and a locking bolt share nothing beyond their Greek name.

Of the homonymous things that are so nearly related that there is a risk of not noticing the homonymy, Aristotle says that some are related by their genus. Robin Waterfield translates line 249 a24 as "some are nearly related by belonging to the same genus" (Waterfield, 1999) But the Greek does not specify that the two objects x and y belong to the same genus, only that the genus is the ground of their relation so the Greek text allows Waterfield's reading as one possibility among others.

The homonymy between "general justice" and "special justice" we found in *Eth. Nic. V* is grounded on their genus. But they do not belong to the same genus. Instead the latter belongs to the former as its genus, and I contend that this possibility is included in 249 a23 *ff*. As it happens, the homonymy between "velocity of motion" as said of an affection and of a locomotion is grounded on the fact that affection and locomotion belong to the same genus.

The homonymy of "velocity of motion" as said of affection and of locomotion is definitely closer than the homonymy of "ἡ κλείς" as said of a collarbone and of a locking bolt. Moreover, since affection and locomotion belong to the same genus, we might want to

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[51] This argument might not satisfy a modern perspective on the matter. We might want to argue that we can compare the time it takes an object to travel from point o to point p, with the time it takes for an object to describe a circumference. But such a comparison works only in the abstract, disregarding qualitative differences in the way that motions actually happen, which are relevant in Aristotle's analysis.

defend that "velocity of motion" as said of affection and of locomotion is a case of close homonymy, as it fits the description in 249 a23 *ff*.

However, when compared to the homonymy of "velocity of motion" as said of motion in a circle and of motion in a straight line, the argument shows that the latter is closer –and hence more difficult to spot– than the former. Perhaps the homonymy of "velocity of motion" as said of affection and of locomotion qualifies as an instance of what Aristotle calls "somewhat similar homonymy".

A comparison of the degree of connection might be more difficult –or even impossible– in some cases. For instance, we might want to say that "velocity of motion" as said of affection and of locomotion is closer than "ἡ κλείς" as said of collarbone and of locking bolt; that "velocity of motion" as said of locomotion in a circle and of locomotion in a straight line is closer than "velocity of motion" as said of affection and of locomotion. But what do we say about different pairs of homonymous things related by genus? Is "velocity of motion" as said of locomotion in a circle and of locomotion in a straight line –which belong to the same genus– closer than "justice" as said of general justice and of special justice –the former being the genus of the latter? Why?

For the time being, it seems as though we have to conclude that "distant homonymy", "close homonymy", and "somewhat similar homonymy" might not be clear categories or types of homonymy. The fact that two different objects x and y are related by their genus might be enough not to consider them as distant homonyms, but not enough to decide whether they are close homonyms and hence, difficult to notice as homonymous in an ordinary conversation.

3.3 Nicomachean Ethics I

The two passages we have analysed so far, from *Eth. Nic. V* and *Phys. VII*, coincide in that they both introduce distinctions of Aristotelian homonymy that refer to what we may call the degree of connection between the homonymous things. This degree of connection does not seem to be a fixed attribute of each instance of homonymy, but rather an attribute that we find as we compare different instances of homonymy. The degree of connection helps us to describe one case of homonymy against another, *i.e.*, we say that in one case the homonymy is closer than in other case.

Phys. VII introduces also a note on the nature of the connection of close homonymy, namely, the homonymous things could be related by their genus, or by analogy. This means that the reason why two different objects x and y share the same name "N" is because they are related either by their genus or by analogy. Let us focus on this aspect now and move onto other passages where Aristotle uses this other criterion to analyse cases of homonymy. In what follows, I shall refer to this new criterion as either the grounds or the source of homonymy, as opposed to the degree of connection that we have discussed above.

As we might recall, *Eth. Nic. I* opens with a discussion of the nature of the good and its role as the goal of every action and choice (1094 a1). Then, Aristotle states the character required from the student of ethical and political matters; the fact that these are not ones to call for demonstrative proof, nor for mathematical precision; and that the purpose of this science is the nature of the good as the ultimate goal of action and choice. After all these clarifications, Aristotle resumes the question about the nature of the good (1095 a14).

Aristotle starts by pointing at the general agreement we seem to have on what we mean by "good" (ἀγαθός), namely, that both the lay people and the more refined ones say that the good is related to happiness. But Aristotle carefully points out that the agreement is in words (ὀνόματι) (1095 a17). In reality, it is clear that people disagree on what is thought to be happiness, and thus, the ultimate good. Aristotle makes clear that the discussion is not about useful things that are sought for the sake of something else (1096 a6), but about the universal good (1096 a12).

Aristotle remarks that the complexity of such an enterprise lies on two facts. First, that an authoritative view –seemingly Plato's– on the matter introduces the Forms to account for the universal good. Second, that it seems as though things are said to be good in as many ways as they are said to be (1096 a25):

- Good as substance: God, reason.
- Good as quality: virtue.
- Good as quantity: that which is moderate.
- Good as relation: the useful.
- Good as time: the right opportunity.
- Good as place: the right locality.

Therefore, in Aristotle's view, there cannot be a good that is single and universally present in all of the things we say to be good.[52] It follows, then, that there cannot be a single science of the good, because even within one category, the good is studied by different sciences (*e.g.*, the good opportunity in war corresponds to the science of strategy; in disease, to medicine, 1096 a32).

A possible way to solve this difficulty, thinks Aristotle, is to distinguish between two ways in which one talks about goods:

> I. (1096 b9) … the goods that are pursued and loved for themselves are called good by reference to a single Form, while those which tend to produce or to preserve these somehow or to prevent their contraries (τὰ δὲ ποιητικὰ τούτων ἢ φυλακτικά πως ἢ τῶν ἐναντίων κωλυτικά) are called so by reference to these, and in a different way. Clearly, then, goods must be spoken of in two ways, and some must be good in themselves, the others by reason of these.

Since the latter are called good in relation to the former, Aristotle groups them all under the heading of useful (1096 b14, see also 1096a6 and 1096 a25).

This proposed solution, if true, would imply the possibility of having one universal and single definition of the good, in relation to which all the others would be defined. Likewise, having a single definition would imply that it would be studied and known by a single science. At least in principle, finding the main way in which the good is said proves to be crucial not only for understanding it but also for understanding all the related ways in which the good is said; *e.g.*, the useful is good because it either produces or preserves the ultimate good, or prevents its contraries.

However, Aristotle remarks that even with the distinction between goods that are pursued for themselves and goods that are pursued for the sake of the former, we are left with a plurality of goods pursued for their own sake whose definitions cannot be comprised by a single definition:

> II. (1096 b20) But if the things we have named [i.e. intelligence, sight, and certain pleasures and honours] are also things good in themselves, the account of the good will have to appear as something identical in them all, as that of whiteness is identical in snow and in white lead.

Since our concern is not Aristotle's view on the nature of the good, but rather on how the concept of homonymy gets involved in the discussion, it is not relevant for us whether

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[52] There is the assumption that the categories are irreducible to one another. Or, at the very least, that the difference between substance, which is prior, and the other categories, which depend upon substance, must prevail (Cf. *Cat. 2, 5*).

Aristotle is right in his criticism of the Platonic view or in his general definition of good. But, for the sake of our analysis of homonymy, we need to grant his general definition of the good as the goal of every action and choice.

Likewise, it is not relevant for us whether the specific examples of goods pursued for their own sake that Aristotle offers –*e.g.*, honour, wisdom, certain pleasures (1096 b23)– are correctly identified. Nor whether Aristotle's classification of all goods that are pursued under the heading of the useful is accurate. For the sake of the analysis of homonymy we need to grant the distinction between goods pursued for their own sake and goods pursued for something else.

With these premises in mind, we can address the question of whether all goods would fall under the same definition. The Platonist doctrine of Forms would imply an affirmative answer, at least in the case of all the goods pursued for their own sake. But two points lead to a rejection of a single definition that actually describes all the particular things one identifies as good insofar as they are good. The first is the fact that the multiplicity of particular things we call good are good in a different way, depending on which category they belong to (substance, quality, and so on).

The second point of contention is the fact that even if one admits the general definition Aristotle starts with –namely, that the good is that at which every choice and every action aims– it turns out that we choose some things as ultimate goals (or so we think), but some others –the useful– we choose as means to achieve other things. So these two types do not share a single definition. And ultimately, even if we were to limit the analysis to the goods that we choose for themselves, –*e.g.*, intelligence, honour, and certain pleasures– it turns out that they are of different natures, and the way intelligence is good, is not the same as the way in which honour is good, and so on.

The outcome, then, is that Aristotle highlights not only the multiplicity of things we call good, but also the multiplicity of reasons why we call each of them good. Thus, we are left with the inescapable question that introduces homonymy:

III.   (1096 b26) But then in what way are things called good? They do not seem to be like the things that are homonymous by chance. Are goods one, then, by being derived from one good (ἀφ᾽ ἑνός) or by contributing to one good (πρὸς ἕν), or are they rather one by analogy? Certainly as sight is in the body, so is reason to the soul, and so on in other cases.

Yet again, Aristotle states that there are different ways in which two different objects x and y (or more, a, b, c… z) can be homonymous. He opens the question with a disjunction: two different objects x and y merit the same name "N" either by chance, or because they are related.

In order for this disjunction to be exhaustive, I take it that we must read the first option as meaning that two different objects x and y merit the same name "N" without being related in any way that would explain their sharing of the same name "N". Each of these two objects came to be identified by the name "N" separately. Hence, x and y bear the same name "N" on the sole grounds of chance.[53]

The second member of the disjunction means that two different objects x and y bear the same name "N" not by mere chance, but rather because they are somehow related. We need to reflect on how the way in which an object x bears the name "N" can be connected to the way in which an object y bears the same name "N".

In our analysis of *Phys. VII*, we found that homonymous things can bear the same name "N" on the grounds of their being related by their genus. We already know two possible ways in which this can happen. One way is that the two different objects x and y that belong to the same genus can merit the name "N" and thus be homonymous, *e.g.*, the attribute "velocity of motion" as said of locomotion and of affection. The second way we know on how homonymous things can be related by their genus is when two different objects x and y share the same name "N" because x is the genus of y, *e.g.*, general justice is the genus of the species justice and both merit the name "justice".

In the same passage, we also found that two different objects x and y can be homonymous by analogy. Aristotle does not include any example there, which brings us back to *Eth. Nic. I* and our current analysis. In the passage marked as III) above, we find again the assertion that some things can be homonymous on the grounds of analogy. The example is :

> Sight (ὄψις) is to body (σῶμα), as
>
> Intelligence (νοῦς) is to mind (ψυχή)

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[53] We must bear in mind that for Aristotle, the act of naming is natural, but the relation between a thing (or type of things) and a name, is not a necessary one. In principle, nothing prevents the event of using the same name for naming two different and otherwise unrelated types of objects. See chapter 2 above.

Aristotle does not elaborate on how the analogy should be read. But we can play around with some thoughts. In principle, we can say the analogy is not hard to admit. Even in English we say "I see" when we mean "I understand".

Perhaps the challenging aspect of the analogy is to notice the homonymy. The four things involved in the analogy –sight, body, intelligence, and mind– have a different name. If we read the analogy simply as it comes, there is no homonymy because there is no name shared by different objects. So we need to go further on to elaborate the analogy in a way that brings about the homonymy.

Let us not forget that the context of the analogy is a discussion of the nature of the good, on how every action and choice aim at it, and how we say that the goodness of things that have a function is in the performance of that function (1097 b10). Perhaps the analogy needs to be read:

Sight is good for the body

as intelligence is good for the mind.[54]

In any case, Aristotle seems to suggest that the homonymy by analogy is based on a relation between objects A and B (here, sight and intelligence) that is not grounded on a common source for A and B. Instead, homonymy by analogy is grounded on the fact that object A stands in a relation with object C in the same way –and hence, with the same name– as object B does with object D. For instance, A performs the same role in C than B does in D.[55]

Lastly, Aristotle mentions that another way in which homonymous objects can be related is by there being an object N from which other objects x, y, and z take their name "N" –either as derived from N or as pointing towards N.

The homonymy in which several objects x, y, and z take the name "N" in relation to one object N seems to fit better the Aristotelian perspective on the good.[56] Ross (Ross, 1995)

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[54] I indulge myself in some speculation and say that for Aristotle sight is the highest of the perceptual capacities (*Met. I* 980 a23; *De An. III* 429 a3). Likewise, intelligence is the highest of the mental capacities (*De An.II* 413 b25, 414 b17).

[55] We shall come back to analogy and transference of name (or metaphor) in section 5 below.

[56] I say that several objects x, y, and z take their name "N" from an object N, and not that several objects x, y, and z are derived from N, because the latter would be a description of Platonic Forms. But, as it is well known, Aristotle does not admit the existence of Forms as separate entities. Regarding the Form of Good in particular, he offers two main reasons for rejecting it. First, good things are not of equal rank, so to say, but instead some are prior and some posterior –substance is prior to any good that comes in any of the other categories (1096 a17). This distinction, Aristotle thinks, is not accounted for by positing a Form of Good. The second reason is more mundane. The good is to be understood as that at which our choices and actions aim; but the Form of

and Irwin (Irwin, 1999) translate προς ἕν in III) above as "contributes", which I think works well for this context, although for other contexts "being in a relation towards" might fit better.[57] I say that this translation fits well in this context because, as we find in I) above, Aristotle defends the view that the things we call good by reference to one ultimate good, are those that tend to produce or preserve them, or prevent their contraries. I take it that all these three are forms of contributing to the ultimate good. Things that produce good, or preserve good, or avoid the contrary of good, are also called good, not in themselves but homonymously. They are called goods, but are the useful kind of good, given that they are sought as means to the ultimate good.

To sum up, we are finding that Aristotle admits different grounds for the homonymy between objects x and y. I have suggested that this corresponds to the second step of his method for analysing problems involving homonymy, namely, establishing why two different objects x and y bear the same name "N". Aristotle says that sometimes there is no connection between the way in which x merits the name "N" and the way in which y merits the same name "N"; in such cases, the homonymy seems to be due to chance.

We have learned also that there are cases in which two different objects x and y bear the name "N" on the grounds of being somehow connected. Sometimes, x and y are related by their genus; sometimes x and y bear the same name "N" by analogy; and sometimes x and y merit the name "N" in relation to one N (either as contributing towards it or as being derived from it).

Let us discuss one more passage where Aristotle highlights the homonymy of different things bearing the same name "N" due to their relation to one N.

3.4 Eudemian Ethics VII

In the Eudemian Ethics Book VII, Aristotle discusses the nature of friendship. The possibility of friendship is introduced from the first lines of the book, as Aristotle advances the view that there might be more than one way in which we speak of friendship:

Good is not attainable, therefore, one cannot aim at it. Hence, it cannot be the ultimate good, the one that accounts for the goodness of all good things one chooses as means to the ultimate good (1096 b32). Whether or not Aristotle offers a fair criticism of Plato's views on the Form of Good, is beyond the scope of this research.

[57] Or "related by affiliation", as Owen suggests, to comprise both the πρὸς ἕν and the ἀφ᾽ ἑνός, as we shall see in chapter 5 below. (Owen, (1965) 1986)

i. (1234 b19) Friendship, what it is and of what nature, who is a friend, and whether friendship has one or many senses (μοναχῶς λέγεται ἢ πλεοναχῶς) (and if many, how many) […] all this must be examined.

The solution to the question will be that, indeed, there are various ways of speaking of friendship. Aristotle defines friendship in accordance with the object we aspire to befriend, the object we love (τὸ φίλον). Since the object of our love is the good, the useful, or the pleasant, it follows that there are three ways in which we speak of friendship: friendship that aims at the good, friendship that aims at what is useful, and friendship that aims at what is pleasant. By the same token, since the object of our love is in each case a different thing, we get that there are three different things we know by the name "friendship", namely: love for the good, love for the useful, and love for the pleasant.

Given that there are three different things that merit the same name "friendship", it becomes relevant to ask about the grounds for the homonymy. The following two passages comprise the core of the Aristotelian position in this matter:

ii. (1236 a17) There must, then, be three kinds of friendship not all being so named for one thing or as a species of one genus, nor yet being wholly homonymous (μήτε πάμπαν λέγεσθαι ὁμωνύμως). For all the senses are related to one which is the primary, just as is the case with "medical"; for we speak of a medical soul, body, instrument, and act, but the authoritative way is the primary (κυρίως τὸ πρῶτον).

iii. (1236 b20) To speak, then, of the beloved object (τὸ φίλον) in the primary sense only is to do violence to what is apparent, and makes one assert paradoxes; but it is impossible for all friendships to come under one account (καθ᾽ ἕνα λόγον). The only alternative left is that in a sense there is only one friendship, the primary; but in a sense all kinds are friendship, not as being homonymous amongst themselves by chance (τυγχανεῖν, τύχη), without being related to the same species, but rather as being related to one thing (πρὸς ἕν).

The first thing we notice in 1236 a17 *ff* is, as I have advanced, that Aristotle acknowledges that there are three things we call "friendship". This simple statement comprises two important claims: first, that the three things in question are indeed three different things; second, that the three of them are rightfully called "friendship".

Let us recall that one of the questions proposed at the beginning of *Eth. Eud. VII* refers to whether the different things we normally call "friendship" are, indeed, properly so called (1235 a31 ff; 1236 b11). Aristotle's final position is, therefore, affirmative.

In 1236 b20 *ff*, we find clearly stated that many of the problems posed by other philosophers are caused by denying that there is more than one thing legitimately called

friendship. More precisely, there are three of them. The fact that these things are different is emphasised by saying that they do not respond to the same account (1236 a26), *i.e.* they demand different explanations of each of their being, legitimately, a friendship.

In both passages 1236 a17 *ff* and 1236 b20 *ff*, we read that the three things share the same name "friendship" because they are indeed related. The fact that they are related is emphasised by saying, in 1236 b20 *ff*, that they do not share the same name "friendship" by chance (τύχη), but by their being related to the primary, most authoritative friendship.

It is worth noticing that the same contrast between homonymous things connected and unconnected appears in both passages 1236 a17 *ff* and 1236 b20 *ff*. Both of these passages are consistent in their stating that the three friendships –albeit different– share the same name on the grounds of their being related to one that is primary. The opposite alternative –*i.e.* that they share the same name without being related– is explicitly dismissed in both passages. But passage 1236 b20 *ff* refers to this alternative as "being homonymous by chance". Whereas passage 1236 a17 *ff* makes the contrast between things being homonymous on the grounds of their being related, and things being homonymous without being related, but does not refer to the latter as "homonymy by chance"; instead, we find the expression "things being wholly homonymous".

Given the parallelism between the two passages, we can advance the hypothesis that the expression "things being wholly homonymous" refers to "homonymy by chance". The argument could be that "whole homonymy" is opposed to "things being homonymous on the grounds of some relation", that is to say, things that merit the same name "N" because they share some further traits or are somehow connected to one another. "Whole homonymy" could be understood, therefore, as "things sharing only the same name "N" and nothing else". Hence, things that are wholly homonymous could be things that share the same name "N" by chance.

In fact, Solomon translates "μήτε πάμπαν λέγεσθαι ὁμωνύμως" in 1236 a18 as "not yet having the same name quite by mere accident"; and "οὔτε ὡς ὁμώνυμοι καὶ ὡς ἔτυχον ἔχουσαι πρὸς ἑαυτάς", in 1236 b25, as "not possessing a common name accidentally without being specially related to one another" (Solomon, 1995). Solomon assumes, thus, that "whole homonymy" means "homonymy by chance".

As for the specific way in which the homonymous things –the three different friendships– are connected, Aristotle says that they do not merit the name "friendship" as

things that merit the same name "N" insofar as they are species of the same genus. Recall that things that merit the same name "N" in virtue of their being species of the same genus (or subspecies of the same species) merit the name "N" in a synonymous way, not by homonymy (see chapter 1, the definition of homonymy and synonymy in *Cat.1*).

In our analysis from *Eth. Nic. I* above, we found that this relation can happen either towards one thing (πρὸς ἕν) or away from one thing (ἀφ᾽ ἑνός). In our current analysis from *Eth. Eud.*, in both passages 1236 a17 *ff* and 1236 b20 *ff*, we read that the homonymy in friendship belongs to this type, more specifically, to the type of homonymy in which several things are in a relation towards one thing. The one thing towards which all friendships point and which explains their sharing the same name "friendship" is, says Aristotle, the primary, most authoritative friendship.

Let me recall that the Aristotelian view holds the existence of three kinds of friendship: friendship that aims at the good, friendship that aims at utility, and friendship that aims at pleasure. Of these, the primary and most authoritative one is friendship that aims at the good. Therefore, both friendship that aims at utility and friendship that aims at pleasure are rightfully called "friendship" because they stand in a relation towards the friendship that aims at the good.

The nature of this relation towards the primary friendship is not quite obvious. For instance, in *Eth. Nic. I* above, we learned that there are two ways of speaking of goods: goods as ultimate objects of every choice and action, or goods in themselves; and goods as things that are means to the ultimate object of choice and action. The latter are goods because they are in a relation towards (πρός) primary goods –*i.e.,* they produce the ultimate good, or preserve it, and so on.

However, none of the above cases of a "relation towards" seems to fit the relation we find in friendship. For it is not the case that by cultivating a friendship that aims at pleasure or utility, one develops a friendship that aims at the good; neither pleasure nor utility in friendship produces the friendship that aims at the good.

Likewise, we are not told that friendship that aims at pleasure is necessary to preserve friendship that aims at the good. On the contrary, the Aristotelian view holds that the friendship that aims at the good brings pleasure, but not the other way around. (1236 b30; 1237 a18)

Either the type of "relation towards" that explains the homonymy in the Aristotelian view of friendship is different from the options described in *Eth. Nic. I* regarding good, or the analysis of the homonymy of friendship is more complex.

Since the three types of friendship are defined in accordance with their object, I suggest that the homonymy of friendship is grounded on the relationship between their corresponding objects. Once again, the primary and most authoritative friendship is the one that aims at the good (1237 a10). Therefore, the other two types of friendship will stand also in a relation towards the good, but in a different way. The useful, we might remember from the discussion in *Eth. Nic. I*, is a kind of good –albeit not in itself. Friendship that aims at utility aims at a secondary good, so to speak, and therefore is a secondary type of friendship. So, friendship that aims at the useful is related to friendship that aims at the good because the two aim at the same object –the good– but the latter aims at the ultimate good, whereas the former aims at a good that takes its name from (*i.e.,* is homonymous with) the ultimate good without being the ultimate good.

On the other hand, pleasure appears to be good (1235 b25) because what is absolutely good is, for this reason, absolutely pleasant (1236 b26). Whence friendship that aims at pleasure aims at an apparent good. Perhaps for this reason some people contend that this is not a true friendship (1236 b10). But Aristotle's stance is that friendship that aims at pleasure is truly a friendship; the φιλία is real, but it is not primary because it aims only at what appears to be good, instead of aiming at the good. This, indeed, seems to be a type of homonymy that we have not found in the previous passages. It is a homonymy grounded on a "relation towards" (πρός), but the apparent good does not produce the real good, nor preserve it, nor avoid its contraries. This is a relationship based on resemblance. Friendship that aims at what is pleasant points towards the friendship that aims at the good insofar as both of them aim at the same object –the good. But the latter points at the real good, whereas the former points at what resembles the real good.

The three friendships are thereby rightfully called "friendship" not by chance but by being connected with the primary of the three, namely, friendship that aims at the good. The primary friendship is the one that aims at the good; friendship that aims at utility, aims at a secondary good; and friendship that aims at pleasure, aims at an apparent good. This explanation would answer the question, Why do friendship that aims at the good, friendship that aims at utility, and friendship that aims at pleasure all merit the same name "friendship"

despite being different things? That is to say, we have applied the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy, to the case of friendship, thus finding the relevant type of homonymy.

Let us now discuss in more detail the homonymy by analogy.

3.5 Metaphor and Analogy

In our analysis of *Eth. Nic. I 1096b26*, in section 3 above, we read that Aristotle includes analogy among other types of homonymy, and gives the following example:

Sight (ὄψις) is to body (σῶμα), as

Intelligence (νοῦς) is to mind (ψυχή).

Since this analogy appears in the context of Aristotle's discussion of the nature of the good, I have suggested to read it as:

Sight is good for the body, as

Intelligence is good for the mind.

In this way, the same name "good" is said of both sight and intelligence, thus revealing the homonymy. That "good" is said of sight and intelligence in different ways can be seen from the fact that the goodness of things that are defined by their function lies in the performance of that function (*Eth. Nic. 1097b10*). Since sight and intelligence have different functions, their corresponding goodness is different.

Ross translates the analogy simply as, "Certainly, as sight is in the body, so is reason in the soul" (Ross, 1995). This translation is true to the text, but it does not allow to appreciate the homonymy announced by Aristotle. An older translation, by Rackham (Rackham, 1934), paraphrases the analogy so as to make explicit the homonymy:

> But in what sense then are different things called good? For they do not seem to be a case of things that bear the same name merely by chance. Possibly things are called good in virtue of being derived from one good; or because they all contribute to one good. Or perhaps it is rather by way of analogy, that is, as sight is good in the body, so intelligence is good in the soul, and similarly another thing in something else. (*Eth. Nic. I 1096b26-28*)

Since Aristotle does not elaborate on the example, it is worth discussing in more detail the concept of homonymy by analogy, before settling with any interpretation.[58]

Aristotle resorts to the mathematical concept of analogy or proportion, which reads as follows: "*b* is to *a* as *d* is to *c*" (*Poet. XXI, 1457b15*). Given these analogical relationships, Aristotle explains that the poet "…will say *d* instead of *b,* or *b* instead of *d*" (*Poet. XXI, 1457b17*).

That is to say, the name "b", which corresponds to object b, gets transferred to object d and, as a result of this transference, both objects b and d bear the same name "b", although not for the same reason: b is called "b" as it originally was, and d is also called "b", but by analogy with b.

As we can observe, homonymy by analogy is the result of a transference of name –or μετάφορα– from one object to another. In fact, Aristotle lists analogy as one of the four kinds of transference of name.

We should then get acquainted with transference of name in general and with analogy in particular. As it happens in other cases, here too, Aristotle is not overly concerned with consistency in the use of technical language. I have suggested above that, sometimes, when Aristotle says that two objects x and y bear the same name not by homonymy but because they are connected, most likely he means "not by chance homonymy" but by homonymy based on some connection. Sometimes, Aristotle contrasts transference of name and homonymy, which might suggest that transference of name is not a kind of homonymy (*e.g., Rhet. 1412b12, Top. 140a6*). Despite the lack of consistency, we can observe that all types of transference of name fit the definition of Aristotelian homonymy. In Poet. XXI 1457b7-25, Aristotle lists the following four kinds of transference of name:

1. From the genus to the species. *E.g.*, "Here stands my ship", for lying at anchor is a species of the genus standing. The two objects to lie and to stand, due to a transference of name, bear the same name "to stand".[59]

2. From the species to the genus. *E.g.*, "Truly had Odysseus done countless deeds of worth", for the species countless belongs to the genus many. The two objects countless and many, due to a transference of name, bear the same name "countless".

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[58] I follow mainly Roger White's interpretation of Aristotle's concept of analogy and transference of name (metaphor). (White, 2010)

[59] I say "object" to refer to whatever thing bears the name, be it an action, a property, a substance, etcetera.

3. From a species to another species. *E.g.*, "Killing a man by draining out his life with bronze", for draining out is a species of the genus taking away, just as cutting (*i.e.*, cutting the life with a sword) is also a species of the genus taking away. The two objects to drain out and to cut, due to a transference of name, bear the same name "to drain out".

4. According to analogy. *E.g.*, to call evening "the old age of the day"; to call old age "the evening of life". For old age is to life as evening is to a day. Both objects old age and evening bear the same name "old age". Alternatively, both objects old age and evening bear the same name "evening".

Transference of name is mostly discussed in *Rhet. III*, where Aristotle offers a large array of examples and discusses the convenience of its use for making a compelling speech. He explains that the purpose of transference of name is to gain new knowledge either by having a new perspective on things already known (*Rhet. 1410b13*), or by enabling us to talk about things that did not have a name but that can be named as a result of the transference of name (*Rhet. 1405a36; Poet.1457b26-30*).[60]

But Aristotle identifies cases of transference of name beyond the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. In *Metaphysics V,* where Aristotle discusses a collection of things that are said in different ways (and are, therefore, homonymous), there are at least 5 cases of transference of name: element (1014b3), capacity (1019b33), quantity (1020a25), complete (1021b17, 25), and whole (1024a6). Aristotle does not explain any of them, and it is not easy to work around how exactly the transference of name works in each case.

Perhaps the least obscure is the transference of name in "complete". Aristotle says that we call "complete" a thing that has attained a good end (σπουδαῖον τὸ τέλος, *Met. 1021b24*), for instance, a virtuous man is complete (or perfect). But we can transfer the name "complete" to a thing that has reached an end, even if it is not a good one. For instance, we say that a spoilt thing is completely ruined (τελείως ἀπολωλέναι, 1021b26); and we say that death is completion because it is an end (1021b28). As said of the virtuous man, "complete" means that the man has reached a good end; as said of the dead man, "complete" means that

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[60] In chapter 2, I have suggested that Aristotle's analysis of homonymy is mainly descriptive, and rarely prescriptive. The case in which one uses a transference of name to coin a name is the one rare exception when homonymy is prescriptive, that is to say, there are rules for creating a good metaphor.

the man has reached the end of his existence. The account of "complete" as said of a virtuous man is different from the account of "complete" as said of the dead man; therefore, "complete" is said homonymously.[61]

Now that we know the generalities of how a transference of name works, let us come back to analogy.

As I said above, Aristotle resorts to the basic concept of analogy in mathematics: "b is to a as d is to c" (*Poet. 1457b15*). We can then transfer the name "b" from object b to object d. For instance, old age (b) is to life (a) as evening (d) is to a day (c). Thus, we can say that the evening (d) is the old age (b) of a day (c).

There is a fundamental difference between the mathematical concept of analogy and the broader applications that Aristotle develops. White reminds us that mathematical analogy is a relation of two magnitudes of the same kind in respect of quantity (White, 2010, p. 58).[62]

Beyond the realm of mathematical objects, comparisons between things of the same kind that can be expressed in quantitative terms are done directly, not by analogy.

In contrast, analogy –in its broader application– is a device that allows to perform comparisons between things of different kinds that cannot be resolved in quantitative terms. For instance, in his biological studies, Aristotle says that some parts of animals can be compared according to the degree (the more and the less) of some property that they both exhibit. *E.g.*, the skin of an elephant is thicker than the skin of a human; the skin of a human is smoother than the skin of an elephant. These are direct comparisons. (*Hist. An. I, 486b5-12*) (White, 2010, p. 28)

Take now scales and feathers. They cannot be compared in a similar fashion, for they are too different in many respects. Therefore, the comparison can be done only by analogy (486b5):

scales are to fish

as feathers are to birds.

As White points out, instead of comparing directly *b* and *d* (scales and feathers) we introduce a third and a fourth terms *a* and *c* (fish and birds). (White, 2010, p. 28)

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[61] In chapter 5, we shall come back to *Metaphysics V* and discuss in more detail the role of homonymy there.
[62] This is the same concept that we'll find, later, in Euclid's Elements V, Def. 3.

Since scales and feathers are too different and the comparison is not direct in respect of a given property present in both, the comparison cannot be resolved according to "the more and the less". Instead, we need to specify the respect in which scales in fish and feathers in birds are being compared. Without such specification, the claim "scales are analogous to feathers" is incomplete. (White, 2010, p. 58)

In this example –as in general, in the context of Aristotle's biology– the comparison is based on the corresponding function of scales in fish and feathers in birds. Instead of the mathematical formula a/b=c/d, White suggests a more general formula, R(a,b)=R(c,d). This new formula calls for specification of the analogical relation R, as follows:

scales in fish are analogous to feathers in birds

in respect of their function. (White, 2010, p. 58)

We can observe how Aristotle departs from the original mathematical concept when he elaborates on the different ways to compose an analogy in poetry, by specifying the nature of the analogical relation. He says that:

1. One might compose the analogy not by transferring name "b" from object *b* to object *d*, but by taking a predicate that is normally associated with object *b*, and transferring it to object *d*. For instance,

   Then the impudent stone rebounded back to the plain … [Homer] applied these epithets by a transference of name by analogy: for as the stone is to Sisyphus, so is the impudent one to the one he offends. (*Rhet. III 1411b31-1412a6*)[63]

   As White remarks, Sisyphus' stone is not directly called "impudent boy" (*i.e.,* "the impudent one). Strictly speaking, the four terms of the analogy are: "a boy is to people (whom he offends) as the stone is to Sisyphus".

   The analogical relation R is not specified by Aristotle. White suggests that it could be R=lacking in respect, or R=being a pitiless torturer. (White, 2010, pp. 38, footnote 35)

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[63] Aristotle's example in *Poet. 1457b20-22* reads as follows: "A cup is in relation to Dionysus what a shield is to Ares. The cup accordingly will be described as 'The shield of Dionysus' and the shield as 'the cup of Ares'." However, this example illustrates only the basic structure R(a,b)=R(c,d), and not the more complex one in which one transfers a predicate associated with *b* to the object *d*.

But the relevant point is that the predicate "impudent", which would be naturally associated with a boy who offends other people, is now transferred to the stone, as if the stone were offending Sisyphus. (White, 2010, pp. 38-39)

2. One might compose the analogy by transferring the name "b" from object *b* to object *d*, and then denying of *d* a natural attribute of *b*. *E.g.*,

<div style="text-align:center">

A cup (b) is to Dionysus (a)

as a shield (d) is to Ares (c).

</div>

Then, Aristotle says, we can call a shield "a cup of Ares that holds no wine", for holding wine is a natural attribute of the cup (object *b*) that is not present in the shield (object *d*).[64]

Specifying the analogical relation R is key to understanding the homonymy because the analogical comparison between object b and object d holds good only to the extent that they are analogous. In any other respect besides the analogical relation R, we assume that objects b and d are different and, therefore, what is said of b does not hold for d. White refers to the properties that are shared by both objects *b* and *d*, as "invariant under analogy", and adds that "A valid argument by analogy will then be one that only infers from the model to the original those properties that are invariant under analogy" (White, 2010, p. 22).

This warning is in line with Aristotle's insistence on the necessity of being alert to the presence of homonymy in our arguments. If two different objects x and y bear the same name "N" by homonymy based on analogy, and we are unaware of the homonymy, we are at the risk of assuming erroneously that properties of x will also belong to y.

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[64] White makes the case that the analogical relation R might refer not only to one particular feature (*e.g.,* the function of organs), but sometimes it might refer to a series of analogies, so that R(a,b) represents an entire model with complex relations that helps to explain R(c,d). For instance, in *Parts of Animals (658b27-659a37)* when Aristotle discusses the nature of the trunk in the elephant, he takes into account on one side the difference between the elephant's "nose" and that of other animals' on the basis of the fact that the elephant spends plenty of time in and near water. On the other hand, Aristotle also takes into account the unsuitability of the elephant's forefeet to fulfil the function of hands, and thus explains in part the behaviour of the trunk. The explanation of the nature of the trunk in the elephant needs to take into account the "total economy of the elephant –its place within the organization of its parts that enables the elephant to live out its particular life cycle– and the difference of the trunk from other noses is seen to reflect the differences between the elephant and its life, considered as a whole, and other animals and their lives." (White, 2010, p. 36) And White concludes, "You seek to understand what is revealed in one comparison by locating it in a nest of comparisons, so that you are potentially comparing the whole economy of one animal with that of another. In that way, although Aristotle himself never talks in this way, he is using analogy to treat one animal as a model –and indeed a *working* model– of another animal." (White, 2010, pp. 37, his emphasis)

To sum up, we must bear in mind that some cases of connected homonymy are based on an analogy. Having established that two different objects x and y are homonymously called "N", then homonymy by analogy is a possible answer to the question, Why do objects x and y bear the same name "N"?

3.6 Final Remarks

In this chapter, I have addressed the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy, namely, establishing the grounds for the homonymy. I have suggested that, once we have established that "N" is said homonymously, the next step is to ask, Why do objects x and y bear the same name "N"? The different answers to this question can be considered as different types of homonymy.

We have identified 4 passages were Aristotle makes explicit distinctions regarding the ways in which two different objects x and y can be homonymous: *Eth. Nic. V 1129a, Phys. VII 248a14, Eth. Nic. I 1096b26, and Eth. Eud. VII 1234b19.* It was remarked that Aristotle's distinctions conform to two separate schemas.

On the one hand, Aristotle says that some homonymous things are close, some are distant, and some are somehow similar. Aristotle does not explain why that is so. He does say that distant homonymous things are easy to notice, *i.e.*, that in an ordinary conversation, we would not mistake "N" as said of x for "N" as said of y. Cases of close homonymy, in contrast, are difficult to notice. Close homonymy is in need of an explanation regarding why "N" as said of x has a different account from "N" as said of y. Somewhat similar homonymous things might have a combination of those conditions, *e.g.*, might be not too difficult to notice, but still require some explanation.

The classification of cases of homonymy as close, somewhat similar, and distant, seems to relate only to whether the homonymy is easy to identify, that is to say, it relates to the first step of the method for analysing problems involving homonymy (*i.e.*, establishing that the problem in question is indeed a case of homonymy). This distinction does not explain why objects x and y bear the same name "N".

On the other hand, we identified the following ways in which Aristotle classifies cases of homonymy, which do seem to explain why objects x and y bear the same name "N":
- Unconnected homonymy, or homonymy by chance (whole homonymy)

- Connected homonymy, in which the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are connected:
  - By their genus
  - By transference of name, especially by analogy
  - With several objects bearing the name "N" as derived from one primary N
  - With several objects bearing the name "N" as contributing towards one primary N, in different ways:
    - By producing it,
    - By preserving it,
    - By avoiding its contraries
    - By resembling it

It is unlikely that this classification is exhaustive. But it offers a solid starting point for an analysis of cases involving homonymy. The types mentioned above are fairly general, so as to be applicable to several cases. Even though we bear in mind that the classification might not be exhaustive, whenever we find a new case of homonymy, we should first try to make sense of it as belonging to one of the types above; only if none of the types explains why the objects x and y bear the same name "N", then we can conclude that this example belongs to a new type that we can add to the classification.

This assessment is especially relevant, given that the types of homonymy Aristotle distinguishes are not always illustrated by an example. Likewise, the examples that Aristotle explicitly labels as cases of homonymy –approximately 26 examples throughout his works– are not always explained, and the type of homonymy is rarely indicated.[65]

Given that the two schemas for classifying homonymy are motivated by different concerns –the former explains why a case of homonymy might go unnoticed, whereas the latter explains the grounds for the homonymy– they do not necessarily map onto each other. For instance, a case of chance homonymy might be easy to notice and therefore qualify as distant homonymy, since the homonymy is unconnected. But this does not entail that all cases of distant homonymy are cases of chance homonymy.

The details of the classification as I describe it can be contested. For instance, I have introduced the type homonymy by resemblance as a subtype of the connected homonymy in

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[65] See Appendix A, section II).

which several objects merit the name "N" as contributing to one primary N. Aristotle does not mention explicitly this type of homonymy. I have suggested it as a way to account for the way in which the friendship that aims at pleasure merits the name "friendship", namely, by aiming at an object that resembles the good. It might be argued that homonymy by resemblance fits better as a subtype of connected homonymy in which several objects merit the name "N" as deriving from a primary N, or even that it is a separate type altogether.

In any event, the details of the classification are not as important as the method itself. Whatever type of homonymy one proposes, it must address the question, Why do the homonymous objects x and y bear the same name "N"?

Chapter 4. Irwin's classification of Aristotelian Homonymy

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have engaged in the study of Aristotle's concept of homonymy as means to an enquiry into the meaning of "τὸ καλόν", given that Aristotle himself says that "τὸ καλόν" can be said in many ways and is therefore homonymous (*Top. 1.15 106a21-23*).

In chapter 2, I discussed Aristotle's definition of homonymy introduced in *Cat. 1a*. In chapter 3, I proposed a classification of the different types of homonymy I have identified throughout Aristotle's works. My proposal stems from the premise that Aristotle analyses problems involving homonymy in a methodical way.

The analysis of the definition of homonymy is related to step 1 of Aristotle's method, which consists in establishing that the problem we are analysing is indeed a case of homonymy. The classification of different types of homonymy is related to step 2, which consists in answering the question, Why do objects x and y bear the same name "N"?

In this chapter, I shall discuss Irwin's classification of the different types of Aristotelian homonymy.

In his article *The Sense and Reference of kalon in Aristotle*, Irwin discusses the ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said in different contexts within Aristotle's philosophy, and advances a hypothesis for a main meaning of it. (Irwin, 2010) He starts his discussion with the premise that "τὸ καλόν" is homonymous, and applies to this analysis his findings from a previous study on Aristotelian homonymy. (Irwin, 1981).

I am following Irwin's lead on the matter, that is to say, I start by studying Aristotle's concept of homonymy, and then I apply this knowledge to the homonymy in the uses of "τὸ καλόν".

However, my interpretation of the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy differs from Irwin's (as we shall see in chapter 7), partly because my interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy also differs from his.

Irwin starts his study on Aristotelian homonymy with an analysis of the definitions of homonymy and synonymy from the *Categories*. As I have said in chapter 2, Irwin explains that the way Aristotle states the definition of homonymy allows for two readings: either homonymy and synonymy exhaust the possible ways in which two different objects x and y

can share the same name "N"; or the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is not exhaustive, but admits a *tertium quid*. Irwin adopts the former reading, which entails that:

- Two different objects x and y are synonymous if and only if the account of the name "N" as said of x is the same as the account of "N" as said of y.

- Two different objects x and y are homonymous if and only if the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different.[66]

Homonymy, in turn, can be of either of two major types:

1. The accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and totally unrelated, or

2. The accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but somehow related.

As I have argued in detail in chapter 2, to this extent, I agree with Irwin's interpretation. But I have some fundamental disagreements with his procedure for identifying and classifying types of homonymy, which I shall discuss in this chapter.[67]

4.1 An outline of Irwin's classification of Aristotelian homonymy

Irwin is not primarily concerned with offering an exhaustive classification of Aristotelian homonymy, but he is concerned with establishing distinctions between major or outstanding types of homonymy.

The first distinction is between connected and unconnected homonymy. Irwin says that "Different types of beings are connected homonyms, since the definitions all mention a subject by reference to which the other beings are defined." (Irwin, 1981, p. 525). Here are his examples:

- Primary and secondary quantities (see *Cat. 5b1-11*) are called "… quantities in different ways, with different definitions; but the definitions of the secondary all

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[66] Irwin's formula reads, "x and y are homonymously F if and only if the name 'F' applies to both x and y, but a different definition ("account of being") must replace 'F' in 'x is F' and in 'y is F'." (Irwin, Homonymy in Aristotle, 1981, p. 524)

[67] More recently, Christopher Shields has offered a much more detailed classification of Aristotelian homonymy, with specific labels for each type. (Shields, 1999)
But his proposal is not different from Irwin's in any fundamental aspect. When relevant, I shall indicate the equivalence between Irwin's and Shields' classifications.

mention the primary. And so quantities should be connected homonyms." (Irwin, 1981, p. 526)

- "Not seeing is sometimes not having sight, sometimes not using it (*Top. 106b15-20*) – sight is mentioned in each definition" (Irwin, 1981, p. 526)

- "The healthy is spoken of in many ways –sometimes as what produces health, sometimes as what preserves it, and so on (*Top.* 106b3-7; cf. 107b6-12); all the definitions mention health." (Irwin, 1981, p. 526)

Irwin does not elaborate on how he means "subject", but it is clear that he points at a thing that all definitions of the name "N" as said of objects x, y, and z, have in common.

From this definition of connected homonymy, we can assume that, whenever two different objects x and y bear the same name "N" in a different way, and the corresponding definitions of "N" do not make reference to one common thing, then it is a case of unconnected homonymy.[68]

Unconnected homonymy is, therefore, homonymy "according to nothing in common" or "chance homonymy" (*Eth. Eud. 1236a18, b25-6; Eth. Nic. 1097b26-7*) (Irwin, 1981, p. 532). Aristotle does not have any example of homonymy that he explicitly labels as homonymy by chance, nor does Irwin propose one. But Irwin does suggest that chance homonymy recalls what Aristotle calls "distant homonymy". (Irwin, 1981, p. 527)

Aristotle's example of distant homonyms is "ἡ κλείς" said of a locking bolt and of the collarbone (*Eth. Nic. V 1129 a25*). Perhaps as a gesture towards the reader, or simply with the intention of capturing the experience of the original example, instead of translating the Greek expression and explaining how it can refer to a body part and a locking device, Irwin changes the original example into an English one, namely, "chest" as said of breast and of a box.

I take it that he assumes his example to be equivalent to the Greek one, and so the explanations he offers around his example, I assume to be addressed to Aristotle's example.

Irwin interprets that this is a case of distant homonymy because the definition of "breast" has no elements in common with the definition of "boxes", given that the nature of breasts and boxes is entirely different. He particularly emphasises that we can perfectly

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[68] Shields calls these two types of homonymy Associated Homonymy, and Discrete Homonymy, respectively. (Shields, 1999, p. 35)

understand the definition of one chest without the need to understand the definition of the other. (Irwin, 1981, p. 527)[69]

To wrap up then, connected homonyms are those whose definitions all include a common subject or element in reference to which other things are defined; whereas unconnected homonyms are those whose definitions have no common elements and, therefore, knowledge of the definition of one of the homonyms does not entail knowledge of the other.

Connected homonyms can be, in turn, of the following subtypes: analogous, focally connected, or spurious. Irwin does not comment on analogy. In fact, analogy is only mentioned twice in (Irwin, 1981): once on page 527, listed along with focal connection, to indicate that it is a type of connected homonymy; and another time, on footnote 12, along with spurious homonymy, to indicate that it is not focally connected. Irwin does not clarify either of the two remarks. Therefore, it is clear that Irwin considers analogy as a subtype of connected homonymy, but we do not know what is peculiar to it.[70]

Let us move onto focally connected homonymy. Irwin borrows Owen's terminology – Focal meaning (Owen, 1979)– and alters it so that instead of referring to the meaning of words and definitions of concepts, it now refers to the things bearing names.[71]

Irwin sets out the scheme of focally connected homonymy as follows: "If Ns are focally connected, then the focus N1 has the definition "G", and subordinate Ns have the definition "G+H", G+J", etc. N1 is primary and the focus because other Ns include its definition", although he adds that, sometimes, the definitions of the subordinate cases include not the focal definition, but the name of the focus. (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, Footnote 12)[72]

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[69] Irwin does not elaborate on the counter-part, close homonymy. Shields refers to this distinction between close and distant homonymy in terms of seductive and non-seductive homonymy.

[70] Irwin does not comment on the homonymy by genus, although he does make a reference to the homonymy between general justice and special justice, which are related by genus. (*Eth. Nic. 1129aff*) (Irwin, 1981, p. 572).

[71] Shields coins the expression "core dependent homonymy" instead of Irwin's "focally connected homonymy".

[72] Irwin's original formula is "if Fs are focally connected, then the focus F1 has the definition G, and subordinate Fs have the definition G+H, G=J, etc." He uses "F", probably after "focus"; whereas I use "N" after "name". He says that some subordinate Ns can have the definition "G=J", but that might be an editorial slip, because if two things have equivalent definitions, then those things are of the same sort; if they are of the same sort, they cannot be homonymous.

Even though Irwin insists on the point that Owen's approach is about meaning of words, whereas he is concerned with real essences, Irwin defines focal connection in the same way as focal meaning. See chapter 5 below.

Irwin appeals to two examples that he explicitly claims to be cases of focal connection: healthy, and being. Aristotle uses the example of the homonymy in "healthy" in different places and for different purposes, but Irwin refers in particular to the fact that "healthy is spoken of in many ways –sometimes as what produces health, sometimes as what preserves it, and so on…".[73] (Irwin, 1981, pp. 526, 531)

Irwin's point is that the definitions of healthy things include the definition or the name of "health". For instance, a healthy medicine could be defined as "a treatment that produces health"; a healthy walk could be defined as "a motion that preserves health", and so on. Accordingly, the definition of "healthy medicine" has the structure "G+H", and the definition of "healthy walk" has the structure "G+J", where G represents "health". That is to say, the definitions of "healthy" and "healthy walk" include the name "health".

Irwin is hesitant on whether the focus of the definition must itself be one of the F_s. (Irwin, 1981, p. Footnote 12) Despite his hesitation, it is my impression that he favours an affirmative answer to that question.

For Irwin contends that a definition that is contained in all F_s, but which does not correspond to any F more than to others, is not a real definition, but a general description that needs to be completed differently for different F_s. This is how Irwin reads Aristotle's account of the soul De An. II 414 b20ff). Aristotle distinguishes three main types of soul –the nutritive, the sensory, and the rational. Aristotle explains that it is not possible to have a proper definition of "soul", for we understand that "soul" refers to what displays life, and this can be done in more than one way, whereas the proper definition ought to express the peculiar nature of the thing defined. However, the definition of "soul" applies equally to the soul of a plant, the soul of a non-rational animal, and the soul of a rational animal. There is no such a thing as a "mere soul", in reference to which the other souls are defined. And none of the three main types of soul is contained in the definitions of the others, i.e., the soul of a non-rational animal is not defined as "the soul of a plant + H". (Irwin, 1981, p. 537. Footnote 21)

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[73] Irwin makes reference to Top. 106 b3-7, and 107 b6-12. But that is probably an editorial slip. For Top. 106 b3-7 does not mention "healthy" –nor the type of homonymy Irwin is discussing here. The passage in Top. 107 b6-12 does mention "healthy" being said in two different ways, but does not elaborate on how these two ways are related. I take it that Irwin has in mind Met. 1003 a36ff, which reads, "And just as every healthful thing points towards health, one thing by protecting it, another by producing it, another by being a sign of health, and another because it is receptive of it…"
For all the places in which the homonymy of "healthy" is discussed, see Appendix A section ii).

Therefore, according to Irwin's interpretation, it seems as though the focus of the focal connection must itself be one of the F_s, if we understand –as Irwin does– that the focus has a definition.[74]

The third and last subtype of connected homonymy that Irwin identifies refers to what he calls spurious homonyms. In addition to the formal structure, Irwin says that being a genuine N is a condition for being focally connected to N1 (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, Footnote 12). But there are connected homonyms that share the same name on the basis of mere resemblance. Things that resemble N1 can bear the name "N", but the corresponding definition of "N" is not applicable to them.

There are two stock examples in Aristotle's corpus. One refers to sculptures, paintings, and in general, any artistic representations, for Aristotle says of a hand made out of stone that it is not a hand except homonymously. The other example refers to organs or living entities that are no longer alive and do not longer function as they were supposed to. *E.g.*, Aristotle says that a dead hand is not a hand except homonymously (Irwin, 1981, p. 528).[75]

Both in the case of a dead hand and a hand made out of stone, it is clear that they are hands that cannot fulfil the function of a real hand, and thus, according to Irwin's interpretation, they are not a real hand –hence the name "spurious"– but bear the name "hand" because they resemble a real hand.

Nowhere in his works does Aristotle mark artistic representation of bodies, and dead bodies, as a specific type of homonym. But Irwin identifies them together as a separate subtype of homonymy, relying perhaps on the fact that, quite often, Aristotle pairs the homonymy of sculpted and painted organs, with the homonymy of dead ones.[76] And clearly, from a logical point of view, Irwin is right: both the painted hands and the dead hands bear the name "hands", but the definition of "hand" is not applicable to them, insofar as they cannot function as a real hand does.

The consequence of spurious homonymy is that, for instance, when we say of a piece of sculpture, "this is a hand" what we are saying is that the name "hand" –which is the same name that we use to name real hands– is correctly applied to the sculpture, and yet it is not clear whether the statement is true, for we cannot apply the definition of "hand" to the

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[74] Irwin does not clarify his views on the homonymy of soul.

[75] For Shields, these are cases of "discrete non-accidental and seductive homonymy".

[76] See Appendix A section ii).

sculpted hand. To address this, Irwin suggests that the statement "this is a hand", said of a sculpted hand, is true. But instead of the definition of "hand" –*i.e.,* a grasping organ– we would have to substitute a definition something like "likeness of a hand". And the same holds for a dead hand. (Irwin, 1981, pp. 528, 529)

To sum up, Irwin considers that there are two main types of Aristotelian Homonymy: unconnected and connected. Unconnected Homonymy is chance homonymy, which he says that recalls distant homonymy. Connected Homonymy comprehends three subtypes of homonyms: analogous, focally connected, and spurious.

4.2 Criticism of Irwin's classification

A key tenet for this research is that Aristotle has a methodical approach to the analysis of problems involving homonymy. I have suggested that we can think of his method in three steps: first we establish that the problem in question does indeed involve homonymy; second, we establish the grounds for the homonymy; and third, we identify the primary thing N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

In chapter 3, I have discussed in more detail the first step of the method. I have argued that establishing that the problem we are analysing does involve homonymy is achieved by showing that the account of "N" as said of object x is different from the account of "N" as said of object y. In order to show this, ideally, we give the actual accounts of "N". But there are other ways to show that the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different, without giving the actual accounts. I have argued that the tests for homonymy that Aristotle collects in *Topics 1.15* do precisely this, *i.e.*, they show that "N" as said of x means something different from "N" as said of y; but none of the 14 tests for homonymy is performed by giving the corresponding accounts of "N".

In chapter 4, I have discussed the second step of the method. Unlike the first one, this does require us to give the different accounts of "N" as said of objects x and y, because we need to assess them together, in order to see whether they are connected.

The distinction between step 1 and step 2 for an analysis of homonymy is introduced by Aristotle in *Top. 1.15 106a4-8*:

> … we must not only say that in one way "good" is said to be justice and courage, in another way "good" is said to be conducive to soundness and conducive to health, but we must also say that some things are called "good" because they possess certain qualities in themselves,

> while other things are good because they are productive of a certain result and not because they possess certain qualities in themselves.

Step 1 of the method answers the question, Is the account of "N" as said of object x different from the account of "N" as said of object y? In contrast, step 2 answers the question, Why do objects x and y bear the same name "N"? In Aristotle's example above, the answer to the first question is affirmative. One account of "good" refers to justice and courage, whereas another account refers to soundness and health.

The next distinction, in relation to the second step of the method, is more subtle: assuming that "good" refers to the same property –say, justice– we say that one account of "good" is "the possession of justice", and another account of good is "that which is productive of justice". We can observe that the second account makes reference to the former.

In my opinion, the distinction between establishing the presence of homonymy (step 1), and establishing the grounds for the homonymy (step 2) is not taken into consideration by Irwin's classification of Aristotelian homonymy. In what follows, I shall address the consequences of this omission:

a) *Irwin does not draw distinctions between the two different purposes –and corresponding schemas– of Aristotelian homonymy.*

In the previous chapter, I have argued that Aristotle highlights different aspects of homonymy, according to the specific problem he is addressing. Sometimes, Aristotle is concerned with establishing the distinction between the way in which "N" is said of x and of y. If noticing such a distinction poses a challenge, then Aristotle explains that it is because x and y are close homonyms; whereas if the distinction is easy to spot, Aristotle explains that it is because x and y are distant homonyms.

Some other times, however, we might already be aware that the accounts of "N" as said of objects x, y, and z are different. But we might wonder whether a definition of "N" must be such as to comprehend the three different accounts; or whether the definition of "N" must refer primarily to x; or problems of this sort. In these cases, Aristotle is more concerned with pointing at the possible relations between the account of "N" as said of x and the accounts of "N" as said of y and z. It is in cases like these that Aristotle explains that some cases of homonymy are based on analogy; or on a relation in which the accounts of "N" as said of x, y,

and z make reference to a primary N; or that x and y bear the same name "N" by chance; and so on.

I have also suggested that the two different schemas do not necessarily map onto each other. What is more, I contend that the schema that distinguishes what we may call degrees of closeness (or degree of connection), is more related to the first step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy; whereas the schema that results in types of homonymy is related to the second step of the method.

The distinction between the two schemas is not explicitly drawn by Irwin, nor is it clear whether he takes them to be different schemas serving different purposes, for on the whole, he assumes that the role of the types of homonymy is to highlight the relevant difference between the homonymous things x and y, but he does not mention the role of explaining the grounds on which the two different objects x and y share the same name "N". (Irwin, 1981, p. 534)[77]

At some point in his article, Irwin grants that distant homonymy is a degree of connection, rather than a type of homonymy. For he says that dead hands are closer to real hands than sculpted hands to real hands, and thus the homonymy in the latter is more distant and easier to notice (Irwin, 1981, p. 529).

But Irwin also says that distant homonymy recalls chance homonymy (Irwin, 1981, p. 527). Aristotle does not say explicitly anything of the sort, and it is difficult to decide conclusively on the matter, given that we do not have an example of chance homonymy in Aristotle's extant works. We can grant that when two different things x and y come to share the same name "N" due to a linguistic accident, then most likely the meaning of "N" as said of x will have nothing in common with the meaning of "N" as said of y, and most likely the homonymy will be easy to notice. To this extent, we can say that, indeed, if x and y are homonymous by chance, then most likely they are distant homonyms as well.

However, as Irwin analyses the homonymy of "chest" said of breasts and boxes –which is meant to be a case of distant homonymy, in place of Aristotle's original example of "ἡ κλείς" said of a collarbone and a locking bolt (*Eth. Nic. V 1129 a*)– he says that the distant homonymy here need not mean that breasts and boxes share the same name "chest" as a result of a

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[77] In fact, Irwin is primarily concerned with identifying some unified sense for "N" in cases of connected homonymy. That is to say, he goes from what I consider to be step 1 of the method, to step 3. We shall discuss these matters in more detail, in chapter 5.

linguistic accident. But if this is how Irwin reads this example, then based on this example he has no grounds to suggest that distant homonymy recalls chance homonymy, for he concedes that the example might not be a case of chance homonymy.

All in all, it is not clear what role Irwin assigns to the degree of connection within Aristotelian homonymy.

b) *Some of the types of homonymy identified by Irwin do not account for the grounds of the homonymy.*

Irwin's analysis of the types of Aristotelian homonymy is primarily concerned with explaining why the account of "N" as said of x is different from the account of "N" as said of y. Accordingly, his analyses focus on comparing the definitions of x and y, rather than comparing the definitions of "N" as said of x and "N" as said of y.

In the previous chapter, I have argued that the types of homonymy distinguished by Aristotle address the question, Why do x and y bear the same name "N"? As we shall see, the subtypes of connected homonymy that Irwin proposes –focally connected, and spurious– are not conceived to address such a question.

Irwin proposes spurious homonyms as a subtype of connected homonyms. This subtype is meant to account for the homonymy of dead organs and artistic representations, *e.g.*, of dead hands and sculpted hands, insofar as they merit the name "hand". As I have said in the previous section, Irwin's rationale for this label –spurious homonyms– is that, in the context of Aristotle's biology, hands (organs, in general) are defined by the function they perform in the organism as a whole.

As Irwin correctly points out, neither dead hands nor sculpted ones can perform the function of real hands, and therefore neither of them fit the definition of "hand" as real hands do.

This explanation serves to show only that neither dead hands nor sculpted ones merit the name "hand" in the same way as real hands do. That is to say, Irwin's explanation goes only as far as establishing that the name "hand" as said of real hands, sculpted hands, and dead hands, is homonymous. But it does not explain how the name "hand" is said of sculpted hands and of dead hands, which is what Aristotle indicates that we should do when analysing problems involving homonymy (*Top. 1.15 106a4-8*).

It is to be noted that Irwin classifies spurious homonyms as subtypes of connected homonymy, despite the fact that, according to his analysis, the definition of a real N is not applicable to a spurious N –nor is the spurious N focally connected to the real N, as we shall see in a moment.[78]

The reason for classifying dead hands and sculpted hands as cases of connected homonyms –says Irwin– is that they merit the name "hand" not by chance, but due to a resemblance with real hands (Irwin, 1981, p. 528).

I agree with Irwin in that the homonymy of "hand" as said of real hands, sculpted hands, and dead hands is connected. However, if we assume that the connection is grounded on resemblance, as Irwin suggests, then the subtype of homonymy should have been homonymy by resemblance, because this is what explains their bearing of the name "hand" –not the fact that they are not real hands.[79]

Moreover, it is worth questioning whether sculpted hands and dead hands merit the name "hand" in the same way. For it seems to me that the remains of a hand would still merit the name "hand" even though the resemblance to a real hand faded away.

Irwin points out that dead hands have more in common than sculpted hands with real hands, which makes the homonymy of the former closer than the homonymy of the latter (Irwin, 1981, p. 528). Nonetheless, Irwin classifies the homonymy of dead hands together with the homonymy of sculpted hands, simply as cases of spurious homonyms. That is because – says Irwin– Aristotle often uses the homonymy of artistic representations to explain "… how dead organs and parts are spurious homonyms too" (Irwin, 1981, p. 528).

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[78] Recall that, for Irwin, connected homonymy occurs when the accounts of "N" as said of x, y, and z have a common subject or element. Cases in which the definition of N is part of the account of "N" as said of x, y, z, are cases of focal connection.

[79] Aristotle says that both friendship that aims at the useful and friendship that aims at pleasure merit the name "friendship" in relation to (πρός) the primary friendship (*Eth. Eud. 1236a17ff*).
In chapter 4, I have suggested that the friendship that aims at pleasure merits the name "friendship" based on a resemblance towards friendship that aims at the good –*i.e.*, the primary friendship– because pleasure resembles good. But, since resemblance does not seem to be a form of contribution (*e.g.*, production, preservation, and the like), I have suggested that, perhaps, resemblance could be deemed as a case of derivation (ἀφ᾽ ἑνός), which is also mentioned by Aristotle as a type of homonymy in which several things merit the name "N" in reference to one primary N (*Eth. Nic. 1096b26ff*).

It is true that these cases of homonymy –dead organs and organisms, and artistic representations– are quite often paired together.[80] But this is not enough to support the claim that they constitute a specific type of homonymy.

All the passages where Aristotle discusses the homonymy of dead organs and artistic representations are meant to explain that the definition of an organ accounts for its function and, therefore, neither dead organs nor artistic representations merit the name of the organ in the same way as the living organ does. Aristotle does not assign a type for the homonymy of dead organs and artistic representations, because in those passages his only concern is to show that they are homonymous.[81]

Irwin also explains that spurious homonyms are not focally connected because being a genuine N is a condition for being focally connected (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, footnote 12). This condition is problematic for Irwin's concept of focal connection.

According to Irwin, an object is a genuine N if the definition of N is applicable to it. Thus, he says that both boxes and breasts are genuinely "chests"; even if they both merit the name "chest" because they resemble each other, their definitions do not depend upon such a resemblance and, therefore, they are not spurious homonyms (Irwin, 1981, pp. 527-8).

Irwin's argument entails a comparison of the definition of a box that happens to bear the name "chest" with the definition of a body part that happens to bear the name "chest". That is to say, Irwin is comparing the account of what it is to be a box, with the definition of what it is to be breasts. It is to be expected that their definitions do not have elements in common. This analysis does allow to establish the presence of homonymy, for it makes clear that "chest" is said in different ways. But it does not allow to further the analysis of homonymy, for it compares the definitions of "x" and "y", instead of comparing the definitions of "N" as said of x and y.

I have said that, according to Irwin, spurious homonyms are connected, but not focally connected, because being a genuine N is a condition for focal connection. And I have suggested that this condition –being a genuine N – is problematic for the concept of focal connection.

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[80] Throughout Aristotle's corpus, I can count at least 11 passages where this comparison is made. See Appendix A section ii).

[81] In chapter 5, we shall analyse passages where Aristotle is primarily concerned with explaining the grounds for the homonymy and with identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

Recall that Irwin describes focal connection with the formula: "If Ns are focally connected, then the focus N1 has the definition G, and subordinate Ns have the definition G+H, G+J, etc. N1 is primary and the focus because other Ns include its definition in theirs." And Irwin adds that, sometimes, the definitions of subordinate Ns seem to include the name, rather than the definition of the focus (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, footnote 12).

In the previous section, we said that "health" is part of the definition of healthy walk, and of healthy medicine and, therefore, the homonymy of "healthy" is focally connected to health.

Irwin argues that neither sculpted hands nor dead hands fit the definition of real hands and, therefore, are not genuine hands. The problem with this argument is that, if the definition of real hands were applicable also to sculpted hands and dead hands, then sculpted hands and dead hands would be also real hands, which means that they would merit the name "hand" in the same way that real hands do.

Focal connection, as proposed by Irwin, does not require that the definition of the focus be applicable to the subordinate cases. A healthy walk merits the name "healthy" in relation to health, but the definition of "health" as such is not applicable to a healthy walk. When we enquire for the grounds of the homonymy, we find that a walk merits the name "healthy" because it contributes to health; to this extent, in the context of an analysis of homonymy, a healthy walk is genuinely "healthy".

Likewise, a sculpted hand does not fit the definition of a real hand. But it does merit the name "hand" correctly. In fact, it merits the name "hand" due to its relation with real hands, even if the relation is based merely on resemblance, thus rendering a rather distant homonymy.

Similarly, in the case of boxes and breasts, if they merit the name "chest" because they resemble each other, then they are connected homonyms, even if the homonymy is distant and easy to notice.

If we ask for the definition of "chest" and signal a box on the one hand, and then ask for the definition of "chest" and signal breasts on the other, then we are defining boxes and breasts, but we are not analysing the homonymy.[82]

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[82] This is especially true in Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian definitions, for he says that a definition is an account of the essence of the thing defined –to which I agree. Therefore, the definition of "chest" as said of a box is the account of what makes the box be a box. (Irwin, 1981, p. 535)

The condition of being a genuine N is problematic for the concept of spurious homonyms for the reason explained above. And it is also problematic for the concept of focal connection because:

- If being a genuine N means that the object x correctly merits the name "N", then this condition is also met by spurious homonyms. For sculpted hands and dead hands correctly merit the name "hand".

- If being a genuine N means that the definition of "N" as such is correctly said of all the Ns, then all the Ns merit the name "N" in the same way and are not homonymous.

- If being a genuine N means that the definition of "N" is correctly applied to all the Ns, but not in the same way, then this condition is met both by focally connected homonyms and by spurious homonyms.

From an ontological point of view, it might be relevant to analyse whether a relation based on resemblance is fundamentally different from other types of relation. But the analysis of homonymy emphasises not the relations between x and y,[83] but the relations between the way in which x merits the name "N" and the way in which y merits the same name "N".

In regards to focally connected homonymy, there is one additional remark I would like to make. Aristotle says that, sometimes, several things merit the name "N" in relation to one primary N (*Met. 1028a32ff; Met. 1003a33ff; Eth. Eud. 1236a17ff; Eth. Nic. 1096b26ff*). This is what Irwin calls focally connected homonymy. However, Irwin formalises the explanation of focally connected homonymy, thus blurring the nuances that Aristotle makes for the different ways to account for this type of homonymy.

Once again, let us recall Irwin's formula for focal connection: If Ns are focally connected, then the focus N1 has the definition G, and subordinate Ns have the definition G+H, G+J, etcetera. N1 is primary and the focus because other Ns include its definition in theirs. (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, footnote 12).

The two examples that Irwin explicitly mentions as cases of focal connection are "healthy", and "being". Here is a relevant passage where Aristotle discusses these cases:[84]

> Being is meant in more than one way, but pointing toward one meaning (πρὸς ἕν) and some
> one nature rather than by mere homonymy. And just as every healthful thing points toward

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[83] Some objects x and y might be related and yet not be homonymous. *E.g.*, an organism produces many kinds of residues, but only corpses merit the same name as the corresponding organism; a glove also resembles a hand, and yet it is not a hand. The analysis of homonymy must focus on the bearing of the same name "N".

[84] For the homonymy of "healthy", Irwin quotes *Top. 106b3-7* and *107b6-12*, but that might be an editorial slip, because none of those passages is about the homonymy of healthy.

(πρός) health, one thing by protecting it, another by producing it, another by being a sign of health, and another because it is receptive of it, and also what is medical points toward (πρός) the medical art (for one thing is called medical by having the medical art, another by being well suited to it, another by being an action belonging to medical art, and we shall find other things spoken of in a similar way to these), so too is being meant in more than one way, but all of them pointing toward one source (πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν). (*Met. 1003a33ff*)

Aristotle distinguishes several ways in which things might merit the name "N" in relation to one (by contributing to one, πρὸς ἕν) primary N: by protecting it, by producing it, by being a sign of it, by being receptive of it, by being well suited to it, by belonging to it. All of these accounts could be formalised in the same way: "N+G", where N is the primary thing, and G the way in which the subordinate N relates to the primary one.

But there are other relations that Aristotle does not include among the "πρὸς ἕν", that could also be formalised as "N+G". For instance, homonymous things related by genus could be described with the same formula. Let us say that the definition of general justice is, the exercise of virtue in relation to others, "G"; the definition of special justice –which is part of general justice– is, the exercise of virtue in relation to others regarding the fair distribution of goods, "G+F" (*Eth. Nic. 1129b30ff*). As we observe, the definition of general justice is part of the definition of special justice, but Aristotle does not include this type of homonymy as a case of homonymy in relation to one primary thing (πρὸς ἕν).[85]

Elsewhere, Aristotle distinguishes between things that are homonymous by contributing to one primary thing (πρὸς ἕν) and things that are homonymous by being derived from one primary thing (ἀφ᾽ ἑνός) (*Eth. Nic. 1096b26ff*). I have suggested that a dead hand merits the name "hand" insofar as it is derived from a real hand. Let us say that the definition of a hand is, a grasping organ, "G" (Irwin, 1981, pp. 528-9). The definition of a dead hand can be, the remains of a grasping organ, "G+R". That is to say, we can use the same formula that we use for any other case of homonymy by contribution to one (πρὸς ἕν). But saying that x merits the name "N" because it derives from a primary N is certainly different from saying that x merits the name "N" because it contributes to a primary N. This nuance is lost if we simply use the formula "G+R", where G is the focus.[86]

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[85] Irwin discusses the homonymy of "justice" only as a case of close homonymy (Irwin, 1981, p. 527). I grant that he could make a case for focal connection based on the formal aspect of the homonymy.
[86] Owen groups together the homonymy πρὸς ἕν and the homonymy ἀφ᾽ ἑνός, and describe the group as "homonymy by affiliation to some central use" (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 17).
He considers "relative to one" and "derived from one" as the same type of homonymy, based on *Gen. Corrup. 322 b31*, and *Eth. Eud. 1236 b20-21, 25-26.* The former passage only mentions a contrast between mere

Lastly, the formulae "G+H", "G+J", can be used to describe things that are not homonymous. For instance, both an ox and a human being merit the name "animal". Let us say that the definition of "animal" is, a sentient living creature, "S". The definition of human being can be, a rational sentient living creature, "S+R"; and the definition of ox, a non-rational sentient living creature, "S+N". Both definitions "S+R" and "S+N" are different but have a common element "S" and thus, according to Irwin's concept of focal connection, they are focally connected to S. Yet, an ox and a human being do not merit the name "animal" in a homonymous way.

To sum up, in general, I agree with Irwin's arguments to establish that x and y merit the name "N" by homonymy. He has several ways of explaining that the way in which x merits the name "N" is different from the way in which y merits the same name "N".

Irwin proposes two major types of homonymy, unconnected and connected, to which I also agree.

But Irwin proposes focally connected homonyms and spurious homonyms as subtypes of connected homonyms.

Having established that x and y merit the same name "N" homonymously, then the type of homonymy should explain in which way x and y are homonymous, as Aristotle indicates in *Top. 1.15 106a4-8*. That is to say, having established the homonymy, we must address the question, Why do x and y bear the same name "N"?

The subtypes of connected homonyms proposed by Irwin are not the most useful for addressing such a question. The concept of spurious homonyms emphasises the difference between x and y, thus making clear that they merit the same name "N" but in different ways.

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homonymy (maybe homonymy by chance) and homonymy based on some prior uses of the name in question; to my mind, this passage does not offer enough information as to justify Owen's reading. As for the second passage, it does suggest what Owen points, namely, that πρὸς ἕν and ἀφ᾽ ἑνός are actually the same relation – but probably with a different direction. It is possible to read *Eth. Eud. 1236 b 18-21* as saying that friendship based on the pursuit of pleasure (and on the pursuit of utility) bears the name "friendship" based on a relation πρὸς ἕν (relative to) the primary friendship; as well as saying that the name "friendship" as said of friendship based on the pursuit of pleasure is ἀφ᾽ ἑνός (derived from) the name "friendship" as said of the primary friendship:

"The view is also held, when people look into the matter closely, that those who feel affection for each other on account of pleasure are not friends, because it is not the primary friendship, since that is reliable but this is unreliable. But as a matter of fact it is friendship, as has been said, though not that sort of friendship but one derived from it (ἀπ᾽ ἐκείνης)"

But, as I said, in some cases the difference between homonymy πρὸς ἕν and homonymy ἀφ᾽ ἑνός does matter. We shall discuss Owen's proposal in more detail in the next chapter.

Whereas the concept of focal connection blurs the nuances that Aristotle makes in his analysis of the different ways in which x and y can be homonymous.

4.3 Final Remarks

In previous chapters, I have argued that Aristotle analyses problems involving homonymy in a methodical way, that comprehends three basic steps:

1. Establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy,
2. Establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and
3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

In chapter 3, I argued that the different answers we can give to address the second step of the method result in different types of homonymy (*cf. Top. 1.15 106a4-8*).

In this chapter, I discussed Irwin's interpretation of the different types of Aristotelian homonymy. I contend that Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy does not take into account the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy. For he assumes that the role of the types of homonymy is to highlight the relevant difference between the homonymous things x and y, instead of explaining the grounds on which the two different objects x and y share the same name "N", as I suggest.

Irwin distinguishes two major types of homonyms, unconnected and connected. Given two different objects x and y that bear the same name "N" in different ways, x and y are connected homonyms if the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different but with a common subject or element. Otherwise, they are unconnected.

In turn, Irwin distinguishes three subtypes of connected homonyms: analogous, spurious, and focally connected –although he does not discuss analogy. In addition, Irwin also discusses Aristotle's distinction between distant and close homonyms.

I have argued that the distinction between distant and close homonyms is motivated by an epistemic concern; for Aristotle says that close homonymy is difficult to notice, and therefore an argument must be offered in order to make clear that x and y merit the same name "N" in different ways. In my opinion, the distinction between distant and close

homonymy is related only to the first step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy.

Whereas the types of homonymy that Aristotle highlights in some passages are meant to explain not *that* x and y merit the same name "N" in different ways, but *why* and *how* this happens –*e.g.,* analogy, homonymy by contributing to a primary thing, homonymy by being derived from a primary thing, and so on (see chapter 3).

The two schemas respond to different aspects of the analysis of problems involving homonymy. Therefore, they do not necessarily map onto each other.

Irwin is not explicit on whether he sees the two schemas as responding to different criteria or purposes within the analysis of Aristotelian homonymy. At some point, he says that the distinction between distant and close homonyms is a matter of degrees, and that within the same type of homonymy, one case of homonymy might be closer than another –with which I agree. But he also says that distant homonymy recalls chance homonymy.

There is another aspect of Irwin's classification of the types of Aristotelian homonymy that is clearly different from the position I am proposing here. For I contend that the subtypes of connected homonyms that he proposes –spurious and focally connected– are not helpful in explaining the grounds for the homonymy.

Irwin's concept of spurious homonyms is meant to emphasise the difference between x and y, so that it becomes clear that they merit the same name "N" in different ways. But it does not explain why, despite their being different, they merit the same name "N". For instance, by saying that a dead hand is a spurious homonym with a real hand, it becomes clear that the dead hand merits the name "hand" in a different way than the real hand does. Because the real hand fits the definition of "hand", which is based on the function of the organ; whereas the dead hand cannot longer perform the function of a real hand, and therefore does not fit the definition of "hand". But this does not explain in which way the dead hand merits the name "hand".

As for Irwin's concept of focally connected homonyms, I contend that it does explain the grounds for the homonymy to an extent, but it blurs the nuances that we find in the different types of homonymy that Aristotle distinguishes. For instance, Aristotle says that some things merit the name "N" by contributing to a primary N –by preserving it, or by producing it, and so on– whereas other things merit the name "N" by being derived from a primary N. All of the possible kinds of homonymy by contribution to a primary N, together

with all of the possible kinds of homonymy by being derived from a primary N, can be expressed with the same formula Irwin proposes for focal connection (G+H, G+J… G+Z; where G is the focal definition of the primary N).

The three aspects of Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy I criticise in this chapter –the lack of clarity about the difference between the two schemas for classifying homonymy; the concept of spurious homonyms; and the concept of focal connection– are ultimately related to the same point, namely, that Irwin's proposal does not take into account the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy.

Even though I disagree with several points of Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy, I do, nonetheless, consider it worth analysing his views on the matter.

I have said that the ultimate goal of this research is understanding the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in the context of Aristotle's philosophy; and I have recalled that, for Aristotle, "τὸ καλόν" is homonymous. Therefore, we need to study Aristotle's remarks about homonymy, and apply them to the case of "τὸ καλόν". This is exactly the approach that Irwin takes in his article *The Sense and Reference of Kalon in Aristotle*, which we shall discuss in chapter 7.

I do not follow Irwin's classification of Aristotelian homonymy, but I agree with Irwin that understanding Aristotelian homonymy is key for analysing the meaning of many relevant concepts in Aristotle's philosophy –such as "τὸ καλόν".

Chapter 5. The primary meaning of a homonymous "N". Metaphysics Delta

Introduction

The overall project I undertake here is an investigation into the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" or "fineness" in the context of Aristotle's philosophy. But we know that "fineness" can be said not only of different types of things but also in different ways (*Top. 1.15 106a20-22*).

I have argued that, despite there not being an extant treatise dedicated to homonymy, we can observe that Aristotle has a three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy –described in *Top. 1.15 106a2-8* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30*– as follows:

1. Establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy (the corresponding meanings of the name "N" as predicated of objects x and y are different),

2. Establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

In Chapter 2, I discussed mainly what corresponds to step one by analysing the definition of homonymy in *Categories.* We learned that, for Aristotle, a name that can be said in many ways (πολλαχῶς λέγεται) is homonymous (ὁμώνυμος). Aristotelian homonymy means that the definition of the name "N" as said of x differs from the definition of the name "N" as said of y, and these two definitions may or may not be connected.

To say that x and y merit the name "τὸ καλόν" homonymously, then, entails that "τὸ καλόν" has several meanings, either connected or unconnected.

In chapters 3 and 4 I discussed the second step of the method, which tells us that, in addition to establishing the homonymy between x and y, we ought to explain the basis on which x and y bear the same name "N". I have argued that, by following this method, we find that there are different types of homonymy. *E.g.*, there is homonymy by chance, homonymy by analogy, homonymy by resemblance, and so on.

Those two steps might suffice in certain contexts and for certain purposes, *e.g.*, when the orator aims only at specifying that he means "N" as in "x is N" and not as in "y is N"; or in dialectic, when one needs to draw distinctions between "N" as said of x and as said of y.

If, however, one has scientific ambitions, such as establishing the nature of the kind that x belongs to in virtue of which we call it "N", then most likely one needs to define "N". In cases in which "N" is said homonymously, in the context of a scientific enquiry, Aristotle explains that we must refine our investigation:

> "…after distinguishing the various ways in which each thing is said, we must then explain by reference to what is primary in each term, saying how they are related to it"[87] (*Met. IV* 1004a28-30)

According to this, the third step for a complete analysis involving homonymy is to identify how several ways in which "N" can be said might be related. To an extent, we have already discussed some aspects of this step, for in chapters 3 and 4 we have learned that, in the case of connected homonymy, the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of x and of y will reveal their relations. Once we know the relations, we are in a position to identify the primary N in relation to which other things bear the name "N".

This third step completes the analysis of the homonymy of a name "N", insofar as it allows us to see more clearly which way of saying "N" is to be defined and the extent to which this primary definition can account for the other ways in which "N" is said.

In this chapter, I shall discuss the third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy. I shall focus on the relation between the primary N and the way in which other things bearing the name "N" are related to it.

First, I shall discuss Owen's concept of focal meaning. Roughly speaking, Owen proposes that when several ways in which "N" can be said display some relation, it is a focal relation. The focus of this relation is held by one primary N, from which we take the main meaning of "N". The related non-primary ways in which "N" is said result in different meanings of "N", all of which make reference to the one primary N.

Next, I shall discuss Irwin's proposal of there being a unity of sense underlying the various related meanings of "N". This unified sense does not correspond to any N –or type of N, for that matter– nor to any specific attribute. The unified sense is a general description that fits all instances of N but does not define any N more than another.

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[87] "ὥστε διελόμενον ποσαχῶς λέγεται ἕκαστον, οὕτως ἀποδοτέον πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ἑκάστῃ κατηγορίᾳ πῶς πρὸς ἐκεῖνο λέγεται."

Each of these views is proposed as accounting for all cases of connected homonymy.[88] And they are clearly not compatible. I shall argue, however, that identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" requires a more comprehensive theory. For some cases of related homonymy are well explained in terms of focal meaning and do not fit into an analysis in terms of an underlying unity of sense, *e.g.*, "being", as Owen suggests. But other cases of related homonymy are better explained by pointing at a unified sense and do not fit into an analysis in terms of focal meaning, *e.g.*, "life", as Irwin proposes.

My proposal combines resources from both proposals, for I contend that, in all cases of connected homonymy, some ways in which "N" is said are primary and some others derive from the primary ones; but the primary way in which "N" is said does not necessarily refer to a single primary N in all cases of connected homonymy. Thus, my interpretation reconciles – albeit with some adjustments– both Owen's and Irwin's interpretations on the matter.

I shall defend my hypothesis by looking into some of the terms Aristotle analyses in *Metaphysics V*, and explaining whether they can be analysed in terms of focal meaning –or homonymy in relation to one primary N– or in terms of a unified sense –or homonymy in relation to a cluster of primary N's. If my hypothesis proves successful, then one of these two schemas should be applicable to our quest for the meaning of "τὸ καλόν".

5.1 Focal Meaning

In his paper *Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle* (Owen, 1979), Owen's main thesis is that the concept of focal meaning was decisive in Aristotle's defence of the possibility of developing a single science of being *qua* being. In this section I shall address what the concept of focal meaning entails; how it is related to the concepts of natural priority and logical priority; and how it is invoked by Aristotle –according to Owen– in different problems, such as finding the primary meaning of "being", "soul", and "medical".

I am not concerned with the historical aspect of Owen's argument. However, it is worth knowing the overall context of his claims.

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[88] Although, as we shall see, for Owen, Aristotelian homonymy is always unconnected. The cases in which different objects merit the same name "N" for related reasons, are cases of focal meaning –which, according to his analysis, is not a subtype of homonymy.

Owen's argument stretches from the *Eudemian Ethics I*, where Aristotle claims that, since "being" is said in many ways, there cannot be one science of it,[89] to the *Metaphysics IV*, where Aristotle not only contends that this science is possible but even explains its subject matter.

From a historical point of view, therefore, Owen argues that, when Aristotle wrote the *Eudemian Ethics*, he had not fully developed the concept of focal meaning in all its sophistication. Whereas in *Metaphysics IV*, according to Owen, we find a refined analysis of the special kind of multivocity of "being", so that it can be reconciled with the project of a universal science of being *qua* being.

As I was saying, my concern is not a review of his argument from the historical point of view –which requires taking a stance regarding the authorship as well as the dates and order of composition of several works (*Eudemian Ethics, Protrepticus, Metaphysics I, IV, VII, and XII*), which are beyond the scope of this research. Let us focus, then, on Owen's definition and explanation of focal meaning.

Three passages are key to the understanding of focal meaning:

a) There must, then, be three kinds of friendship, not all being so named for one thing or as species of one genus, nor yet having the same name quite by a complete homonymy. For all the senses are related to one which is the primary, just as is the case with the word "medical"; for we speak of a medical soul, body, instrument or act, but properly the name belongs to that primarily so called. The primary is that of which the definition is contained in the definition of all; *e.g.*, a medical instrument is one that a medical man would use, but the definition of the contained is not implied in that of "medical man". Everywhere, then, we seek for the primary. But because the universal is primary, they also take the primary to be universal, and this is an error. (*Eth. Eud. VII 1236 a17-25*)

b) There are many senses in which a thing may be said to "be", but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous. Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves health, another in the sense that it produces it, another in the sense that it is a symptom of health, another because it is capable of it. And that which is medical is relative to the medical art, one thing in the sense that it possesses it, another in the sense that it is naturally adapted to it, another in the sense that it is a function of the medical art. And we shall find other words used similarly to these. So, too, there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one starting-point; some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substance, others because they are a process towards substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of some of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say

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even of non-being that it is non-being. As, then, there is one science which deals with all healthy things, the same applies in the other cases also. (*Met. IV 1003 a34-1003b12*)

c) For it must be either homonymously that we say these are, or by making qualifications and abstractions (in the way in which that which is not known may be said to be known), –the truth being that we use the word neither homonymously nor in the same sense, but just as we apply the word "medical" when there is a reference to one and the same thing, not meaning one and the same thing, nor yet speaking homonymously; for a patient and an operation and an instrument are called medical neither homonymously nor in virtue of one thing, but with reference to one thing. . (*Met. VII 1030 a32-1030b2*)

In the three passages we encounter the same basic idea: several things merit the name "N" in virtue of their reference to one thing that is the primary bearer of the name "N". In a), different sorts of friendship are so called because they are related to a primary friendship (that, later on, in 1236b1, we learn to be the friendship that aims at the good); in b), all the different things that merit the name "being" do so in virtue of one primary being, namely, the substance; and in all three passages we read that "medical" is said of many things and in many ways, but all of these things take the name "medical" as they stand in a relation to one primary thing, namely, the medical art.[90]

Owen says that a homonymous "N" has focal meaning when several things merit the name "N" in virtue of an "affiliation" with one primary bearer of the name "N".[91] The meaning of "N" as said of this primary N is, therefore, the focus of the meaning of "N".

A *caveat* is in order. As we learned in chapter 2, in the context of Aristotelian philosophy, Owen reserves the term "homonymy" and cognates for what I call "unconnected homonymy". He reads the three passages above as marking an opposition between the multivocity of "N" based on an affiliation to one primary N, and a multivocity by homonymy –or equivocation, as he also calls it (Owen, 1979, pp. 23, 26).

In chapters 2 and 4, however, I have argued that Aristotle does not seem too concerned with the use of technical language throughout different works. I have suggested that the opposition between multivocity πρὸς ἕν and multivocity by homonymy that we read in the three passages above can be better read as a contrast between mere homonymy or

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[90] Owen takes the focus of the meaning of the homonymous "medical" to be the medical man (*i.e.*, the doctor) (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 17)

[91] Owen uses the expression "affiliation" as a way to generalise two relations: a relation towards the one, or πρὸς ἕν, and a relation away from the one, or ἀφ᾽ ἑνός. In *Eth. Nic. I 1096 b27-28*, Aristotle mentions these two relations separately. But Owen points out that, in other places, the distinction is not made. *E.g.*, in *Gen. Corrup. 322 b31-32*, Aristotle mentions only that some things are homonymous ἀπὸ τῶν ἑτέρων; whereas in *Eth. Eud. 1236 b25-26*, Aristotle mentions only the possibility of all kinds of friendship being homonymous by a relation πρὸς ἕν.

things said wholly homonymously (πάμπαν λέγεσθαι ὁμωνύμως), as we read in a) and cases in which the homonymy is grounded on some sort of relation, *i.e.*, a contrast between unconnected and connected homonymy. This reading is consistent with *Eth. Eud. VII 1236 b25* and *Eth. Nic. I 1096 b26-29*, where sharing the same name "N" on grounds of some sort of relation is contrasted with being homonymous by chance (ἀπὸ τύχης), thus indicating that there are different types of homonymy.

Given that Owen reads Aristotelian homonymy as referring only to the phenomenon in which several things merit the same name "N" on different and unrelated grounds, and that synonymy means that several objects share the same name "N" on the same grounds, then Owen reads Aristotle's distinction between synonymy and homonymy as non-exhaustive. The relation by affiliation to a primary "one" that he calls focal meaning is a *tertium quid* between homonymy and synonymy (Owen, 1979, p. 26).[92]

The disagreement between Owen's reading of Aristotelian homonymy and mine, results in the fact that he reserves the term "homonymy" for what I call "unconnected homonymy"; and I place the relation by affiliation (or πρὸς ἕν) that he calls "focal meaning" under the heading of "connected homonymy", alongside homonymy by analogy, and homonymy related by the genus. What in principle might seem to be merely a terminological disagreement, has consequences in the way one analyses concrete problems.

For instance, in *Top. 1.15 106a21-23,* "τὸ καλόν" is found to be said homonymously because it can be said as the opposite of "ugly" (αἰσχρόν) when said of an animal (*i.e.*, τὸ αἰσχρὸν ζῷον vs τὸ καλὸν ζῷον) and as the opposite of "mean" (μοχθηρόν) when said of a house (*i.e.*, ἡ μοχθηρά οἰκία vs ἡ καλὴ οἰκία). According to Owen's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy, this assertion means that the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" as said of an animal is unrelated to the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" as said of a house. Whereas according to my interpretation, this passage tells us only that "τὸ καλόν" is said homonymously (*i.e.*, first step of the method), but we still have to question the grounds for the homonymy (second step) and, more importantly, what the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" is, in relation to which the house and the animal get to be called "καλόν/καλή" in different but perhaps related ways.

It is clear, therefore, that Owen's remarks on focal meaning are applicable only to connected homonymy. However, since this chapter is concerned only with connected

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[92] See also Chapter 2 above.

homonymy (*i.e.*, with the ways in which several things called "N" are related to one primary N), Owen's remarks are perfectly relevant, even though focal meaning does not cover all types of connected homonymy –for it includes neither homonymy by analogy nor homonymy related by genus.

Having said that, we can observe that Owen reads the three passages above (*Eth. Eud. 1236a17-25; Met. 1003a34-1003b12; and Met. 1030a32-1030b2*) as cases of multivocity of the name "N" explained by an affiliation of several things bearing the same name "N" with one primary N. This primary N is what determines the main meaning of "N". The priority of the primary N can be seen, in speech (λόγος) in the fact that the definitions of "N" as said of each of the non-primary N's include, as a necessary part, a reference to the primary N, as we read in a).

Owen rephrases Aristotle as follows: "A word such as 'medical', [Aristotle] says, is not univocal –it has various definitions answering its various senses, but one of these senses is primary, in that its definition reappears as a component in each of the other definitions. If to be a medical man is to be XY, to be a medical knife is to be of the sort used by a man who is XY (1236 a15-22). This is the pattern of reductive translation that Aristotle later applies to 'being'…" (Owen, 1979, p. 17). Note how Owen says that the definition of the primary N reappears as component in the other definitions; yet, what he shows is that the primary N itself –not the definition– is what reappears as a reference in the other definitions. The latter –that the primary N itself is the focus of the focal meaning– is consistent with the rest of his analyses, as we shall see.

This asymmetric relation in which one N is included in the definitions of all the others is a type of logical priority. Focal meaning, therefore, entails logical priority. But it is not reduced to logical priority.

Attention must be paid to the distinction between focal meaning and logical priority. Owen seems to understand that logical priority is a relation that obtains between two definitions, in which one of them is the basis for another. But this does not necessarily mark the presence of focal meaning. For instance, regarding the series points-lines-planes-solid, Owen reminds us that the Academy allowed the definition of the posterior terms by the prior, or the converse (Owen, 1979, p. 19). The logical priority, in this example, can go in either direction. But no common name "N" is involved here, and thus this is not a case to be discussed in terms of focal meaning.

Another important relation that we must distinguish is that of natural priority. Natural priority happens when several things are related in a way that one of them can exist without the other, but not the other way around. For instance, substance is naturally prior to the attributes; and the final good is naturally prior to the goods as means (Owen, 1979, p. 18). But natural priority does not necessarily result in focal meaning; for instance, the grown up man is naturally prior to the child insofar as the former is the father to the latter. But this priority does not result in homonymy, for both of them merit the name "human" on the same grounds.

The relation between the substance and the attributes is, in fact, a complex net of relations. For the substance is naturally prior to the attributes. And, in addition to the natural priority, both substance and attributes merit the same name "being". But the substance merits the name "being" in a primary way, whereas attributes merit the name "being" by reference to the substance. Finally, the definition of "being" as said of the substance is prior to the definition of "being" as said of any attribute, for the latter necessarily makes reference to the substance, and such is the logical priority of "being" as said of substance. We have, therefore, three types of relations: a relation between things, a relation between the names of those things, and a relation between the definitions of the names of the things.

The complex net formed by these three relations is what Owen calls focal meaning, and he finds it best expressed in *Met. IV 1003 a34* (b, above): πρὸς ἕν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν λεγόμενα, things "said relative to one thing and to a single nature" (Owen translates φύσιν as "character") (Owen, 1979, p. 17).

Focal meaning involves three aspects: the nature of things sharing a name "N"; the various definitions of "N" in accordance with each thing it is said of; and language, *i.e.*, the name we use to refer to the various things.

A common mistake in reading Owen's concept of focal meaning is to omit one of the relations it involves. For instance, both Irwin and Fortenbaugh assume that focal meaning is the same as priority of definition (or logical priority), and reformulate it in a way that the definition of the primary N must be contained in the corresponding definitions of the non-primary N's. Whereas Owen's analysis shows that the various definitions of "N" as said of the

non-primary bearers of the name "N" must include a reference to the thing that is the primary bearer of the name "N". [93]

Ferejohn also assumes that focal meaning is the same as logical priority, and then proceeds to point out a difficulty in *Eth. Eud. 1236 a22-23*, namely, that "medical" is said in many ways, all of which point towards a primary one, but it is not the adjective "ἰατρικόν" which becomes a necessary part of the various definitions of medical things, but the noun "ὁ ἰατρός" (Ferejohn, 1980, p. 120). Similarly, it is not the adjectival participle "τὸ ὄν" which is a necessary part of the various definitions of existing things, but the noun "οὐσία" (*Met.IV 1003 b5-9*) (Ferejohn, 1980, p. 122).

Ferejohn misses the distinction between referring back to the word (or the definition) and referring back to the thing, which is what focal meaning calls for. Ferejohn reads the homonymy of "being" and "medical" as involving a "grammatical ploy" (Ferejohn, 1980, p. 122) to smooth over a "slight wrinkle" (Ferejohn, 1980, p. 120) in Aristotle's analysis. But Owen does not read those passages as flawed, and the transit from "τὸ ὄν" to "οὐσία" is not read by him as a grammatical change, but as a transit from the name to the thing, *i.e.*, the thing that merits the name "being" in the first place is the substance.

In my opinion, Owen's analysis of Aristotle's views on the relation πρὸς ἕν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν λεγόμενα, or things that are said in relation to one thing and one nature, is successful in explaining the complexity of Aristotle's observations on the phenomenon in which several things merit the name "N" for different reasons but all connected to one primary bearer of the name "N": the primary N holds priority in the bearing of the name "N" insofar as other things merit the name "N" in relation to the primary N; and the primary N holds logical priority over other things that merit the name "N" insofar as the definition of "N" as said of any of the non-primary N's makes reference to the primary N.

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[93] Irwin reformulates Owen's concept of focal meaning into his own concept of focally connected homonymy. His claim is that Owen's analysis is about meaning of words, whereas Aristotle's remarks are about definitions of real essences. Irwin's formula for focally connected homonymy is "If F_s are focally connected, then the focus F_1 has the definition 'G', and subordinate F_s have the definition 'G+H', 'G+J', etc. F_1 is primary and the focus because other F_s include its definition". (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, Footnote 12).
Fortenbaugh contends that the account of friendship we read in *Eth. Eud. VII* is not a case of focal meaning, because it is not shown "…how the definition of a perfect or primary friendship is involved in the definitions of other kinds of friendships" (Fortenbaugh, 1975, p. 57).

Owen's concept of focal meaning allows him to offer a highly plausible interpretation of Aristotle's views on the priority of "being" as said of a substance over "being" as said of any attribute.

It must be noted, however, that Aristotle mentions natural priority only in the case of substance and "being" (*Met. V 1019a1-4; see also Met. VII 1028a32 "substance is prior in time (χρόνῳ)…"*. Owen takes the two types of priority –natural priority, and logical priority– to be applicable to all cases in which different objects merit the name "N" in relation to one primary N. But it is not entirely clear how natural priority occurs in, say, the homonymy of "medical". For to say that the medical art –the focus of the homonymy of "medical"– holds natural priority over the medical instruments and medical preparations (*i.e.,* medicine) means that the medical art can exist without the instruments and preparations. But this does not seem to be the case. It seems as though the medical art, medical instruments and medical preparations coexist –for the medical art entails knowing how to use medical instruments and medical preparations for the purpose of healing the patient. The presence of homonymy and the logical priority in the definition of "medical" as said of the medical art, are enough to say that the medical art is the focus of the homonymy of "medical". Perhaps, Owen's concept of focal meaning is unnecessarily demanding.

A second –and more important– remark is that the concept of focal meaning cannot account for all the cases in which several things merit the same name "N" for different but related reasons. Let us take, for instance, Aristotle's theory of the four causes (for "cause" is said in many ways, *Met. V 1013b3-5*). The name "cause" applies equally to the four causes. And none of the four causes seems to have logical priority over the others –let alone natural priority.

Moreover, in the case of "being" and "medical" it was quite clear what was the primary thing bearing the corresponding name, *i.e.,* a substance for the former, and the art for the latter. Whereas in "cause" there is no primary thing.

Finally, someone might want to argue that the main meaning of "cause" is along the lines of "An answer to the question, Why does this happen?". But if we assume this as the definition of "cause", then the four causes are synonyms, for the definition applies to the four of them in the same way. We shall come back to the homonymy of "cause" in Chapter 6.

Let us now discuss Owen's remarks on Aristotle's concept of "soul". Owen applies the same analysis of focal meaning to Aristotle's studies on the nature of the soul under the

assumption that a plant soul, an animal soul, and a human soul all merit the name "soul" in a different but not unrelated way, "…with soul as with being, it is the primary sense of the word that shows what is common to all senses (*De An. 415 a23-25*), and it is only what is denoted by the word in its primary sense that can have 'separate existence' (413 a31-b10)" (Owen, 1979, p. 20).[94]

Owen does not elaborate on how he reads *De An. 415 a23-25* ("for the nutritive soul (ψυχή) is found along with all the others and it is the most primitive and widely distributed (πρώτη καὶ κοινοτάτη) power of the soul (δύναμις ψυχῆς)") and it is not obvious how he applies the concept of focal meaning here, especially since the passage starts with a remark about the nutritive soul but ends with a remark about the power of nutrition –which are not the exact same thing.

But it is possible that Owen reads the passage as asserting that the power of nutrition is the primary one, in the sense that it has natural priority, which is then consistent with the other passage Owen refers to, *De An. 413 a31-b10*, for the power of nutrition's being naturally prior to the other powers of the soul (sensation, thinking, and movement) entails that the former can exist without the latter, but not the other way around.

Perhaps Owen reads 413 b1 ("This [*i.e.*, the power of nutrition] is the originative power the possession of which leads us to speak of things as living at all") as asserting that the name "soul" (which we can consider coextensive with "life", 413 a21-22) is primarily said of things that have the power of nutrition; which is true, since having the power of nutrition is a *conditio sine qua non* (413 a30-31).

It seems, therefore, that the power of nutrition indeed holds natural priority over the other powers of the soul.

There is not, however, logical priority. For it is true that Aristotle defines the nutritive soul by the power of nutrition. But even though the power of nutrition is a biological condition for an animal to be alive, "animal soul" (as well as "animal life") is not defined by reference to the power of nutrition, but by reference to the power of sensation (*De An. 413 b2*). In fact, none of the other powers of the soul is defined by reference to the power of nutrition.

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[94] Owen acknowledges that there are important differences between the use of focal meaning in the case of "being" and in the case of "soul", but does not explain them (Owen, (1960) 1979, p. 20). Nonetheless, there is no doubt that he sees Aristotle's use of the term "soul" as a case of focal meaning, for he compares it to the case of "being" (Owen, (1960) 1979, pp. 20, 37 footnote 25).

Owen has said that "being" has focal meaning because there is one primary being, the substance, in relation to which the other things are called "beings". But this does not happen in the case of "soul"; for the thing that is defined by having the power of nutrition is a plant, but the other things that have a soul are not said to have a soul by reference to a plant. Moreover, if all types of soul were defined by having the power of nutrition, this would not be a case of homonymy, but a case of synonymy –for all souls would be called "soul" on the same grounds.

The accounts or definitions of "being" as said of things that are not substances, include a reference to the substance. But the account of "animal soul" makes no reference to a plant.

Therefore, the complex net of relationships we see in the homonymy of "being" (as well as in the homonymy of "medical") is not found in the homonymy of "soul".

To sum up, Owen's concept of focal meaning is successful in explaining cases of multivocity in which several things merit the same name "N" on the basis of an affiliation with a primary N. Prime examples of homonymy by focal meaning are "being" and "medical" (albeit natural priority is not clear in the latter).

Owen does not assume that Aristotle has a general method for analysing problems involving homonymy –for Owen takes Aristotelian homonymy to refer only to what I call unconnected homonymy. However, his analysis of focal meaning –which I consider to be a type of connected homonymy– outlines in a clear way the nature of the relationship between the different things x and y bearing the same name "N", *i.e.*, they are related to one primary N in a way that the primary N has priority in bearing the name "N" because other things are called "N" in relation to the primary N; and the primary N has logical priority over other things that merit the name "N" insofar as the definition of "N" as said of any of the non-primary N's makes reference to the primary N.

Owen's concept of focal meaning, therefore, equates to what I describe as the second and the third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy (2. Establishing the grounds for the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and 3. Identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N").

My first criticism of Owen's proposal has been that the concept of focal meaning seems to be unnecessarily demanding in regards to the natural priority, for this kind of priority

does not seem to be present –or at least not clearly– in all cases of connected homonymy, *e.g.,* "medical".

My second criticism of Owen's proposal has been that it does not seem to be applicable to all cases of connected homonymy, as Owen pretends. For instance, the homonymy of "soul" does not seem to fit the conditions for focal meaning.

In my opinion, it seems possible to argue that there are cases of connected homonymy where there is no one primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". If so, it seems reasonable to think that the analysis in terms of focal meaning is not the only way to address the task of identifying the primary meaning of "N" in cases of connected homonymy.

5.2 The underlying unity of sense

Another way to account for the nature of the connections between homonyms, as well as to find the primary meaning of a homonymous name "N", is by acknowledging the variety of meanings but assuming an underlying single sense. On this view, we would say that "N" is said homonymously of x and y insofar as "N" has different definitions –one definition as said of x, another definition as said of y. But it is a case of connected homonymy insofar as "N" has one single sense across the variety of definitions. The unity of sense is not found by looking at one primary N –for on this view, none of the N's has priority over the others– but by looking at what is common across the various definitions of "N".

This view is proposed by Terence Irwin. He contends that, in principle, this unified sense allows us to identify the names "N" as said of x and "N" as said of y as connected homonyms. For if the corresponding definitions of "N" as said of x and as said of y were unconnected, then "N" would have not only different definitions but actually different senses.

Likewise, according to Irwin, the unity of sense allows us to manage the multiplicity of definitions of "N". For if a different definition of "N" entailed a different sense, then we would have to learn as many senses of "N" as the number of things "N" can be said of. For instance, "life" is said in many ways but has a unified sense:[95]

> Now this [*i.e.*, life] is said in many ways, and provided any one alone of these is internal to a thing we say that thing is living –namely, thinking or perception or local movement and rest, or movement in the sense of nutrition, decay and growth (*De An. 413a22-25*).

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[95] Irwin quotes *Top. 148a27-28* for a definition of life, "change of a kind that is nourished, belonging to it naturally" (Irwin, 1981, p. 536). But in the passage referred, Aristotle is criticising Dionysius' definition of life, which he therefore does not endorse. Hence, I resort to Aristotle's remarks on *De An. II.2*.

Following Irwin's proposal for analysing connected homonymy, we would have to say that "life" has a different definition as said of a human, of an irrational animal, and of a plant (*De An. 414b32-33*). But the fact that there are three different definitions does not entail that there are three different senses.

According to the passage above, let it be the definition of "life" in "human life", "internal capacity of thinking"; the definition of "life" in "animal life", "internal capacity of perception"; and the definition of "life" in "plant life", "internal capacity of nutrition" (*De An. 415a16-17*). We have three different definitions for the same name "life". But the three definitions have in common that they all refer to an internal capacity of some sort of motion. This gives us the unified sense and the primary meaning of "N".

The unified sense "internal capacity of some sort of motion" is general enough to accommodate to any of the three definitions of "life" (*De An. 414b20-28*). Given this generality, and the fact that this account must be applicable to different sorts of things, then the unified sense of a homonymous "N" is not a definition, properly speaking. For Irwin understands Aristotelian definitions as the account of the essence of a real thing (Irwin, 1981, p. 535). And the unified sense of a homonymous "N" will not refer to any essence in particular, if it is to be applicable to several definitions of different essences.

Moreover, Irwin notes that the unified sense of "N" does not refer to any real property (or set of properties) shared by all the N's –or else the primary meaning of "N" would be simply the definition of such a property. *E.g.*, regarding the homonymy of "being", Irwin remarks that the unified sense of "being" does not correspond to any of the categories more than to the others, "That is because Aristotle thinks there is no interesting or important set of features that all beings have in common that makes them all beings…" (Irwin, 1981, p. 538). Hence, the unified sense of "N" is not expressed by a proper definition, but by a "common description" (Irwin, 1981, p. 536).

Since the common description expresses neither a real essence nor a real attribute, then it becomes "…the schematic formula that is to be filled in differently…" (Irwin, 1981, p. 537). This description becomes a necessary part of each of the different definitions of "N". Indeed, we find that the formula "internal capacity of a motion of some sort …" gets filled in differently for the different definitions of life, when we specify the sort of motion. *E.g.*, in "plant life", the name "life" means "the internal capacity of nutrition" and nutrition is a kind

of motion. In "animal life", the name "life" means "internal capacity of perception" and perception is a kind of motion. Thus far, Irwin's proposal seems plausible.

There are, however, three remarks I would like to make. My first remark is that, in my opinion, Irwin's proposal is not applicable to the case of "being". For it is true that, beyond the 10 categories, there is neither a thing nor a feature picked up by the name "being". But Aristotle says explicitly that substance merits the name "being" in the first place, and that the other things merit the name "being" in reference to substance (*Met IV 1003b5-11)*.[96] Having a unified sense comprising both the primary meaning of "being" –said of a substance– and the non-primary meanings of "being" –said of any of the other 9 types of beings– would be redundant, if there is already a primary meaning of "being". And, in general, having a unified sense comprising the primary meaning of "N" is redundant for all the cases of connected homonymy that can be successfully analysed in terms of focal meaning, for the primary meaning is already given by the primary N.

My second remark is that it is not clear enough what the unified sense refers to. For Irwin says that it refers neither to a thing nor to an attribute common to several things. If this purported unified sense of the homonymous "N" is to be applicable to all the things that are said to be "N" in different but connected ways, then this unified sense must tell something about those things. But Irwin does not specify how the unified sense of the homonymous "N" relates to each N.

The third remark, along the lines of the second, and more relevant for the scientist, is that Irwin does not include in his analysis an explanation of how to identify the unified sense. If the unified sense is not a real attribute that is common to all the N's, how do we find what connects various different ways in which "N" can be said of different things? Yet, Irwin claims that this unified sense is what prevents us from falling into a "semantically uncontrollable" situation (Irwin, 1981, p. 536).

In sum, in this chapter we aim at understanding the way in which the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" can be found. I contend that this task corresponds to the third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy.

Unlike mine, Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy does not assume that Aristotle has a method for analysing homonymy. His interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy

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[96] See section 1. Focal Meaning, for more comments on the priority of substance in meriting the name "being".

is concerned, on the one hand, with establishing the variety of meanings involved in the homonymy of "N" (see chapter 4). Irwin's proposal does not address Aristotle's question about the nature of the connections between related homonyms –which, on my interpretation, corresponds to the second step of Aristotle's method ("…after distinguishing the various ways in which each thing is said, we must then explain by reference to what is primary in each term, saying how they are related to it." *Met. IV 1004a28-30*).

On the other hand, Irwin is concerned with identifying the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" in cases of connected homonymy. He suggests that there is an underlying unity of sense. His proposal entails that the main meaning of "N" is expressed by a schematic formula that does not refer to any N more than to another. In fact, the schematic formula does not refer to any real attribute or property of the N's. For this reason, it is not entirely clear whether we can consider the schematic formula as a proper meaning.

Irwin says only that the different things called "N" are all related by one single sense. But is it rather obscure how each N can be related to the unified sense of "N" if "N" does not refer to a real attribute common to all the different N's. It is equally obscure how we can identify the unified sense, for Irwin provides no explanation.

Despite the difficulties, however, Irwin's proposal can prove to be a good complement to Owen's concept of focal meaning. For the concept of focal meaning reflects well the homonymy of cases in which there clearly is one primary N in relation to which other things are called "N" (*e.g.*, "being" and "medical"). But there are cases of alleged connected homonymy in which there seems to be no primary N in relation to which the other things are called "N" (*e.g,* "cause" and "soul").

Irwin's suggestion of there being a schematic formula that applies equally to several N's might be useful if we can explain how the different N's are related to it and, more importantly for scientific purposes, how to identify it.

5.3 The most authoritative meaning of the homonymous "N"

In this chapter, we aim at understanding the nature of the connections between related homonyms N's, so that we identify the primary N in relation to which the other things are called "N". This primary N gives rise to the primary meaning of "N". I contend that this

corresponds to the third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy.

This aim follows Aristotle's remarks in *Met. IV*, where he explains that every science deals chiefly with that which is primary (*1003b16-17*). In the case of the science of being *qua* being, the hypothesis is that it must deal chiefly with the nature of substance, if substance is what merits the name "being" primarily, and if it is that in virtue of which other things merit the same name (*1003b5-11, 16-18*).

For if the very many ways in which "being" can be said were not related to one primary being, then the science that studies being *qua* being, together with its principles and attributes, would be impossible (*1005a14-17*).

As we identify that several kinds of beings merit the name "being" by reference to the substance –as processes towards a substance, as affections of a substance, as destruction or privation of a substance, as qualities of a substance, and so on (*10035-10*)– we understand that substance is the primary being, and merits the name "being" in the first place. Likewise, as we identify that substance is what merits the name "being" in a primary way, we also understand how to account for the way in which other things are called "being".

Identifying the primary way in which "N" is said requires that one understand the ways in which other N's are related to the primary one. Thus, Aristotle says:

> And since all things are referred to the primary one […] after distinguishing the various ways in which each thing is said, we must then explain by reference to what is primary in each term, saying how they are related to it.[97] (*Met. IV* 1004a26-30)

Therefore, I say that understanding the nature of the connections between related homonyms sharing the name "N" is strongly linked to the identification of the primary way in which the homonymous "N" is said. Our quest for the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" or "fineness" involves an enquiry into how the different ways in which "fine" is said of different objects are related.

In the previous two sections of this chapter, we have discussed two different proposals that shed light onto both aspects of this task.

The first proposal we discussed was Owen's concept of focal meaning. Under this proposal, several things merit the name "N" in relation to one primary thing N. The one

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[97] "ἐπεὶ δὲ πάντα πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἀναφέρεται … ὥστε διελόμενον ποσαχῶς λέγεται ἕκαστον, οὕτως ἀποδοτέον πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ἑκάστῃ κατηγορίᾳ πῶς πρὸς ἐκεῖνο λέγεται."

primary N has priority over the other things called "N", in two ways: it has natural priority because the primary N can exist without the other N's, but not the other way around; and it has logical priority, for the definition of "N" as said of each of the non-primary N's makes reference to the primary N. The primary N is, therefore, the focus of the multivocity of "N".

I have argued that the concept of focal meaning describes very well the homonymy of "being", in which all the different ways in which a thing is called "being" (or is said "to be") are related to one primary thing, namely, the substance.

But I have also argued that the concept of focal meaning is unnecessarily constraining, for it seems to me that N does not always display natural priority over the other things that merit the name "N". Owen takes this kind of priority from Aristotle's remarks about the priority of substance regarding the name "being", and generalises it for all the cases in which there is a primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

Moreover, the analysis of related homonymy in terms of focal meaning is not successful in explaining cases of related homonymy in which none of the N's is clearly the primary one, or has priority over the others. For instance, "soul" and "life" are said in different ways and have different definitions depending on whether they are said of a plant, or of an animal, but none of them has priority over the other.

The other proposal we discussed is Irwin's. Irwin defends the view that there is unity of sense underlying the various ways in which "N" is said. This unified sense does not fit any N more than the others, nor does it refer to any attribute shared by all the N's. It is expressed in a schematic formula that needs to be filled in with specific qualifications according to the different things of which "N" is said. For instance, the unified sense of "life" can be expressed with the schematic formula "internal capacity of some sort of motion".[98] The type of motion gets further determined depending on whether we say "plant life" (where "life" is defined as "internal capacity of nutrition") or "animal life" (where "life" is defined as "internal capacity of perception").

This second proposal, however, does not seem to be applicable to cases in which there is one primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N", *e.g.*, "being".

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[98] See section 2 above, "Now this [*i.e.*, life] is said in many ways, and provided any one alone of these is internal in a thing we say that thing is living –namely, thinking or perception or local movement and rest, or movement in the sense of nutrition, decay and growth" (*De An. 413a22-25*). See also *De An. 414b32-33*.

Both proposals are intended to explain the ultimate structure of connected homonymy. As I have argued, neither of them fits all cases of related homonymy.

In this section, I suggest that, taken together, those proposals reveal the fact that not all cases of connected homonymy have the same structure, and therefore the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" is not found in the same way in all cases of connected homonymy.

In order to support my proposal, I suggest we are guided by those cases in which Aristotle himself undertakes the task of identifying both the different ways in which "N" is said, and the primary N in relation to which other things bear the name "N", namely, *Metaphysics V (Δ)*, where we find a good array of terms that are said in many ways.[99]

The reason why I propose to look for cases of homonymy in *Met. V* is not because I assume that Aristotle's prime concern there is with homonymy. Quite the opposite, my proposal is to use the three-steps method to decide whether the terms and expressions examined in *Met. V* are, indeed, cases of homonymy.

In the previous chapters of this research, we have discussed a few examples of things that Aristotle explicitly refers to as homonymous, and that have become stock examples discussed by scholars (*e.g.*, "healthy", "being", "friendship"). But a good account of Aristotle's definition and uses of the concept of homonymy should allow us to identify and explain cases of homonymy even if they are not explicitly highlighted by Aristotle; likewise, it should allow us to discern true cases of homonymy from other cases in which "N" is said of different things but still synonymously. By looking into some of the terms Aristotle discusses in *Met. V*, we shall test my interpretation of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy.[100]

5.3.1 A note on the content of Metaphysics V

We must be aware that the overall purpose of *Met. V* is by no means obvious. Owen, for instance, regards this book as a display of the several senses of key philosophical concepts as

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[99] In this section, I am using "term" interchangeably with "name" and "word"; I take those expressions to refer to any particular thing or attribute, or even aspect of a thing or attribute, so that a phrase such as "that which is x" is regarded as a single term.

[100] Appendix A section ii) shows all the things that Aristotle explicitly calls "homonymous". Appendix B shows all the things that Aristotle discusses in *Met. V* and identifies those that are homonyms even though Aristotle does not explicitly say so.

elaborations upon a primary sense (Owen, 1979, pp. 19-20). But this description is not accurate, because not all the terms listed in *Met. V* are said in more than one way; and, of those which are, not all of them have a primary sense, or at least not explicitly.

Perhaps a fairer description is William Dooley's, who says simply, that *Met. V* "… consists of definitions of the main uses of key terms of Aristotle's philosophy" (Dooley SJ, 1993, pp. 1, Introduction).[101] For it is rather clear that Aristotle offers definitions or explanations of the meaning of key philosophical terms; but whether each and all of these terms are said in more than one way is not without dispute.

Moreover, it is not obvious that all the terms are analysed in the same way. Lawson-Tancred points at various aspects that would call for further discussion, "It is also the case that the dictionary entries vary greatly in length for different items. The longest entries amount to philosophical essays on the concepts they cover, while the shortest are hardly more than notes. There is also considerable variation in the range of uses considered for different terms. In addition to this, it is not completely clear whether the dictionary is intended to indicate the usage of these terms in contemporary language [that is to say, contemporary with Aristotle] or to prescribe new and specialized uses of them for the purpose of doing Aristotelian metaphysics" (Lawson-Tancred, 1998/2004, pp. 113, intro to Book V). The discussion of these remarks is beyond the scope of this research, but bearing them in mind is important. For not all the terms included in the book are suited for our specific purpose, and there is no reason to assume that Aristotle's main purpose in *Met. V* was to elaborate a catalogue of homonymous terms.

In order for us to address the objective of this chapter –*i.e.*, to understand the nature of the connections of related homonyms and, thus, identify the primary meaning of the homonymous "N"– I think it is worth having a more detailed description of the content of *Met. V*, so that we can decide which cases best illustrate the hypothesis I am advancing, namely, that in connected homonymy, in some cases the primary meaning of "N" refers to a primary N, whereas in other cases, it refers to a cluster of primary N's with some aspect in common.

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[101] Compare to Thomas Aquinas' remarks, "…since the attributes considered in this science [i.e., First Philosophy] are common to all things, they are not predicated of various things univocally (nec dicutur univoce) but in a prior and subsequent way (sed secundum prius & posterius de diversis), as has been stated in Book IV". (Rowan, 1961, pp. 299-300)

Traditionally, *Met. V* is divided into 30 chapters, in which Aristotle analyses the different uses of terms. In principle, this suggests that we have 30 examples to work with. But some chapters discuss more than one term. Chapter 9 includes 5 non subordinate cases ("same", "other", "different", "like", and "being unlike"). Chapter 10 offers 2 full examples, because it discusses the term "opposite", of which there are six kinds, and then elaborates on the second of them (*i.e.*, "contraries"). Chapter 12 includes 4 non subordinate terms ("capacity", "incapacity", "impossible", and "possible"). Chapter 18 discusses the expression "that in virtue of which" and includes a further discussion of the special case "that in virtue of itself", which means that chapter 18 offers 2 examples. Finally, chapter 21 discusses the two ways in which "affection" can be said, the second of which is further divided and commented on. Altogether, then, it seems as though we start with 40 examples to work with.[102]

However, out of the 40 examples, 4 of them ("impossible", "quantity", "disposition", and "mutilated") are said only in one way, and so they are not useful for our discussion.

Next, there are 3 cases ("being", "having", and "whole") that I consider rather unclear as to whether the corresponding term is said in more than one way; and if so, as to whether the different ways in which the term is said are related, let alone whether there is a primary meaning. Some of these cases might be cleared up by Aristotle in other works (*e.g.*, "being"), but since I am concerned with the general method of finding the primary meaning of "N" when it is said in many related ways, and not with the theory surrounding any particular term discussed in *Met. V*, for the time being I shall leave aside the cases that are further discussed elsewhere.[103]

Therefore, we have 33 good examples to look at, which I have classified as follows:[104]

a) 9 cases in which there is one identifiable primary N giving rise to the main meaning of "N" when "N" is said in many related ways;

b) 12 cases in which there seems to be a cluster of main ways in which "N" is said (non-subordinated to one another), which have a common aspect or condition, from which we can take the main meaning of "N"; and

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[102] See Appendix 2 Section A.

[103] Among other things, in some cases it is rather unclear whether Aristotle is distinguishing uses of the term "N" or describing conditions for being an N (e.g., "whole").

[104] See Appendix 2 Section B.

c) 12 cases in which Aristotle lists several different meanings of "N" without pointing out either a main meaning based on a primary N, or a common feature shared by several N's –which suggests that these are cases of unconnected homonymy.

I shall start by applying the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy to a case that can be analysed straightforwardly and which results in there being one primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". Next, I shall apply the method to what seems to be a case of unconnected homonymy. Finally, I shall apply the method to a case that results in there being a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

5.3.2   One primary N

In this section, I shall apply Aristotle's three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy to a term taken from the *Met. V*. Let us consider as an example, the term "nature".[105] Aristotle distinguishes the following things "nature" is said of (*Met. V 1014b16-36, 1015a12-14*):

1. the genesis of growing things;
2. the primary internal thing, from which a growing thing first begins to grow;
3. the source from which the primary movement in each natural object is present in it in virtue of its own essence;
4. the primary matter from which objects consist or out of which they are made (e.g., bronze is the primary matter of a statue, and wood is primary matter of wooden things);
5. the substance of natural object; and
6. every substance in general.

The first step of the method for analysing problems involving homonymy indicates that we assess whether those six things are, indeed, homonymous. We need to know whether they

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[105] See Appendix 2 Section B. The other terms that are said in several ways in which there is one primary thing, are: "necessary", "one", "substance", "prior", "capacity", "quality", "that in virtue of which", and "affection" (as actualised alteration).

bear the name "nature" in the same or in a different manner. Aristotle gives the following accounts:

> "… nature in the primary and proper sense is the substance of things which have in themselves as such, a source of movement; for the matter is called the nature because it is qualified to receive this, and processes of becoming and growing are called nature because they are movements proceeding from this. And nature in this way is the source of the movement of natural objects, which is somehow internal in them, either potentially or actually". (*Met. V 1015a14-20*)

This paragraph indicates three ways in which "nature" is said: substance, in the primary way; matter, insofar as it is qualified to receive the substance; and processes of becoming and growing, insofar as they proceed from the substance, in natural objects.

These three ways explain five of the six things called "nature" distinguished above, namely: the genesis of growing things (1) and the source of the primary movement in each natural object (3) are called "nature" because they are processes of becoming and growing proceeding from the substance. The primary internal thing from which a thing first begins to grow (2) –which probably refers to the primary material (see 1014b16, "ἐξ οὗ" as in "the ingredient out of which"), *e.g.*, the seed–and the primary matter from which objects can be made (4) are called "nature" because matter is qualified to receive the substance. And substance of natural objects (5) is the primary way in which "nature" is said.

The sixth thing, substance in general (*i.e.*, substance of non-natural objects) is called "nature", says Aristotle, by a transference of name. For the composite of form and matter in natural objects (*e.g.*, animals) –which is the substance– is called "nature", and from this composite we take the name and apply it to any substance, insofar as it is a composite of matter and form (*e.g.,* a bronze statue) (*Met. V 1015a3-14*).

Therefore, even though Aristotle starts by distinguishing six things that we call "nature", in fact there are only three main accounts plus an account by a transference of name (derived from "nature" as said of the substance). These are the accounts that we shall use to decide whether two or more things are said to be "nature" homonymously.

The primary matter, the sources of processes of becoming and growing, the substance of natural objects, and the substance of non-natural objects, are all called "nature" in different ways:

- the primary matter is called "nature" because it can receive the substance;

- sources of processes of becoming and growing are called "nature" because they proceed from the substance;

- the substance of natural objects is called "nature" in the first place; and

- the substance of non-natural objects is called "nature" by a transference of name, from the substance of natural objects to the substance of non-natural objects.

It is clear from this, that we are dealing with a case of homonymy, for in each case we give a different account for "nature".

With this same analysis, we have already addressed the second step of the method, that is to say, we have stated why the homonymous things bear the same name "nature": by receiving the substance, by proceeding from the substance, by being a substance, and by transference of name. This is a case of connected homonymy, for all the accounts are related to the substance of natural objects. [106]

Now we are ready to move on to the third step of Aristotle's method, namely, identifying the primary N in relation to which other things are called "N". We need to identify the primary nature, in relation to which other things bear the name "nature".

As I said, the four accounts are related, and it is easy to spot the one thing they all are related to: the substance of natural objects.

From this analysis, it follows that the scientist that wanted to reach a definition of "nature" would need to focus on the substance of natural objects. The definition of "nature" as said of the substance of natural objects will provide the main definition from which any other related definition derives.

We can observe how Owen's concept of focal meaning would reach a similar conclusion. According to the concept of focal meaning, the substance of natural objects is the focus of the meaning of "nature". All the definitions of other things called "nature" make reference to the substance of natural objects. And all the other things that merit the name "nature", do so on the basis of their relation to the substance of natural things.

However, as I have already argued, the natural priority of the substance of natural objects over the other things that merit the name "nature" is not necessarily clear. *X* is naturally prior to *y* if *x* can exist without *y* but not the other way around. But it seems as

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[106] Receiving a substance and proceeding from the substance could be taken as homonymy by affiliation (πρὸς ἕν/ἀφ᾿ ἑνός).

though some things that merit the name "nature" could exist without the substance; for instance, the primary matter does exist before the statue. Therefore, the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy is theoretically less demanding that Owen's concept of focal meaning and therefore can account for more cases of homonymy.

Likewise, the method I am proposing is effective in identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

Sometimes, Aristotle points at the primary N explicitly. In the present case, Aristotle explicitly says that the substance of natural things is called "nature" in the primary and proper sense, "ἡ πρώτη φύσις καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη" (1015a14). Instead of applying the longer analysis that I am suggesting, we might feel tempted to try to find the primary meaning of a homonymous "N" simply by looking for Aristotle's signalling in each case.[107]

However, Aristotle's signalling could be misleading. For instance, Aristotle distinguishes three ways in which "affection" can be said: 1) a quality in respect of which a thing can be altered; 2) the already actualised alterations; and 3) major events, pleasant or painful.

Let us focus on the second. Aristotle says that we call "affections" the actualised alterations of qualities. This second way to say "affection" is further divided into three: the actualised alterations of qualities in general, injurious alterations, and painful alterations. Of these, Aristotle highlights the last one:

> "Especially (μᾶλλον), injurious alterations and movements, and, above all (μάλιστα) painful injuries". (*Met. V 1022b19-20*)

"Painful injuries" is not necessarily the primary meaning of "affection" in general, but it seems to be the main use of "affection" referring to "the actualised alteration of a quality". Aristotle does not elaborate more on the reasons why this main use has priority over the others, and we do not see that the other ways in which "affection" is said derive from this one. "Painful injuries" seems to be a special case –a subtype– of actualised alterations. In any event, "a

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[107] Another example of Aristotle's signalling the main way in which a homonymous term is said, is found in *Met. V 1015a35*: "And from this way of saying 'necessary' (καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ ἀναγκαῖον) all the others are somehow derived…". A similar expression (κατὰ ταῦτα) is found in the analysis of "prior and posterior" (*Met. V 1019a11-12*). See also 1016b1 for the main meaning of "one"; 1020a4 for the main meaning of "capacity"; 1020b13 for the main meaning of "quality"; and 1022a18 for the main meaning of "that in virtue of which".

quality in respect to which a thing can be altered" seems to be a better candidate for the primary meaning of "affection"; for the other two types seem to be related to it. "Especially" might point here at the most frequent usage, which is not always the strict or most important one.

We see, therefore, that identifying the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" by pinpointing Aristotle's signalling is not necessarily the most effective way. Answering the relevant questions for each of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy provides arguments so that we can explain why a given thing is the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N"; the method offers the scientist a solid ground for identifying the primary N and, therefore, the primary meaning of "N".

5.3.3   Cases of unconnected homonym

In this chapter, we are mostly concerned with connected homonymy. But we must not forget that Aristotle also acknowledges the possibility of there being two or more things of different sort that happen to share the same name "N" for what seems to be no more than a coincidence, a linguistic accident. Hence, whenever we analyse the ways in which a given name can be said –or whenever we find Aristotle himself performing this kind of analysis– we must not assume *a priori* that there is going to be only one primary way in which "N" is said. It might well be the case that there are several unrelated ways in which "N" can be said, each of which with its own primary thing or cluster of things in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

That is to say, we must not dismiss the possibility that some of the terms included in *Metaphysics V* might be cases of unconnected homonymy and, as such, there might be more than one primary way in which "N" is said (and, accordingly, more than one primary meaning of "N").[108]

In fact, I contend that, throughout *Metaphysics V*, there are at least 12 terms that one can argue to be cases of unconnected homonymy. We will not look at all 12 of them here, for

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[108] We can, of course, enquire for the most relevant way in which "N" is said –that is, relevant for a particular purpose. But this is not necessarily the same as enquiring for the primary way in which "N" is said.

my only purpose is to point out the features that suggest the presence of unconnected homonymy.

The first step of the method for analysing cases involving homonymy is to establish whether the case in question is, indeed, a case of homonymy. This is achieved by assessing whether the conditions for homonymy stated in the definition (*Cat. 1*) are satisfied. That is to say, we need to know whether the two things x and y bear the name "N" in the same or in a different manner (or, alternatively, whether the name "N" can be said in different ways). I suggest we look at the term "incapacity" ("ἀδυναμία").[109]

Aristotle distinguishes two different ways in which "incapacity" is said, namely: as "privation of a capacity", or as "impossible". Now we need to know whether these two things –the privation of a capacity, and the impossible– bear the name "incapacity" in the same or in a different manner.

To understand the way in which "incapacity" is said of a privation of capacity, we need to understand how "capacity" is said. Aristotle says that "capacity" can be said as:

- the source of change, which is in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other, *e.g.,* the art of healing a man (1019a14-18);

- the source of a thing being changed by another thing or by itself *qua* other, *e.g.*, the virtue in principle of which the patient suffers, or in virtue of which the patient heals (1019a18-22);

- the states according to which things are absolutely impassive or unchangeable, *e.g.,* things are not broken, bent or destroyed by having a certain capacity (1019a24-32); or

- the source of a thing being changed by itself *qua* itself, *e.g.*, that which perishes is thought to be capable of perishing (1019b1-5).

The first way in which "incapacity" can be said is as a privation of a capacity in any of the several ways distinguished above. But Aristotle highlights that the "proper definition of the

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[109] The other terms that, at least in the context of *Metaphysics V*, seem to be said in several unrelated ways are "cause", "opposite", "possible", "relative", "that in virtue of itself", "affection", "privation", "to have", "to come from something", "part", and "kind". One might argue that, in different contexts, some of these terms do have a main meaning. I shall come back to the homonymy of "cause" in the next chapter, and argue that it can be a case of connected homonymy.

primary kind of capacity will be a source of change in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other" (1020a5-6).[110]

Given that we have identified one primary way in which "capacity" is said, it makes sense to consider that the primary way in which "incapacity" can be said –taken as a privation of a capacity– should be along the lines of "a privation of a source of change in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other" (cf. 1019b16).

Aristotle states that there might be different situations in which the privation of the source of change can happen, namely: in general, a thing might lack the source to produce change; or a thing that by its own nature should have the source to produce a change, might not have it at all; or, finally, a thing that should have the source to produce a change, might not have it as yet, or might have already lost it (1019b17-19).

In any case, we can observe that "incapacity" refers here to the privation of the source to produce a change.

Aristotle says that the other way in which "incapacity" is said refers to the "impossible". The impossible is "that of which the contrary is of necessity true" (1019b23-24). "Impossible" refers to what is of necessity false. For instance, "that the diagonal of a square is commensurate with the side" (1019b24-25), is of necessity false.

Now that we have the two accounts, we proceed to compare them and assess whether they are different. In the one case, "incapacity" is said when the source of change in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other is not present. In the other case, "incapacity" is said of that which is of necessity false. The two accounts are, indeed, different. Therefore, the conditions for Aristotelian homonymy are met, for there is a name –"incapacity"– said not only of different things (*e.g.*, the lack of art for healing a man, or the incommensurability of the diagonal with the side of the square), but also in different ways.

Given that this is, indeed, a case of homonymy, we can proceed to the second step of the method for analysing cases involving homonymy, which consists in establishing the nature of the homonymy. This is achieved by assessing why x and y share the same name "N" (*i.e.*, we find the account of "N" as said of x, and the account of "N" as said of y, and then we compare both accounts to see whether and how they relate).

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[110] This is a very emphatic way to identify the main way in which "N" can be said, which is not used in any other place in *Met. V*.

We should note that, in the course of *Met. V.12*, Aristotle does not state the nature of the homonymy of "incapacity", as he does in other cases.[111] Therefore, we need to conduct the analysis ourselves.

As we examine the accounts of the two different ways in which "incapacity" can be said, we notice that they do not make reference to each other in any form –*e.g.*, one does not produce the other, or derive from the other, etc.– nor do they make reference to a common thing. It is not, therefore, a case of homonymy by relation to one (πρὸς ἕν, by affiliation, using Owen's terminology).[112]

The two ways in which "incapacity" is said do not seem to be related by genus, for if this were the case, then the two corresponding accounts would have some part in common, namely, the part that corresponds to the genus. The two ways in which "incapacity" can be said do not seem to be related at all.

It follows from this that the two main things that are said to be "incapacity" –a privation of a capacity, and the impossible– are said so by unconnected homonymy.

One could disagree with whether the way in which it is impossible for the diagonal to be commensurate with the side of the square, and the way in which we call "incapacity" to the lack of art for healing people are related or not. But this analysis is conducted on the basis of the accounts of "incapacity" offered by Aristotle. "Incapacity" as said of privation of capacity refers to the lack of a source of change, whereas as said of the impossible, it refers to a condition (perhaps to a statement) that is of necessity false. It is clear that they are not the same thing when we consider that, for instance, a man could be said incapable of healing another man, insofar as he lacks the capacity of healing people; but it is not by necessity true that this man lacks the capacity of healing people.

Perhaps, under different accounts for "incapacity" as privation of capacity, and as the impossible, the two accounts would be related or even the same. But the two ways in which "incapacity" is said that Aristotle distinguishes in *Met. V* are homonymous in an unconnected

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[111] *E.g.*, Aristotle says that "complete" is said of that outside of which it is not possible to find even one of the parts proper to it. And, by transference of name (or metaphor), we say that bad things are "complete", as when we speak of a thing that has been completely spoilt. Therefore, this is a case of homonymy by transference of name. (1021b25-29)

[112] By contrast, in the previous section we found that the three ways in which "nature" is said refer to the substance. That is to say, the different accounts of "N" make reference to the substance of natural objects.

way, according to the method for analysing problems involving homonymy that Aristotle has used in other places.

What follows from this analysis is that if, for scientific purposes, we were to establish a definition of "incapacity", we would need to decide which of the two we are interested in, for no definition is going to be applicable to both of them. And the scientist needs to be alert, lest he take properties or information pertaining to a thing called "incapacity" in one way, and wrongly draw conclusions about a thing called "incapacity" in the second way.

To conclude that the two main ways in which "incapacity" is said are homonymous in an unconnected way, might be surprising. In chapter 3, we learned that the mark of unconnected homonymy is that it is easy to spot. The two objects x and y that share the name "N" are so different, that it is easy to see that the ways in which they bear the name "N" is unconnected.

But in this case, it seems as though the privation of a capacity and the impossible are not obviously different.

As I have said, the analysis has been conducted on the basis of the accounts of "incapacity" offered by Aristotle only in the context of *Met. V*. The oddity of the result of the analysis should move us to wonder whether Aristotle meant these accounts to be exhaustive.[113]

The same method that allows us to identify the primary meaning of a homonymous "N", also allows us to identify that the accounts of "N" under consideration might not be exhaustive.

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[113] That the accounts offered in *Met. V* are not necessarily meant to be exhaustive can be seen in the same chapter 12, as Aristotle discusses whether a thing that has the capacity of changing and a thing that can perish are both called "capable" in a related or unrelated way:

Capable is said of "that which has a capacity of changing into something, whether for the worse or for the better (for even that which perishes is thought to be capable of perishing… sometimes it is thought to be of this sort because it has something, sometimes because it is deprived of something; *but if privation is in a sense having, everything will be capable by having something… and if privation is not in a sense having, things are called capable homonymously*)" (*Met. V 1019b1-11*).

That is to say, if privation is not a kind of "having", then things that are called "capable" due to a privation, are called so by a complete homonymy. We must note that Aristotle leaves the question undecided. Furthermore, as Kirwan notes, Aristotle also discusses the logical relations between the possible and the impossible in *De Int.* 12 and 13, and again in *Met. IX* (Kirwan, 1971, p. 156).

5.3.4   A cluster of primary N's

We have applied the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy in a case in which, as a result of the method, we identify one primary N in relation to which other things also merit the name "N"("nature") . We can call cases like this paradigmatic, in the sense that the three steps of the method can be applied in a rather straightforward manner.

We have also discussed the homonymy of "incapacity" and seen that, according to the information in *Met. V*, the method reveals that the two main ways in which "incapacity" is said –as privation of a capacity, and as the impossible– seem to be homonymous in an unconnected way. The corresponding accounts of "incapacity" do not make reference to each other, nor to a common subject. If this is correct, then they are unconnected homonyms. However, if such a conclusion is unsettling or unsatisfactory, then we must revise the premises (*i.e.*, the accounts of "incapacity"), for they might be either wrong or incomplete.

Either way, it is valuable to note that the same method provides guidelines in both directions.

In this section, I shall discuss another possible scenario that the application of the method could reveal, namely, that some connected homonyms will not be related to a single primary N (in a hierarchical, asymmetrical way). Instead, some connected homonyms will be ultimately related in a non-hierarchical way, which results in a cluster of primary interrelated N's, in relation to which other things also merit the name "N". To illustrate this type of homonyms, I propose we analyse Aristotle's remarks on the homonymy of "beginning" (ἀρχή), in *Met. V.*[114]

When Aristotle discusses the term "beginning" (ἀρχή) he distinguishes six different ways in which it can be said (*Met. V 1012b34-1013a16*):

1.   that part of a thing from which one would start first;
2.   that from which each thing would best be originated;
3.   that from which (as an internal part) a thing first arises;
4.   that from which (as an external part) a thing first arises and from which the movement or change naturally first proceeds;

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[114] See Appendix 2 Section B. The other terms that seem to have a similar structure are: "element", "the same", "other", "different", "like", "being unlike", "contraries", "complete", "limit", "false", and "accident".

5. that by whose choice that which is moved is moved and that which changes changes; and

6. that from which a thing can first be known.

Next, Aristotle says that "It is common then, to all to be the first point from which a thing either is or comes to be or is known (πασῶν μὲν οὖν κοινὸν τῶν ἀρχῶν τὸ πρῶτον εἶναι ὅθεν ἤ ἔστιν ἤ γίγνεται ἤ γιγνώσκεται). And of these, some are internal to the thing and others are external." (*Met. V 1013a17-20*). Indeed, 1-5 seem to refer to the first thing from which things come to be, and 6 is stated as the first point from which a thing is known. Even though Aristotle starts by distinguishing six ways in which "beginning" is said, they seem to be rather similar, and the homonymy is not obvious.

Moreover, notice how Aristotle points out that there is an aspect common to them all, with the expression "τὸ κοινόν". Aristotle offers what seems, in principle, a common account for all the possible things that merit the name "beginning".

In view of this common account, we need to question whether there is homonymy in the ways we say that something is a beginning –for when the account of the name "N" as said of x is the same as the account of the name "N" as said of y, there is synonymy, not homonymy.

I shall start by pointing out that the common description offered by Aristotle expresses a disjunction that seems to be exclusive and exhaustive.[115] That is to say, there are at least three different accounts. "Beginning" can be said: as the first point from which a thing is; as the first point from which a thing comes to be; or as the first point from which a thing is known. Then, Aristotle says that each of these can refer to either an internal or an external part of the thing, which gives us the six different ways in which "beginning" can be said. Therefore, "to be the first point –either internal or external– from which a thing either is or comes to be or is known" cannot be a single account that describes how "beginning" is said; this statement seems to be a comprehensive account that summarises all the possible ways in which "beginning" can be said.

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[115] It might not be clear why Aristotle included the disjunct "first thing from which something is known". But if we think of, say, mathematical objects, and take into account that these objects do not come to be, then it becomes clear that "the beginning of a mathematical object" refers to either "the first thing from which the mathematical object is" or the first thing from which the mathematical objects is known".

We need to see examples of things that merit the name "beginning" and examine the corresponding accounts. For instance, according to Aristotle:

- as said of the foundations of a house, "beginning" means "the first internal part from which a house arises (*i.e.*, comes to be)";

- as said of the parents of a child, "beginning" means "the first external part from which a child arises (*i.e.*, comes to be)";

- as said of the magistracy, "beginning" means "the first internal thing by whose choice that which is moved in the city, is moved (*i.e.*, the first thing from which the order in the city is; the first thing from which a change in the city comes to be)"; and

- as said of the hypotheses in a given demonstration, "beginning" means "the first internal point from which a thing can be known".

Let us start by assuming that, in the context of the scientific enquiry we are conducting, we need to know the definition of "beginning". We observe that "beginning" can be said of different things in a variety of contexts.

The first step of the method for analysing cases involving homonymy states that we must see if the different objects bear the name "beginning" in the same way. In the examples above, the corresponding accounts of the ways in which "beginning" is said are all different, even if they are all very similar to each other. The fact that the corresponding account of "beginning" in each case differs from the rest is enough to meet the conditions for Aristotelian homonymy.

The second step of the method dictates that we assess why the different things share the same name "beginning". That is to say, given that they are different things, and that we have found that they merit the name "beginning" in different ways, we must ask whether those things merit the name "beginning" in related or unrelated ways; if the former, then we must ask the grounds for the relation.

We can observe that all the accounts of the ways in which "beginning" can be said are related. For they all converge, so to speak, in their being "the first point/part from which…". But I contend that "the first" is neither a thing nor a property. For the phrase "to be the first" does not express a "what" (τί ἐστιν, *Cat. 1a*). Insofar as "to be the first" is what is common to the ways in which "beginning" is said, but it does not refer to a thing, then it cannot be the

primary thing in relation to which other things merit the name "beginning" (that is to say, "to be the first" cannot be the focal meaning, in Owen's terminology).

In this regard, I agree with Irwin's proposal about a unity of sense for connected homonymy. The unity of sense, says Irwin, does not express a real attribute common to the homonymous things; or else, this common property would be the meaning of the homonymous name in question (Irwin, 1981, p. 537).

I contend that the phrase "The first point/part from which..." expresses neither a thing nor a property, because it is not a complete account, and needs to be further qualified. "To be the first" becomes an attribute when it is said not only of something but also in some respect (Cf. *Met. V 1018b9-1019a14*, on the ways "prior" is said). For instance, when one gives the account of "beginning" as said of the foundations of the house, one says not only that it is of the house, but also that it is in respect of the house's coming to be (*i.e.,* the first internal part from which the house is built).

Aristotle says that "to be the first" can be further qualified as being the first point/part from which a thing is, or comes to be, or is known; and that each of these can be either external or internal parts.

One might think that "to be the first" expresses a relation, and as such, it seems to be incomplete insofar as it calls for the *relata*. For instance, "Being taller than..." is not a complete attribute, unless we specify what is taller than what (*i.e.*, the two things being compared). But this lack of completeness does not entail that "being taller than" is incomplete in its meaning and needs to be further qualified.

However, "to be the first" does not express a relation as yet. For instance, we can say that the parents are the beginning of the child, and also that the brain is the beginning of the child. In both cases, "beginning" refers to "the first part" of the child. But we are left with quite a few questions here. We need to clarify whether in both cases we mean "beginning" and "to be the first part" in the same way. At the very least, we can observe that both the parents and the brain are the first part from which the child originates, but the parents are the beginning of the child in an external way (*Met. V 1013a7-8*), whereas the brain is the beginning of the child in an internal way (1013a4). Therefore, to say that x is the beginning of y insofar as x is the first part of y does not provide a full account of the way in which "beginning" is said. Once we specify the respect in which we mean "to be the first", then we

have a relation. For instance, "to be the first internal material part from which a thing comes to be", is a relation that obtains between the brain and the child.

We see now that the phrase "to be the first point from which…" –a phrase that is common to all the ways in which "beginning" can be said– does not have a complete sense on its own and needs to be further determined. This phrase does not suffice as a meaning – let alone as a definition.

At a similar point in his analysis, Irwin says that the unified sense in cases of connected homonymy is expressed by Aristotle with a "common description" (Irwin, 1981, p. 536), which becomes a "schematic formula that is to be filled in differently…" (Irwin, 1981, p. 537).

I have argued that Irwin's proposal is problematic –and not very helpful to the scientist dealing with homonymy– for three reasons. First, because it is not applicable to all cases of connected homonymy. Second, Irwin states that this unified sense of the homonymous "N" does not refer to a property shared by all the N's; but he does not say what the unified sense refers to. And third, Irwin states that sometimes, Aristotle expresses the unified sense of the homonymous "N" with a common description; however, Irwin does not suggest a way to identify the unified sense when it is not given by Aristotle.

My proposal is that, for all cases of connected homonymy, the ultimate N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" can be identified by the application of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy. In some cases of connected homonymy, there will be a single primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" –as we have seen in the previous sections. In other cases of connected homonymy, we shall see not a single primary N , but a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things also merit the name "N". That is to say, there will be some N's that have priority in the bearing of the name "N".

The N's that are part of the cluster of primary N's are not the same thing and have no properties in common in virtue of which they merit the name "N" –or else, as Irwin points out, the meaning of "N" would be the property. But they are subject to a common constraint.

In the example of the homonymy of "beginning", we have found that there are six primary ways in which it can be said, and that all of them are subject to the constraint of being the first point from which they are what they are (*i.e.,* the first point from which a thing is, or comes to be, or is known). As I have said, the phrase "to be the first" refers neither to a thing nor to a property, for it does not tell a "what". The constraint can qualify a quality or a

relation.[116] For instance, "being an internal material part of y" is already a relation;[117] but "being the first" tells us which of the things that can be in such a relation with y can also merit the name "beginning".

"To be the first point/part from which…" seems to be a constraint upon any object and any property of an object in order for it to merit the name "beginning".

Aristotle identifies six primary ways in which "beginning" is said. In whichever way an object is said to be "the beginning" of something else, it will have to meet the condition of being a first part.

The six primary ways in which "beginning" can be said are not related in a hierarchical way, for none of them has priority over the others. Hence, the six of them are primary. Therefore, either we can say that the primary meaning of "beginning" is "to be the first point/part from which…" under the knowledge that this phrase does not have full meaning and needs to be further determined; or we can say that the primary meaning of "beginning" is "the first point/part –either internal or external– from which a thing is, or comes to be, or is known".[118]

In sum, for some cases of related homonymy, the main meaning of "N" refers to a primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". But for some other cases, the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" refers to a cluster of primary N's that are subject to a common constraint.

5.4   Final Remarks

In this chapter, I discussed the third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy, namely, how to identify the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". I applied the full method to some terms that, according to Aristotle, are

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[116] Recall that the accounts of "N" as said of x and y that are relevant for the analysis of homonymy, tell "what it is" (τὶ ἐστιν) to be N for x, and for y. (*Cat. 1a*)
If the constraint does not express what the property is, but it still says something about the property, then it most likely is some sort of second order property –or second order relation. More research is needed in this regard, to see how this constraint behaves in other cases of connected homonymy.

[117] In fact, it expresses two relations: being internal to, and being material for. See *Cat. VII.*

[118] Notice how, none of the two options is a complete description, as Irwin's proposal of a unified sense requires. The first option, as I have said, is incomplete. The second option comprises six descriptions; as it stands, it cannot be applicable to all the things that merit the name "beginning" because nothing can fit all six descriptions at once in the same respect and at the same time.

said in many ways, taken from *Metaphysics V*: "nature", "incapacity", and "beginning". And I have shown that, in some cases of connected homonymy, it is possible to identify a single primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.*, "nature" is primarily said of the substance of natural objects); whereas some other cases of connected homonymy display a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.* "beginning" is primarily said of the first point/part –either internal or external– from which a thing is, or comes to be, or is known. This account of the primary meaning of "beginning" comprises the six primary ways in which it can be said).

I compared my approach to Aristotelian homonymy and the task of identifying the main meaning of a homonymous "N" to Owen's concept of focal meaning, and to Irwin's proposal of there being a single sense of "N" unifying the different meanings of "N" when they are connected.

I suggested that those cases of connected homonymy in which there is a single N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" can be successfully analysed through a variation of Owen's concept of focal meaning. For Owen's proposal implies that the focus N has both logical and natural priority over other things that merit the name "N"; but I have shown that natural priority is not always present. My proposal emphasises only the priority of the bearing of the name "N": once the homonymy has been established, the logical priority is enough to identify the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

Likewise, I have suggested that there are cases of connected homonymy in which there is not a single primary N, but a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N". To some extent, these cases could be analysed in the terms proposed by Irwin. For Irwin says that, for cases of connected homonymy, the primary meaning of "N" is equally applicable to all N's.

In my proposal, all the members of the cluster of primary N's are, so to speak, equally primary, *i.e.*, they are related in a non-hierarchical way, so that none of the members of the cluster holds priority over the others.

Likewise, Irwin says that the primary meaning of "N" is not expressed by a definition, but by a common description. It is not a definition because it refers neither to a thing nor to a property common to all the N's –to which I agree. If the primary meaning of "N" referred to a thing, then this type of homonymy would be the same as the one explained above, *i.e.*, a connected homonymy in which there is a primary N in relation to which other things merit

the name "N". If the common description referred to a property shared by all the N's, then the primary meaning of "N" would be this property.

But Irwin is somewhat vague, for he says that this common description is expressed in a schematic formula to be filled in differently for different N's. But he does not ultimately say what this description refers to. I have suggested that it refers to a constraint that qualifies a property (or a relation) of the primary N's. It is a condition that is fulfilled by all things that merit the name "N", but some of the things that fulfil such a condition are primary, whereas others are derivative. For instance, in the case of "beginning", we found that the condition "to be the first" is fulfilled in six primary ways.

Beside these differences, my approach offers two advantages over both Owen's and Irwin's corresponding approaches. I have argued that neither Owen nor Irwin are explicit regarding how to identify the primary meaning of the homonymous "N". My approach, in contrast, assumes a three-steps method, the application of which results in the being able to decide whether a problem does indeed involve homonymy; the being able to identify the nature of the homonymy (*e.g.*, connected or unconnected; what type of connection); and, in the cases of connected homonymy, the application of the method results in the being able to identify the primary N (or cluster of primary N's) in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

The second advantage of my proposal over both Owen's and Irwin's is that the same method is applicable to any problem that is deemed to involve homonymy, whereas I have argued that Owen's and Irwin's corresponding proposals are successful in explaining only some cases of connected homonymy (*i.e.*, Owen's proposal explains only the cases of connected homonymy in which there is a single primary N; Irwin's proposal explains fairly well only the cases of connected homonymy in which there is not a single primary N).

The method I am advancing is simpler and more comprehensive than the alternatives we have reviewed, which, in my view, makes it more efficient and thus preferable for the purposes of the scientist who investigates the definition of "N" in cases in which "N" can be said in many ways.

Chapter 6. The homonymy of "cause"

Introduction

In the course of this research, I have argued that even though there is no extant work of Aristotle discussing in detail the nature and application of homonymy, Aristotle has nonetheless a methodical approach to the analysis of problems that involve homonymy. In fact, we can observe a three-steps method, described in *Top. 1.15 106a2-8* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30*– as follows:

1. Establishing that the problem in question does involve homonymy (the corresponding meanings of the name "N" as predicated of objects x and y are different),

2. Establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N", and

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which the other objects are called "N".

In this chapter, I shall apply this method to Aristotle's theory of the four causes. I shall start by assessing the accounts of "cause" that Aristotle offers in *Physics II.3 and Metaphysics V.2*. Through the application of the method, I shall show that Aristotle's analysis of the four causes in those places is, most likely, not a complete account on the matter, for it seems as though the four main ways in which "cause" is said were unrelated, which is a rather problematic result.

According to the three-steps method, then, I shall also explore whether one of the four causes can hold priority in the bearing of the name "cause".

The hypothesis I shall advance is, ultimately, that the four causes identified by Aristotle (formal, material, efficient, and final) are equally primary. Hence, Aristotle insists that there are four primary ways in which "cause" can be said. Accordingly, the primary meaning of "cause" could be given by the cluster that comprises the four primary ways in which "cause" is said, together with a common constraint that all the ways in which "cause" can be said are subject to.

6.1 The many ways in which "cause" is said

In *Metaphysics V.2* and *Physics II.3*, Aristotle says that "cause" can be said in many ways, but all of them fall under four main kinds (τρόποι, *Met. V 1013b16*, and εἴδη *1013b28*), which are the most noticeable, namely:

- that out of which (as internal material) a thing comes into being,

- the form or pattern (τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα),

- that from which the change or freedom from change first begins, and

- the end, that for the sake of which a thing is (1013a24-34).

According to Aristotle, these are the ultimate accounts of "cause".

In the context of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy, to say that these are the four primary ways in which "cause" is said corresponds to the third step, namely, identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". In this case, Aristotle´s claim suggests that there are four primary things in relation to which other things merit the name "cause" (*i.e.*, that there is not a single primary cause, but four of them).

If each of the four causes is regarded as primary in their bearing the name "cause", then we should be able to identify other things that merit the name "cause" in relation to each of the four causes –that is to say, we should be able to find other ways in which "cause" can be said, that derive from each of the four primary ways. Indeed, Aristotle distinguishes six ways in which each of the four primary causes can be said:

- in a prior or posterior way, *e.g.*, the physician and the professional man (ὁ τεχνίτης) are causes of health, but the physician is prior (1013b32-33);

- in a proper or accidental way, *e.g.*, the sculptor is cause of the statue in a proper way, whereas Polyclitus is cause of the statue in an accidental way (1013b34-36); and

- as being able to act (δυνάμενα) or as acting (ἐνεργοῦντα), *e.g.*, the cause of the house's being built is the builder as being able to act, or the builder when he is building.

Each of the six ways above can be said, in turn, in different ways:

- either as the individual or as the class (1014a17), and

- either as existing simultaneously with the thing of which they are the causes, or as existing non-simultaneously with them (1014a21-22).

Accordingly, any way in which x is said to be the cause of y, should correspond to a combination of the above. For instance, let us think of a house that is to be built. Among the causes of this house, we might find a pile of bricks, and the class "bricks". Both the class "bricks" and this particular pile of bricks merit the name "cause" in relation to the house insofar as they both are the material out of which the house will be built. And both of them merit the name "cause" in a proper (non-accidental) way. Both of them merit the name "cause" as existing non-simultaneously with the house (for the house is still to be built). But the pile of bricks merits the name "cause" in relation to the house as an individual in relation to an individual; whereas the class "bricks" merits the name "cause" in relation to the house as a class in relation to an individual. Finally, the way in which the pile of bricks is said to be the material cause of the house is prior than the class "bricks" (*i.e.* closer to the actual house).

Therefore, we have two different things, a pile of bricks and the class "bricks", that merit the same name "cause" in relation to the same house. Even though both of them merit the name "cause" insofar as they are material causes of the house, we can observe some differences in their corresponding accounts.

The corresponding accounts of the ways in which a pile of bricks on the one hand, and the class "bricks" on the other, merit the name "cause" in relation to the house, albeit subtly, are nonetheless different and therefore a pile of bricks and the class "bricks" are called "cause" in relation to the same house homonymously.

Let us consider now, in relation to the same house to be built, the way in which the class "bricks" and the class "builder" merit the name "cause". Both of them merit the name "cause" in relation to the house:

- in a proper (non-accidental) way,
- as a class in relation to an individual, and
- as existing non-simultaneously with the house (for the house has not been built).

Up to this point, the accounts of "cause" in relation to the house, as said of the class "bricks" and the class "builder", are the same. But the class "bricks" merits the name "cause" in relation to the house insofar as it is the material out of which the house shall be built; whereas

the class "builder" merits the name "cause" in relation to the house insofar as it is the source of the motion that shall put the house into existence. The class "bricks" and the class "builder" merit the name "cause" in relation to the same house in a very similar but not entirely the same way and are, therefore, homonymous.

To sum up, Aristotle says that there are four primary causes –and therefore four primary ways in "cause" can be said– in relation to which other things merit the name "cause". Aristotle also distinguishes twenty-four derivative ways (six ways, each of which can be said, in turn, in four different ways) to say "cause". That is to say, Aristotle suggests that there are twenty-four different ways in which "cause" can be said, that derive from each of the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said. These are the many ways in which "cause" is said.

But we do not know as yet whether the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said are ultimately connected.

6.2 The primary way in which "cause" is said

We have seen that Aristotle distinguishes four primary ways in which "cause" is said:

- that out of which (as internal material) a thing comes into being,
- the form or pattern (τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα),
- that from which the change or freedom from change first begins, and
- the end, that for the sake of which a thing is (1013a24-34).

We have already discussed that each of these four can be said, in turn, in twenty-four different ways (or a combination of them). Let us focus now on the four primary ways, so that we see if they are ultimately connected and what the primary meaning of "cause" can be.

Apart from marking the above as the four primary headings of the many ways in which a thing merits the name "cause", Aristotle does not indicate one primary thing in relation to which these four merit the name "cause", nor does he say that any of them has priority over the others, at least not in the context of *Metaphysics V* and *Physics* II. On the contrary, two times does Aristotle emphasise that the above are the primary ways in which "cause" can be said (*Met. 1013b16-17, 1013b28-30; Phys. 1095a3, 1095a15*).

We can observe that the four accounts of "cause" are completely different. None of them seems to be primary, for none of them is referred to by the other accounts. Moreover,

they do not seem to overlap in any way, nor do they exhibit any common property or condition that would help us to see that they are connected.

According to the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy, if the different accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different and do not exhibit some form of relation, then we should conclude that x and y are homonymous in an unconnected way.

However, such a conclusion about the homonymy of "cause" would be surprising, to say the least. In chapters 3 and 4, we learned that the trademark of unconnected homonymy is, according to Aristotle, that it is easy to notice. That is to say, that in an ordinary conversation, if one were to speak about, say, the cause of the house, the listener would easily understand whether one means the material cause or the efficient cause, without further clarification. But this does not seem to be the present situation, for Aristotle devotes a lot of attention to establishing the different ways in which we talk about causes. This suggests that the homonymy is not easy to notice and that is, most likely, a connected type of homonymy.

The best course of action is to question whether we have missed some piece of information that can shed light on the matter, so that we can identify either one of the four causes having priority in the bearing of the name "cause", or some common condition that all four causes fulfil upon which the four causes are related and merit the name "cause" in an equally primary way.

Regarding the first option, it has been pointed out that in *On the Parts of Animals*, Aristotle bestows explanatory priority to the final cause.[119] For instance:

> "… the causes concerned in natural generation are, as we see, more than one. There is the cause for the sake of which, and the cause whence the beginning of motion comes. Now we must decide which of these two causes comes first, which second. Plainly, however, that cause is the first which we call that for the sake of which. For this is the account of the thing, and the account forms the starting-point, alike in the works of art and in the works of nature. For the doctor and the builder define health or house, either by the intellect or by perception, and then proceed to give the accounts and the causes of each of the things they do and of why they should do it thus." (Part. An. I 639b11-19)

The builder is the cause of the existence of the house, but the builder acts with a view to the house. Each step that the builder takes into the building process, can be explained as a step guided by the purpose of building a particular house.

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[119] See (Code, 1997) and (White, 2010, pp. 29-37).

This research is not concerned with the details of the explanatory priority. The question for us is whether this explanatory priority translates into priority in the bearing of the name "cause". That is to say, whether it could be consistently argued that, for Aristotle, the builder merits the name "cause" in relation to the house, in a way that is derived from the end goal of building the house as cause. It makes certain sense to say that the builder is the cause of the house only insofar as he aims at building the house.

However, it could be argued that the priority is not held by the final cause, but by the formal cause. For the builder has a view to the house –and therefore he must have some understanding of what a house is and how it might look like. Thus, it is the formal cause of the house –*i.e.,* its being a house– what gives direction to the building process.

In fact, Aristotle explains that, in some natural processes of generation, the formal cause, the final cause and the efficient cause coincide. For instance, a horse is the formal, the final, and the efficient cause of a horse (Cf. *Phys. II.7 198a24-25*). In such a case, the explanatory priority gets diluted among the three causes.

But this coincidence does not always happen. Aristotle says that, for this coincidence of the three causes to take place, the mover –or efficient cause– and the thing to be generated must be of the same species, *e.g.*, a horse is generated from a horse.

But a horse can also be the efficient cause of a mule, in which case the efficient cause does not coincide with the formal and the final causes. Likewise, in the generation of products of art, the efficient cause does not coincide with the formal and final causes.

Finally, regarding some things that are not subject to generation, the only cause that seems to be present is the formal cause. *E.g.*, in mathematical objects, we enquire the "what", that is to say, the definition (*Phys. 198a15-16*).

As we can see, the explanatory priority depends upon the nature of the type of object under investigation, and does not seem to be related with the priority in the bearing of the name "cause".

Since the formal cause seems to be present regardless of the type of object whose nature we enquire, one might argue that the formal cause holds priority in the bearing of the name "cause" over the other three causes. This would entail that the other causes merit the name "cause" in a derivative way from the formal cause, and not the other way around, *i.e.,* in a non-symmetrical way. For instance, matter would merit the name "cause" only insofar as

it is capable of receiving a form, whereas the form would not be defined as a cause insofar as it is capable of affecting a matter.

But we do not observe this asymmetry in the bearing of the name "cause". On the contrary, when both the formal and the material causes are present, it seems as though the form is a cause insofar as it is capable of affecting the matter, just as the matter is a cause insofar as it is capable of receiving a form:

> "… if we were discussing a couch or the like, we should try to determine its form rather than its matter (*e.g.*, bronze or wood), or if not, we should give the matter of the whole. For a couch is such and such a form embodied in this or that matter, or such and such a matter with this or that form; so that its shape and structure must be included in our description. For the formal nature is of greater importance than the material nature." (*Part. An. 640b24-29*)

All in all, even if we could decide on which cause has explanatory priority in each case, the explanatory priority seems to be unrelated to the priority in the bearing of the name "cause". At least in principle, it seems possible to define one cause in terms of another symmetrically, which tells us that they are related in a non-hierarchical way, *i.e.*, none of them holds priority in the bearing of the name "cause".

Given that none of the four causes holds a clear priority in the bearing of the name "cause", we should now discuss the second possible solution, namely, that there might be some common condition upon which the four causes bear the name "cause" in an equally primary way. Let us recall the corresponding definitions of each cause offered by Aristotle:

- that out of which (as internal material) a thing comes into being,
- the form or pattern (τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα),
- that from which the change or freedom from change first begins, and
- the end, that for the sake of which a thing is (Met. 1013a24-34).

As I have said above, there are no obvious common traits among the accounts of the four causes. If there is an aspect common to them all, we must look elsewhere. For instance, Irwin suggests that the four definitions are comprehended by one single sense, which can be observed from the fact that, according to Aristotle, the four causes answer the same question "Why?". Irwin reminds us that, in Aristotle's view, a student of nature must aim at a complete answer that comprises the four causes (*Phys. II 198a21-24*) (Irwin, 1981, p. 537).

Irwin claims that "Some unity of sense here is not only consistent with the multivocity of "cause", but even necessary for it. For the four causes provide four complementary answers to a single why-question; it is when we see that this single question points us to four different sorts of things that we see the multivocity of complementary causes; we could never see this if the question itself had several senses" (Irwin, 1981, p. 537).

In chapter 5, I have argued that it is not entirely clear what Irwin means by "sense" and therefore I do not adhere to his terminology. But he is concerned with how the four primary ways in which "cause" is said are ultimately connected. He says that we can see that they are connected from the fact that the four of them, together, provide an exhaustive answer to the question "Why?". To say that the four ways in which "cause" is said have different senses implies, for Irwin, that the corresponding four meanings of "cause" are unconnected; if they were unconnected, they would not respond to the same question.

Irwin explains that the primary meaning of "N" in cases of connected homonymy (*i.e.*, the unified sense) is expressed by a schematic formula that needs to be filled in differently for each N (Irwin, 1981, p. 537). Accordingly, the unified sense of "cause" would be along the lines of "An answer to the question 'Why does this happen?'" (See *Phys. II 198a14-21*).

I agree with Irwin in that, as I have already said, the different accounts of the corresponding causes do not have common features. In the previous chapter, I have suggested that the schematic formula referred to by Irwin cannot be regarded as the primary meaning of "cause" –for this would imply that the four causes merit the name "cause" in the same way and are, therefore, synonyms. But it could be regarded as a condition that anything that merits the name "cause" fulfils. Accordingly –and taking into account that there are four primary ways in which "cause" is said– the primary meaning of "cause" should be along the lines of "An answer –that could be formal, material, efficient, or final– to the question, Why does this happen?".[120] That is to say, the primary meaning of "cause" comprises the common condition and the primary ways in which "cause" can be said.[121]

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[120] It must be noticed that this is a single account only in a grammatical way. In fact, it comprises four possible accounts with a common condition.

[121] In chapter 5, I suggested that the common condition that we observe in the members of the cluster of primary N's is some sort of second order property, or second order relation. In this case, "to be an answer" is a relation that is said of four possible relations (*i.e.*, "to be the material of" is a relation; "to be the final end" is a relation, and so on).

In this way, it becomes clearer that the four primary ways in which "cause" is said are homonymous in a connected way, and that none of them holds priority in the bearing of the name "cause" over the others. The reason why I insist that the primary meaning of "cause" must include both the condition and the primary ways in which "cause" is said is because the condition alone has no full meaning on its own. If the question "Why does this happen?" had complete meaning on its own, then there would be only one type of answer for it. But the question needs to be further specified. Aristotle claims that there are four types of answers. In fact, Aristotle claims that the very question can be understood in four different ways, as follows ("[Ὅτι δὲ ἔστιν αἴτια, καὶ ὅτι...] τοσαῦτα γὰρ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τὸ δία τί περιείληφεν", *Phys. II 198a14-21*):

- What is this?,
- What initiated the motion?,
- For the sake of what?, or
- What is this made of?

As we can see, it is inaccurate to say that the four causes answer one single question "Why does this happen?", for the question itself needs to be further qualified.

We have found that there are no common properties among the four causes that justify the correct application of the name "cause". But there seems to be a common constraint, a condition that all things that merit the name "cause" fulfil.

Likewise, we have found that none of the four causes holds priority in the bearing of the name "cause" over the other three causes. But we know that Aristotle states that the four of them are the primary ways in which "cause" can be said. And we have found that it seems possible that some causes can be explained in terms of others, *e.g.*, matter merits the name "cause" insofar as it is capable of receiving a form, and a form merits the name "cause" insofar as it is capable of affecting matter.

In his analysis of Aristotle's concept and uses of analogy, Roger White proposes that, when several different objects x, y, and z (or type of objects) merit the same name "N" but display no common property among them, they are ultimately related by a common analogical pattern.[122] For White, it makes no sense to ask whether the analogical pattern that

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[122] For more on homonymy based on analogy, see chapter 3.

justifies the correct application of "N" has more than one meaning or sense (White, 2010, p. 60), for "our criteria for sameness or difference of sense are not sufficiently refined to answer such a question […] Instead we should replace that question with other, more tractable, questions, such as, Is it the case that someone who had learned what it means to describe the **object x** as "**N**" *ipso facto* learned what it would mean to describe the **object y** as "**N**"?"[123] (White, 2010, p. 61. Adapted)

The fact that there are no common properties among the four causes makes it unhelpful to ask whether the meaning of "cause" is the same. His proposal would be, instead, to ask whether understanding in which sense the builder is said to be "efficient cause" in relation to the house helps us to understand in which sense the bricks are said to be "cause" in relation to the house. The analogical pattern has the role of providing the grounds for the comparison (*i.e.,* the analogical comparison) between the two things –the builder and the bricks– even though there are no common properties in their relation to the house.

Recall that, according to White, "There are two different ways of comparing two things: the first involves a direct comparison between the two, and the second, which is by analogy, involves an indirect comparison, where the comparison depends upon the introduction of a third and a fourth term" (White, 2010, p. 28). That is to say, instead of comparing the bricks as cause of the house and the builder as cause of the house (a direct comparison that is impossible to perform), we compare the bricks as material cause of the house with the builder as efficient cause of the house. The third and fourth terms introduced in this comparison are the specific roles of the brick and the builder in relation to the house, *i.e.*, material cause and efficient cause. White explains that, for this comparison to be possible, we ought to specify the respect in which we mean to compare the four terms in question. In our example, the bricks and the builder are being compared insofar as they explain why the house came to exist. The specification of the respect in which we are carrying out the comparison, says White, is called "analogical relation R" (White, 2010, p. 58). Thus:

The bricks as material are analogous to the builder as a source of motion

In respect of their explaining why the house came into existence.

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[123] Emphasis and adaptation are mine. The original says, "Is it the case that someone who had learned what it means to describe the weather as calm *ipso facto* learned what it would mean to describe the sea as calm?".

It seems as though the unified sense proposed by Irwin –an answer to the question "Why?"– which I take to be a condition for things to merit the name "cause", can be better explained in terms of the analogical relation proposed by White: the formal cause explains what the house is, as the material cause explains what the house is made of –and so on for the other causes.

The fact that the four primary causes can be explained by analogy with each other, also supports my view that they are not related in a hierarchical way, for the analogy is symmetrical.

To sum up, Aristotle distinguishes four primary ways in which "cause" is said, and the four of them seem to be ultimately connected in a non-hierarchical way. For even though Aristotle bestows explanatory priority to the final cause over the efficient and material ones, this priority takes place only in cases of generation. Moreover, the explanatory priority does not seem to translate into the priority in the bearing of the name "N".

The four causes seem to merit the name "cause" in an equally primary way. They do not exhibit a common property that justifies the correct application of the same name. But they do seem to comply with the same condition, namely, the four causes respond to the question "Why does this happen?". In addition, we have seen that Aristotle allows for the causes to be mutually explanatory (*e.g.*, matter merits the name "cause" insofar as it is capable of receiving a form; and a form merits the name "cause" insofar as it is capable of affecting matter), which is not possible in cases where there is a single N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". The relation between the four causes might be regarded, following White's analysis, as an analogy; that is to say, the way in which one of the four causes merits the name "cause" can be explained by analogy to the way in which another cause merits the name "cause".

In the previous chapter, I have argued that, in cases of connected homonymy that do not have a single primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N", but that do have a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N", the primary meaning of "N" comprehends the primary ways in which "N" is said, as well as the common condition that they all fulfil. In this case, my proposal is that the primary meaning of "cause" could be along the lines of "An answer –that could be formal, material, efficient, or final– to the question, Why does this happen?".

6.3 Final Remarks

In this chapter, I have applied Aristotle's three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy –expounded in *Top. 1.15 106a2-8* and *Met. IV 1004a28-30*– to the homonymy of "cause".

The first step of the method dictates that we decide whether the several ways in which "cause" is said are, indeed, homonymous. For instance, we must assess whether the corresponding accounts of "cause" in relation to a house, as said of a pile of bricks, and as said of a builder, are the same or not.

The second step of the method indicates that we establish the type of homonymy by comparing the different accounts of "cause" to decide whether they are unconnected or connected; if the latter, we must be able to explain the type of connection we observe.

The third step of the method indicates that, in the case of connected homonymy, we identify the primary cause in relation to which other things merit the name "cause".

We have seen that there is not a clear division between steps 1 and 2, on the one hand, and between steps 2 and 3, on the other. For in order to decide whether there is homonymy in the different ways in which "cause" can be said, we might draw a comparison between the different accounts of "cause".[124] Likewise, as we analyse the type of connections between the different accounts of "cause", we might as well notice that several accounts make reference to a common thing.

I started by applying the method to the accounts of "cause" we read in *Phys. II.3* and *Met. V.2*. There, Aristotle explains that there are four primary ways (τρόποι, *Met. V 1013b16*, and εἴδη *1013b28*) in which "cause" can be said –formal, efficient, final, and material– each of which in turn, can be said in many ways, *e.g.*, in a proper or accidental way; in a prior or posterior way; as being able to act or as acting; as individual or as a class; and as either existing simultaneously with the thing of which they are causes, or not.

I have focused my analysis on the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said. By comparing the corresponding four accounts offered by Aristotle, we noticed that, indeed, they are different accounts and, therefore, the several ways in which "cause" can be said give rise to homonymy.

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[124] In chapter 2, we discussed that step 1 of the method for analysing homonymy can be addressed in different ways that do not require giving the account of "N" as said of x and y.

The second thing that we noticed is that the four accounts in question are actually entirely different, with neither common elements nor a reference in common. According to the method, this observation would imply that the four primary ways in which "cause" is said are unconnected. This outcome is problematic, for Aristotle says that unconnected homonymy is easy to notice. That is to say, if the homonymy of "cause" were unconnected, then it would be easy to notice the different ways in which "cause" is said in each occasion without further clarification. Instead, Aristotle pays great attention throughout several works to distinguish the ways in which "cause" is being said.

Given the circumstance, I have suggested that the method itself reveals that some piece of information might be missing.

If we assume that the four primary ways in which "cause" is said are connected, then either one of them holds priority in the bearing of the name, or the four of them are equally primary and comply with a common condition.

My conclusion is that there are not strong enough reasons to consider any of the four causes as the primary cause in relation to which the other three merit the name "cause".

Aristotle emphasises that the four ways he distinguishes are the primary ways in which "cause" can be said. My proposal is, accordingly, that the primary meaning of "cause" must comprehend the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said (*i.e.*, that the four causes form a cluster of primary causes). And the condition that they all fulfil is most likely, that they all answer the question "Why does this happen?". I have also explained that this condition, on its own, does not constitute the meaning of "cause"; it is a constraint on what features can constitute an account of cause.

The application of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy suggests that the primary meaning of "cause" could be along the lines of "An answer –that could be formal, material, efficient, or final– to the question, Why does this happen?".

Chapter 7. The homonymy of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy

Introduction

The ultimate goal of this research is the investigation into the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in the context of Aristotle's philosophy. We know that in ancient Greek, "τὸ καλόν" is a fairly common term to express general commendation, which can be predicated of, say, the physical appearance of a lady, the royal behaviour of a prince, the highly accomplished craftsmanship, among others. We do not necessarily assume that Aristotle endorses all these different usages. Nonetheless, Aristotle's writings exhibit what, in principle, seem to be different usages. Furthermore, Aristotle explicitly acknowledges that "τὸ καλόν" is said in many ways and is, therefore, homonymous.

Given that "τὸ καλόν" can be said in many ways, the original question proposed – about the meaning of "τὸ καλόν"– has to turn into a question about the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν". For this purpose, we need to understand what is implied in saying that "τὸ καλόν" –and, in general, any name "N"– can be said homonymously.

For this reason, the previous five chapters of this research were dedicated to the study of Aristotelian homonymy. I have suggested that Aristotle deals with problems involving homonymy in a methodical way, which can be summarised in the following three steps:

1. Establishing whether the problem in question does indeed involve homonymy (*i.e.*, whether the account of "N" as said of x is different from the account of "N" as said of y).

2. Establishing the type of homonymy (whether it is unconnected or connected and, if the latter, the type of connection).

3. In cases of connected homonymy, identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

Regarding the third step, I have argued that, in some cases of connected homonymy, there is a single primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.*, the substance is the primary being in relation to which other things merit the name "being"). In some other cases, there is a cluster of primary N's, connected in a non-hierarchical way, in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.*, presumably, the four causes are primary in their

bearing of the name "cause", and several other ways of saying "cause" are related to each of the four causes).

Now that we have a solid theoretical apparatus to analyse problems involving homonymy, we are in a good position to come back to our question about the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν", assuming that "τὸ καλόν" can be said in many ways.

I shall start this chapter with a discussion of Irwin's analysis of the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy. Even though I do not adhere to his interpretation on the matter, I find great value in the strategy he follows. Irwin starts his analysis of the sense and reference of "τὸ καλόν" by pointing out that it is said homonymously; then he proceeds to identify ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said in various contexts; and finally he applies his criteria for analysing Aristotelian homonymy in order to identify the primary way in which "τὸ καλόν" is said.

Crucial aspects of Irwin's interpretation of the primary meaning (sense, in his view) of "τὸ καλόν" with which I disagree, are the result of his understanding of Aristotelian homonymy, which I have criticised in chapters 4 and 5.

Since my analysis of the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" follows the same general strategy as Irwin's –*i.e.*, start with a discussion of Aristotelian homonymy in general, and then apply the findings to the case of "τὸ καλόν"– I shall contrast my proposal mainly with Irwin's.

My hypothesis is that the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" is expressed by Aristotle in *Met. XIII 1078a31-b6*, where he claims that "τὸ καλόν" is a final cause, and that its greatest forms are order, due measure (due proportion, or symmetry), and definiteness.

According to my interpretation of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy, the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν" falls among the cases of connected homonymy in which the primary meaning of "N" is given by a cluster of N's, all of which are equally primary in the bearing of the name "N", and connected in a non-hierarchical manner.

As we shall see, on Irwin's interpretation, *Met. XIII 1078a31-b6* indicates merely one way –among others– in which "τὸ καλόν" is said, with no priority over the others. Whereas in my interpretation, the greatest forms of "τὸ καλόν" are the primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said.

I shall finish this chapter by illustrating how the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν can account for the way in which "τὸ καλόν" is said in other contexts. Within the scope of this research, it is not possible to conduct an exhaustive analysis of all the usages of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's

extant works; but by explaining and illustrating my hypothesis, I expect to lay the foundations for further research in this direction.

7.1 The many ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said. Irwin's diagnosis

In his article *The Sense and Reference of kalon in Aristotle*, Irwin identifies four different contexts in which Aristotle uses the expression "τὸ καλόν" and cognates, to qualify different sorts of things. Each context gives rise to a corresponding type of τὸ καλόν, as follows:

1. Aesthetic contexts. Aesthetic usages of "τὸ καλόν" point at physical attributes that are pleasant and attractive to the onlooker, without further judgment or interest regarding their function (Irwin, 2010, p. 385).

    As an example of physical attributes described as "καλόν", Irwin recalls: the blackness of the bison's horn described as "shiny and καλόν" (*Hist. An. 630a35*); that "often jesters compare someone who is not καλός to a goat breathing fire, or a ram butting" (*Gen. An. 769 b18-20*); and that the bird called chatterer has a καλόν colour (*Hist. An. 616b16-17*).

    To support his claim that the aesthetic use of "τὸ καλόν" refers to attributes that are pleasant and attractive to the onlooker without further judgment or interest, Irwin recalls a passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

    > For dogs do not delight in the scent of hares, but in the eating of them, but the scent told them the hares were there; nor does the lion delight in the lowing of the ox, but in eating it; but he perceived by the lowing that it was near, and therefore appears to delight in the lowing; and similarly he does not delight because he sees a stag or a wild goat, but because he is going to make a meal of it. (*Eth. Nic. 1118a18-23*)

    This passage is taken by Irwin as a counter-example of what he means by "purely aesthetic and disinterested pleasure", for if the lion "simply enjoyed the sight of the ox, it would keep looking at it, rather than eating it" ((Irwin, 2010, p. 385). That is to say, the lion is not capable of taking disinterested pleasure on the aesthetic type of καλόν, in the way that a person is presumed to be.

    To sum up, the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν is the one that prompts disinterested pleasure in the onlooker.

2. Natural contexts. The usage of "τὸ καλόν" in a natural context is marked, according to Irwin, by the onlooker's judgment and understanding of a teleological order in nature, especially in animals. This usage differs from the aesthetic one in two key aspects: one, the onlooker does not observe the natural object in a disinterested manner, for he observes it in order to understand how it works. The second aspect in which the natural context differs from the aesthetic one is that, in the natural context, the onlooker does not necessarily find attractive the natural object and, consequently, any pleasure that the student of nature might experience is not linked to the sensible attractiveness of the natural object. In support of this distinction between the aesthetic and the natural usages of "τὸ καλόν", Irwin recalls the following passages:

> We should venture on the study of every kind of animal without distaste, on the assumption that in all of them there is something natural and καλόν. For what is not a matter of chance but for the sake of something is found, and found most of all, in the products of nature, and the end for which something has been constituted or come to be has the place of the καλόν. (*Part. An. 645a21-25*)

And

> [We must study animals] without omitting, to the best of our ability, any member of the kingdom, however unattractive they might be. For if some have no grace to charm the sense, yet nature, which fashioned them, gives amazing pleasure in their study to all who can trace links of causation, and are inclined to philosophy. (*Part. An. 645a7-10*)

This description would suggest that Irwin points at a distinction based merely on the onlooker's attitude; that is to say, τὸ καλόν is of an aesthetic type if the onlooker simply observes and takes pleasure in what they observe; whereas it is of a natural type if the onlooker observes with a scientific attitude, aiming at understanding the end of the arrangement of the different parts in the animal.

But Irwin's distinction goes beyond the onlooker's attitude. He contends that "τὸ καλόν" is especially applicable in nature, to features that are neither essential nor necessary to the survival of the animal. These features are present in the animal and merit the predicate "τὸ καλόν" regardless of the attitude of the onlooker. For instance:

- The way in which human teeth grow is καλόν, in relation to the common function of teeth (*i.e.,* the reduction of food, *Part. An. 661b6-9*), for the front teeth are sharp in order to cut food into bits, whereas the back teeth are flat in order to grind down the food.

- The way in which bees breed is καλόν. For not all kinds of bees are able to generate, and yet all the three kinds always continue to exist, thus: the kings generate their own kind and bees; bees generate drones; and drones do not generate. And the breeding season of each kind is related with the weather season, revealing a natural order (τάξις, *Gen. An. 760a32*).

The particular arrangement of teeth in humans is neither part of the definition of "human" (*i.e.*, is not essential) nor necessary for the existence of humans. Likewise, the particular arrangement in the breeding of bees is neither part of the definition of "bees" nor necessary for the existence of bees, for this is not the only breeding arrangement possible, says Irwin (Irwin, 2010, p. 387).

The appreciation of the καλόν in nature depends upon the grasping of the teleological order in nature, that is to say, the student of nature needs to understand the end for the sake of which the organs and animals are the way they are.

According to Irwin, τὸ καλόν is an evidence of –not the same as– a final cause in nature: "The fact that the natures of different organisms are teleologically ordered is a reason to regard the natural order as καλόν." (Irwin, 2010, p. 387)

The grasping of the καλόν in the natural order is the result of the scientific attitude, which contrasts with the disinterested attitude necessary to appreciate the aesthetic type of καλόν.

3. The Abstract context. According to Irwin, the abstract usage of "τὸ καλόν" refers to mathematical objects. In support of this view, Irwin recalls the following passage:

> The main forms (εἴδη) of τὸ καλόν are order (τάξις), due measure (or due proportion, συμμετρία), and definiteness (τὸ ὡρισμένον), which the mathematical sciences demonstrate in a special degree. (*Met. XIII 1078a36-b2*)

Irwin points out that these forms are attributes of things other than mathematical objects. For instance, dramas (*Poet. 1450b36*), cities (*Pol. 1326a33*), and bodies (*Top. 116b21*) can merit the predicate "καλόν" on account of exhibiting at least one of the three greatest forms.

Despite the presence of some of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν in objects other than mathematical, such as animals and cities, Irwin claims that there are no reasons to interpret *Met. XIII 1078a36-b2* as stating the general criteria for things being καλά.

Moreover, Irwin contends that there is no reason to conclude that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν are criteria for the presence of aesthetic or natural καλόν, even though their presence might influence our aesthetic judgment as well as our grasping of the teleological order (Irwin, 2010, p. 389).

For instance, Aristotle says that small people cannot be καλόν (*Eth. Nic. 1123b6-8*), and that a city that is too large cannot fulfil its function (*Pol. VII 1326a31*).

The presence of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν seems to be independent of any attitude or further understanding from the onlooker.

4. Ethical contexts. These contexts identify the καλόν with what is praiseworthy insofar as it is concerned with voluntary actions (*Eth. Nic. III 1109b31, Eth. Eud. II 1223a9-15*). As such, the καλόν in an ethical context represents a subset of non-instrumental goods (Irwin, 2010, p. 390). In support of these claims, Irwin recalls the following passages:

> Now these activities are desirable in themselves from which nothing else is sought beyond the activity. And of this nature, excellent actions are thought to be; for to do καλά and good deeds is a thing desirable for its own sake. (*Eth. Nic. X 1176b5-8*)

And

> Now goodness and nobility-and-goodness differ not only in name but also in themselves. For all goods have ends which are to be chosen for their own sake. Of these, we call καλόν those which, existing all of them for their own sake, are praised. For these are those which are the source of praised acts and are themselves praised, such as justice itself and just acts… (Eth. Eud. VII 1248b16-22)

In both passages, we read that some things and actions are to be chosen for their own sake (*i.e.*, they are non-instrumental). Insofar as they exist for their own sake, they are praiseworthy. For instance, justice and just acts are praiseworthy insofar as they exist for their own sake, and therefore, justice and just acts are among the things regarded as καλά in an ethical way.

Yet again, Irwin argues that the presence of the ethical type of τὸ καλόν might influence our aesthetic judgment, but this does not entail that Aristotle advance an aesthetic view of ethics. For instance, the virtue of magnificence seems to imply that the ethical virtue depends upon the aesthetic outcome of the actions of the purportedly virtuous person.

Irwin explains that the trade-mark of the virtue of magnificence is its being a large-scale manifestation of the virtue of generosity (Irwin, 2010, p. 390). Its being a large-scale manifestation offers an opportunity to display good taste, as we read in the following passages:

> The magnificent man is like an artist (ἐπιστήμονι ἔοικεν); for he can see what is fitting (τὸ πρέπον) and spend large sums tastefully (ἐμμελῶς). (*Eth. Nic. 1122a34-35*)

And

> The magnificent man will spend such sums for the sake of the καλόν, for this is common to the virtues. (*Eth. Nic*. 1122b6-7)

In light of these passages, it seems as though it would be justified to render "τὸ καλόν" as "beauty", at least in the context of Aristotle's discussion of magnificence. But, as Irwin points out, the above translation, proposed by Ross (Ross, 1995), already assumes an aesthetic interpretation of the matter. For "ἐπιστήμονι ἔοικεν" could be better translated as "expert", and "ἐμμελῶς", as suitable, which results in interpreting the passage as stating that the magnificent man has some understanding that allows him to spend large sums of money in the right way according to the circumstances (Irwin, 2010, p. 390).

Hence, the claim that acting for the sake of τὸ καλόν is common to the virtues, does not need to be understood in an aesthetic way. For Irwin, it makes better sense to read the presence of τὸ καλόν in the context of the discussion of magnificence in the same way as we found in *Eth. Nic. 1176b5-8* and *Eth. Eud. 1248b16-22* above, namely: as magnificent acts being chosen for their own sake and, as such, being praiseworthy –rather than being chosen because they are attractive to the onlooker (Irwin, 2010, p. 391)

To sum up, Irwin distinguishes four different contexts in Aristotle's philosophy where "τὸ καλόν" is predicated of different sorts of objects. Each of these contexts gives rise to a specific type of τὸ καλόν: aesthetic, natural, abstract, and ethical. According to Irwin, these are clearly different types and none of them subsumes the others: "On the one hand, we have found good reason to deny that [Aristotle] ascribes one and the same property to all καλά things, or that he gives the same account of what makes them καλά. Some things are καλά insofar as

they are beautiful, others insofar as they are well ordered, and others insofar as they are praiseworthy attempts to promote a common good." (Irwin, 2010, p. 395)

In Irwin's opinion, the aesthetic uses of "τὸ καλόν" are well translated as "beauty", for beauty is pleasant and attractive to the onlooker (Irwin, 2010, p. 385). For the natural type of τὸ καλόν, Irwin proposes "admirable", "appropriate", or "fine", and he adds that the same translations could work for the abstract type of καλόν (Irwin, 2010, p. 389). Finally, he suggests that the ethical usage of "τὸ καλόν" could be rendered as "noble" or "honourable" (Irwin, 2010, p. 391).

As we can see, some of the translations work only for one type of context, *e.g.*, "beauty" clearly signals an aesthetic usage, whereas "noble" strongly suggests an ethical context. In contrast, other translations are broader in their meaning, and therefore could be used in any of the four contexts without imposing a particular interpretation, *e.g.*, "fine", "admirable", and "fitting" could work for an ethical context just as well as for a natural, aesthetic or abstract one (Irwin, 2010, p. 396).

7.2 Criticism of Irwin's proposal of the four types of τὸ καλόν

Even though I agree with Irwin's general strategy for identifying the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy –*i.e.*, addressing the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν"– I greatly depart from his conclusions.

In the course of chapters 4, and 5, I have explained in detail how my understanding of Aristotelian homonymy differs from Irwin's. But before discussing how my interpretation of the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν" differs from Irwin's, I would like to point out that Irwin does not fully apply his own considerations regarding Aristotelian homonymy to his analysis of the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν".

In chapter 4, we learned that Irwin identifies several types of Aristotelian homonymy. The first major distinction he draws is between connected and unconnected homonymy. However, in his analysis of the different types of τὸ καλόν, Irwin does not address the possibility of there being unconnected homonymy among the different usages of "τὸ καλόν". For instance, each of the types he introduces is contrasted with the aesthetic καλόν. Yet, when he proposes some general translations of "τὸ καλόν" that can suit any of the four

contexts he identifies, there is an unquestioned assumption that the four types of τὸ καλόν –including the aesthetic one– are connected.

But, even if the assumption that the four usages of "τὸ καλόν" are connected is correct, Irwin's analysis of Aristotelian homonymy includes an identification of different subtypes of connected homonyms: focally connected homonyms, homonyms by analogy, and spurious homonyms.[125] In his analysis of the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν", however, there is no indication regarding the type of connection between the four different types of τὸ καλόν.

Finally, in chapter 5 we learned that Irwin proposes that, for cases of connected homonymy, there is a unified sense of the name "N" that is equally applicable to all the N's. According to Irwin, this unified sense does not correspond to any of the homonymous N's more than to the others. Nor does it refer to a property present in all the homonymous N's (Irwin, 1981, p. 536).

This unified sense, says Irwin, is expressed by a schematic formula that needs to be filled in differently for each of the homonymous N's. For instance, the four Aristotelian causes are four different ways in which "cause" can be said, but the four of them answer the same question, "Why does this happen?" (Irwin, 1981, p. 537). Being an answer to the question, "Why does this happen?" is not a definition of "cause" –for it does not express a real essence. It is a formula, says Irwin, that needs to be answered in different ways.

In chapters 5 and 6, I have argued that Irwin does not elaborate enough on how the unified sense of "N" relates to each of the homonymous N's. I suggested that the schematic formula described by Irwin expresses not the primary meaning of "N" –as Irwin suggests– but a general condition that must be fulfilled by each of the N's in order for it to merit the name "N". Since it refers neither to a primary thing, nor to an attribute, but it nonetheless tells something about the things that merit the name "N", I have suggested that it qualifies a property, or a relation.

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[125] See Chapter 4.
Focally connected homonymy is defined as follows: "If F_s are focally connected, then the focus F_1 has the definition 'G', and subordinate F_s have the definition 'G+H', 'G+J", etc. F_1 is primary and the focus because other F_s include its definition". (Irwin, 1981, pp. 531, Footnote 12)
Spurious homonymy involves definitions of homonymous things based on resemblance (e.g., sculpted hands are homonymous with real hands).
As for homonymy by analogy, Irwin does not offer any definition.

In his analysis of the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν", Irwin suggests that some English translations ("fine", "admirable", and "fitting") are broad enough to be applicable to all four contexts he has distinguished. However, he does not suggest any schematic formula for the unified sense of "τὸ καλόν".

Irwin contends that the schematic formula that expresses the unified sense of a homonymous "N" appears as a necessary component of the different accounts of "N" as said of x, y, and z (Irwin, 1981, p. 537). The account Irwin gives for the usage of "τὸ καλόν" in an aesthetic context is that it is attractive to the onlooker and pleasant in a disinterested way. The account for the natural usage is related to the grasping of the teleological order in the natural organism. The ethical usage is marked as being praiseworthy and chosen for its own sake. There is no specific account for the abstract usage of "τὸ καλόν" in Irwin's analysis. But, by observing the three accounts he offers, we can see that Irwin does not analyse them in terms of a schematic formula repeated in them all.

The English translations he suggests as suitable for any of the four contexts ("fine", "admirable", and "fitting") do not fulfil the role of the unified sense of "τὸ καλόν" that we would have expected to find in Irwin's analysis.

Therefore, as I have said, Irwin starts his analysis of the different usages of "τὸ καλόν" by acknowledging the homonymy, but he does not fully apply his own considerations regarding Aristotelian homonymy to this particular case.

Beside these remarks on the method of Irwin's analysis, I disagree with the emphasis he puts in the peculiarities of what he identifies as the aesthetic usage of "τὸ καλόν". For in his analyses of the natural, the abstract, and the ethical usages of "τὸ καλόν", the main point of contrast is the aesthetic usage.

Irwin contends that the natural usage of "τὸ καλόν" is marked by the scientific attitude of the onlooker, in sheer contrast with the disinterested pleasure Irwin bestows to the onlooker of the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν (Irwin, 2010, p. 386).

In his analysis of the abstract usage of "τὸ καλόν", Irwin highlights that the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν (order, symmetry or due measure, and definiteness) are not exclusive of mathematical objects, but are also present in cities and animals, and that they might influence our aesthetic appreciation of such objects. But Irwin adds that this implies neither that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν are criteria for beauty in mathematical objects, nor that they are a general account of the aesthetic τὸ καλόν (Irwin, 2010, p. 389).

Lastly, Irwin's analysis of the ethical usage of "τὸ καλόν" is also focused on explaining why it is not justified to render "τὸ καλόν" as "beauty", that is to say, Irwin highlights the different traits of each type of τὸ καλόν: the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν is characterised by eliciting disinterested pleasure in the onlooker, whereas the ethical type of τὸ καλόν is marked by the praiseworthiness of the action (Irwin, 2010, pp. 390-392).

But Irwin's arguments to identify the aesthetic usage of "τὸ καλόν", and to qualify it by an attractiveness in the observed object as well as by a disinterested pleasure in the onlooker are, in my opinion, rather weak. In order to support the claim that the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν is marked by being attractive to the onlooker, Irwin appeals to four passages, as follows:

- In *On marvellous things heard 830b14-19*, it is described that cuckoos lay their eggs in the nests of doves or pigeons. Then, the young cuckoo grows so big and καλός, that it quickly overpowers the other birds in the nest. And it is said that the pigeons take pleasure in this, so that they help the young cuckoo to expel their own young birds.
- In *On Generation of Animals 769b18-20*, a person who is not καλόν is compared to a fire-breathing goat.
- In *History of Animals 630a55*, Aristotle says that the blackness of the black horn of a bison is shiny and καλόν.
- In *History of Animals 616b16-18*, the colour of a bird is described as καλόν.

It is clear that the four passages refer to physical aspects of animals or people. However, nothing in the last three passages indicates that the animals are perceived as being attractive as a result of their καλόν feature.

It is only in regards to the first passage that Irwin explicitly suggests that the reason why the pigeons take pleasure in the young cuckoo might be because it is καλός. If this is so, then "τὸ καλόν" here could refer to physical beauty (Irwin, 2010, p. 385).

However, this argument has two weaknesses. The first issue with Irwin's argument is that it is based on a passage from a work whose authorship is doubtful. But even if we assume that *On marvellous things heard* truly reflects Aristotle's thoughts on the matter, the second issue with Irwin's argument is that the fragment in question is not clear regarding the grounds for the pigeons' pleasure. Let us see the passage in more detail:

It becomes apparently a καλός strong bird, so it can easily dominate the other birds. It is said that the pigeons delight in this. (*Mir. Aus. 830b16-18*)

Γίνετα δ᾽, ὡς ἔοικε, μέγας καὶ καλός, ὥστε ῥᾳδίως κατακρατεῖν τῶν λοιπῶν. τούτῳ δὲ χαίρειν φασὶ καὶ τὰς φάττας.

What exactly the "this" (τούτῳ) in which the pigeons take pleasure refers to, is not obvious. It could be, as Irwin suggests, to the fact that the young cuckoo is καλός and this is attractive to the pigeons. Or it could be that the young cuckoo is a bigger bird than the young pigeons, and the parents find preferable (and delightful) to have a big and strong young chick, and so they help the cuckoo to expel the weaker birds out of the nest.

The passage is not clear enough regarding what exactly in the young cuckoo is καλόν, nor on how the young cuckoo's being καλός affects the perception of the pigeons. Therefore, this passage does not offer enough support for Irwin's claim that the aesthetic usage of "τὸ καλόν" refers to physical attractiveness.

Likewise, Irwin recalls one passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics* in support of his claim that the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν is marked by a disinterested pleasure experienced by the onlooker. Let us see the passage in question once again:

> For dogs do not delight in the scent of hares, but in the eating of them, but the scent told them the hares   were there; nor does the lion delight in the lowing of the ox, but in eating it; but he perceived by the lowing that it was near, and therefore appears to delight in the lowing; and similarly he does not delight because he sees a stag or a wild goat, but because he is going to make a meal of it. (*Eth. Nic. 1118a18-23*)

As I have said in the previous section, Irwin takes this passage as a counter-example of what he means by "purely aesthetic and disinterested pleasure", that is to say, if the lion "simply enjoyed the sight of the ox, it would keep looking at it, rather than eating it." (Irwin, 2010, p. 385).

In my opinion, however, this passage is not meant to illustrate disinterested pleasure. In *Eth. Nic. III.10*, Aristotle is discussing the nature of temperance, which is defined roughly as "the mean with regard to bodily pleasures related to touch and taste" (*1117b25, 1118a2, 1118a26*), that is to say, related to food, drink, and sexual intercourse (*1118b32*).

A self-indulgent person is he who takes pleasure not in any food, but in dainty dishes. Taking pleasure in odours is not related to temperance either, except incidentally, insofar as a certain odour is a reminder of a dainty dish or a special unguent (*1118a5*).

Aristotle explains that temperance is concerned with the enjoyment of food, drink, and sexual intercourse because self-indulgence in these pleasures makes us brutish and slavish insofar as these pleasures are animal-like (*1118a25, 1118b4*).

It is at this point that Aristotle says that the lion does not delight in hearing the lowing of the ox, but only insofar as the lowing lets the lion know that the ox is nearby, for the lion seeks to eating it (*1118a19-21*).

Aristotle uses that example to illustrate that taking pleasure in an odour is not related to temperance (or lack of temperance), except incidentally, insofar as it is related to the sense of taste.

But Aristotle is not saying, as Irwin contends, that humans can take a disinterested pleasure in odours. Aristotle's examples of odours that might result pleasant, without being a reminder of dainty dishes, include odours of simple food, *e.g.*, the scent of an apple (*1118a10-11*), alongside scents of roses or incense.

Perhaps the appealing to the scent of roses and incense allows for Irwin's interpretation, namely, that a person can take a disinterested pleasure in smelling a rose. But the scent of an apple might be a reminder of an actual apple and thus stimulate the appetite. The point of contrast in Aristotle's example is between the odour of an apple –a simple food– and the odour of a dainty dish, because only the latter might give rise to the vice of self-indulgence. For taking pleasure in the odour of an apple, even if it reminds us of an actual apple and stimulates our appetite, seems to be simply natural, and is neither a vice nor a virtue.

Likewise, Aristotle indicates that temperance is not concerned with pleasures of sight or hearing. Aristotle's argument implies that these kinds of pleasures are not available to animals others than human beings. But this does not imply, as Irwin contends, that human beings take disinterested pleasure in objects of sight and hearing.

Surely we can assume that Aristotle knew that sometimes, we take pleasure in a scent or in a colour without further thought. But the fact that Aristotle sets aside these kinds of pleasure as exclusive to human beings might as well be related to the fact that, for some people, the pleasure that comes from the sight of a colour is related to an intellectual grasping –which is not available to animals others than human being. Hence, Aristotle mentions, among pleasures of sight, not only colours but also shapes and even paintings (*1118a4*).

Therefore, the passage above is not meant to illustrate the difference between interested and disinterested pleasures, as Irwin's argument requires.

To sum up, Irwin distinguishes four usages of "τὸ καλόν": the aesthetic, the natural, the abstract, and the ethical. He acknowledges that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν –which correspond to the abstract context in his analysis– might be present not only in mathematical objects, but also in animals, people, and other sorts of objects.

Irwin contends emphatically that the four usages of "τὸ καλόν" are clearly different and that none of them takes priority over the others. In particular, he claims that there is no reason to interpret that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν stated in *Met. XIII 1078a36-b2* –which correspond to what Irwin calls the abstract context– are meant to be a general criteria for beauty (*i.e.*, the aesthetic type of καλόν) despite the fact that, as Irwin acknowledges, their presence might influence the aesthetic judgment of the onlooker.

In my opinion, however, Irwin's description of the aesthetic context and type of τὸ καλόν does not reflect Aristotle's usage of "τὸ καλόν" as said of physical attributes or objects of perception.[126]

I have argued that Irwin's arguments regarding the distinctiveness of what he calls the aesthetic usage of "τὸ καλόν" (to be attractive and to elicit disinterested pleasure in the onlooker) are rather weak. I am not dismissing a possible link between the appreciation of τὸ καλόν –be it perceptual or intellectual– and the experience of pleasure. But Aristotle's usage of "τὸ καλόν" as said of objects of perception is not clearly linked to eliciting disinterested pleasure on the onlooker, as Irwin contends.

If the distinctiveness of the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν is what prevents the abstract type –and the corresponding three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν– from offering a general account of "τὸ καλόν", but the arguments in support of the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν are not

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[126] In his response to Irwin's article, Anton Ford focuses on Irwin's distinction between the aesthetic and the ethical usages of "τὸ καλόν". According to Ford, the appreciation of beauty (in an aesthetic sense) is essential to Aristotle's ethics. Τὸ καλόν in ethics is not only praiseworthy, but also such as to elicit pleasure –both in the agent and in the onlooker. And the appreciation of the ethical καλόν requires an intellectual grasping, in order to see why a certain action is the right action. (Ford, 2010)

Ford's argument implies that Irwin's understanding of Aristotle's ethics and beauty is partial. Regardless of whether one agrees with Ford's argument about Aristotelian ethics, I think he is right in that the appreciation of τὸ καλόν in the context of ethics elicits pleasure both in the agent and the onlooker, and that it requires an intellectual grasping.

strong enough, then we should consider more carefully the possibility of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν as a general criteria for the presence of τὸ καλόν in all sorts of objects.

7.3 The greatest forms of τὸ καλόν

In the previous section, we learned that in *Met. XIII 1078a36-b2*, Aristotle introduces what he calls "the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν": order (τάξις), due measure (symmetry or due proportion, συμμετρία), and definiteness (ὡρισμένον).

Irwin has advanced that these forms are not only present in mathematical objects but, nonetheless, he contends that there are no reasons to assume that Aristotle introduces them as criteria for aesthetic beauty or any other type of τὸ καλόν, aside from the abstract one.

In this section, I shall suggest that these forms of τὸ καλόν might be not only general criteria for physical beauty, but actually for any manifestation of τὸ καλόν.

I shall discuss this matter under the assumption that τὸ καλόν can be said in many ways.[127] My working hypothesis is that the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν correspond to the three primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said.

In the context of my interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy (Chapters 2, 3, and 5 above), my hypothesis implies that the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" within Aristotle's philosophy is given by the cluster of the three primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said, together with some condition that all things that merit the name "καλόν" and cognates, must fulfil.

If my hypothesis proved to be correct, then we should be able to identify how other ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said are related to the primary meaning.

I shall start by justifying my hypothesis, that is to say, by explaining why, in my opinion, *Met. XIII 1078a31-b5* can be read as Aristotle's general account of τὸ καλόν –and hence as providing the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν". Let us recall the relevant passage:

> Now since the good and the **fine** are different (for the former always implies action as its subject, while the **fine** is found also in motionless things), those who assert that the mathematical sciences say nothing of the **fine** or the good are in error. For these sciences say and prove a very great deal about them; for if they do not expressly mention them, but prove their results and their principles, it is not true to say that they tell us nothing about them. The main forms of **fineness** are order, due measure, and definiteness, which the mathematical sciences demonstrate in a special degree. And since these (*e.g.*, order and

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definiteness) are obviously causes of many things, evidently these sciences must treat this sort of cause also (*i.e.,* **the fine**) as in some sense a cause. (*Met. XIII 1078a31-b5*)

Ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἕτερον (τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀεὶ ἐν πράξει, τὸ δὲ καλὸν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀκινήτοις), οἱ φάσκοντες οὐδὲν λέγειν τὰς μαθηματικὰς ἐπιστήμας περὶ καλοῦ ἢ ἀγαθοῦ ψεύδονται. Λέγουσι γὰρ καὶ δεικνύουσι μάλιστα. Οὐ γὰρ εἰ μὴ ὀνομάζουσι τὰ δ' ἔργα καὶ τοὺς λόγους δεικνύουσιν, οὐ λέγουσι περὶ αὐτῶν. τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἴδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὡρισμένον, ἃ μάλιστα δεικνύουσιν αἱ μαθηματικαὶ ἐπιστῆμαι. Καὶ ἐπεί γε πολλῶν αἴτια φαίνεται ταῦτα (λέγω δ' οἷον ἡ τάξις καὶ τὸ ὡρισμένον), δῆλον ὅτι λέγοιεν ἂν καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην αἰτίαν τὴν ὡς τὸ καλὸν αἴτιον τρόπον τινά.

I would like to note that the passage above states that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν are best shown by the mathematical type of knowledge –not by mathematical objects, as Irwin reads.

Irwin's interpretation of the passage implies that order, due measure (or symmetry, as he says), and definiteness are properties that are present in mathematical objects in the highest degree, which entails that other kinds of objects might have those properties, but in a lesser degree.

In my view, the passage above states that order, due measure, and definiteness are best grasped through a mathematical type of expertise, regardless of the kind of objects those forms impinge on. This entails that there might be other ways to appreciate the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν, even if only in an imperfect way.

Aristotle does not elaborate on the different ways in which it might be possible to appreciate the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν. For instance, we know that Aristotle predicates "τὸ καλόν" of objects of perception, *e.g.,* the colour of birds and horns recalled by Irwin (*Hist. An. 616b16, 630a35*) (Irwin, 2010, p. 385). But it is unclear whether order, due measure, and definiteness can be perceived by the senses in a similar way as, say, number, figure, and magnitude, which Aristotle regards as objects of perception (common senses, *De An. II.6 418a18-19*). This question shall remain open for further research.

Why the mathematical kind of knowledge is the one that best reveals the forms of τὸ καλόν, is not clear either. Julia Annas contrasts the passage from *Met. XIII* above, with *Posterior Analytics 75b17*, where Aristotle states that it is not the job of a geometer to decide whether the straight line is the "καλλίστη" of lines.[128] But Annas observation assumes a somewhat aesthetic view of mathematics, for she renders "τὸ καλόν" as "beauty". Hence,

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[128] Annas also refers to *Met. III.2 996a26ff,* where Aristotle states that mathematical proofs do not take into account the final cause (Annas, 1976, p. 151)*.* However, the passage she refers to discusses the good as a final cause, not final causes in general.

Annas notes that mathematicians prefer one proof over another on the grounds of simplicity and elegance. And she observes that "Aristotle is not expansive enough here for us to be sure whether he is merely acknowledging the fact that mathematicians do recognize elegance as a desirable factor in proofs, or whether he thinks that elegance is a legitimate mathematical virtue."[129] (Annas, 1976, p. 151) This question shall also remain open for further research.

For the time being, we must come back to the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν". Gabriel Richardson Lear suggests that *Met. XIII 1078a31-b5* has the outlook of a general account of τὸ καλόν (Richardson Lear, 2006, p. 118). Lear suggests that order, due measure, and definiteness are properties that determine the presence of τὸ καλόν in any kind of object – *e.g.*, natural as well as objects of art. Her account, however, is mainly concerned with the way in which moral virtues are said to aim at beauty, for she regards order, due measure, and definiteness as the formal properties of beauty (Richardson Lear, 2006, p. 120).[130]

In order to support the claim that *Met. XIII 1078a31-b5* has the outlook of a general account of τὸ καλόν, I would like to point at the similarity between line *1078b1*:

> The greatest forms of fineness are order, due measure, and definiteness.

> Τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἴδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ ὡρισμένον.

and Aristotle's statement regarding the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said:[131]

> These, then [the material, the form, that from which the change of freedom of change first begins, and the end] are the causes, and this is the number of their kinds... *Met. V.2 1013b28-29*

> Τὰ μὲν οὖν αἴτια ταῦτα καὶ τοσαῦτά ἐστι τῷ εἴδει...

Note how, in both passages, Aristotle talks not only in terms of τρόποι (*Met. V 1013b17*), but actually in terms of εἴδη. In chapter 5, I have argued that the primary causes give rise to the primary ways in "cause" is said. The remarkable similarity between the passages above suggests, in my opinion, that what Aristotle calls "the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν" might as well give rise to the three primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said. That is to say, a thing might merit the predicate "τὸ καλόν" on account of exhibiting order, whereas another thing

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[129] Compare to the opening lines of *De An.* (402a1-5), where Aristotle states that the more precise a type of knowledge is, the more καλόν it is.
[130] Even though Lear advances an interpretation of *Met. XIII 1078a31*-b5 as stating general criteria of beauty, her proposal is not essentially different from Cooper, who addresses the passage in question only from the ethical point of view, and assumes an aesthetic interpretation (Cooper, 1999, pp. 273-275).
[131] For a discussion of the homonymy of "cause", see chapter 6.

might merit the same predicate on account of exhibiting due measure, and yet another thing, on account of exhibiting definiteness.

In chapter 5, we discussed that the primary meaning of the homonymous "N" in cases of connected homonymy exhibit different patterns. I have argued that there are cases in which there is one primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.*, the substance is the primary being in relation to which other things merit the name "being"). In this case, the primary meaning of "N" is given by the primary N.

But there are other cases in which there is a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N". I have argued that, in this latter case, we should be able to observe some common condition or constraint that all the things that merit the name "N" must fulfil. Accordingly, I have also suggested that, in these cases, the primary meaning of "N" is given by the cluster of primary N's together with the common condition.

In chapter 6, I have argued that the homonymy of "cause" belongs to the second case. That is to say, the primary meaning of "cause" is given by the cluster that comprehends the four causes –which give rise to the four primary ways in which "cause" is said– together with the common condition of being an answer to the question, "Why does this happen?".

To say that the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said are equally primary entails that none of the four causes has priority over the others in the bearing of the name "cause", and that there is no common property upon which the four causes merit the name "cause". We observed that it is possible to explain some cause in terms of another, in a symmetrical way, *e.g.*, a form merits the name "cause" insofar as it can affect a material; likewise, a material merits the name "cause" insofar as it can receive a form.

In the context of the three-steps method for analysing problems involving homonymy, identifying the primary meaning of "cause" corresponds to the third step.

If we apply the same rationale to the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν", together with my suggestion that the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν give rise to the three primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said, then we obtain:

a) That the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" will be given by the cluster that comprehends the three primary ways in which "τὸ καλόν" is said, together with a common condition that all things that merit the name "τὸ καλόν" must fulfil. We are yet to identify the common condition. And

b) That a whole array of different objects x, y, and z, will merit the name "τὸ καλόν" and cognates, in ways that are somehow related to one of the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν. For instance, an object might merit the name "τὸ καλόν" by promoting order, or by restoring due proportion.

Regarding the common condition that all things that merit the name "τὸ καλόν" must fulfil, in *Met. XIII 1078a31-b5*, Aristotle states that τὸ καλόν must be regarded as a cause of both actions and motionless objects.

Elsewhere in the *Metaphysics*, we read the suggestion that τὸ καλόν is a final cause and, hence, it is among the things for the sake of which other things are or are done (*Met.XII 1072a29-b4*). Insofar as τὸ καλόν is a final cause, it is an object of desire (*Met. XII 1072a24-28*).

These remarks are consistent with the suggestion that τὸ καλόν is choice worthy (*Top. 105a27-28*) (Irwin, 2010, p. 384), and with the claim that the virtuous moral agent acts with a view to τὸ καλόν (*Eth. Nic. III 1115b1-22, IV 1120a24-28*).

Likewise, the condition of being a final cause could give rise to the general sense of commendation that is attached to the name "τὸ καλόν" and cognates, as we learned in chapter 1. For it makes sense to say that a thing is praiseworthy insofar as it must be chosen for its own sake.

I must insist that the common condition that all N's must fulfil in order to merit the name "N" is not a property –for if it were a property, then the primary meaning of "N" would be the definition of the property. Likewise, establishing the common condition that justifies the bearing of the name "N" is not the same as establishing the definition of "N". The common condition needs to be specified in order for it to have full meaning.[132]

In the present case, establishing that things that merit the name "τὸ καλόν" must fulfil the condition of being a final cause is not the same as establishing that the definition of "τὸ καλόν" is "to be a final cause", for τὸ καλόν is not the only thing or kind of things that Aristotle regards as a final cause. For instance, the good (*Met. 1078a31-b5*), and the soul (*De An. II 415b15*) are also regarded as final causes.

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[132] In chapters 5 and 6, I have suggested that the common condition qualifies a property or relation of the things that merit the name "N".

My suggestion is that the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" comprehends the common condition "to be a final cause", together with the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν. That is to say, the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" could be along the lines of "a final cause in the form of order, due measure, or definiteness".[133]

It might be noted that my proposal, in principle, does not include a reference to pleasure. I am not assuming that being pleasant is not related to τὸ καλόν. But if my hypothesis proves to be correct, and the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" includes the cluster of greatest forms of τὸ καλόν –order, due measure, and definiteness– together with the condition of being a final cause, then a reference to pleasure –or to any attitudinal behaviour– is not a necessary part of the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν". This should remain as a question for further study.[134]

Likewise, my proposal does not make reference to any type of object. The primary kinds of τὸ καλόν are order, due measure, and definiteness, and it is expected that each of them will have a different outlook in different types of objects. But the type of object does not seem to be relevant for a classification of the way in which "τὸ καλόν" is said.[135]

Let us consider this account of the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" as a hypothesis, and see what we can learn from each of the three steps of the method for analysing problems involving homonymy.

Insofar as it is the primary meaning of the homonymous name "τὸ καλόν", the account I am advancing would correspond to the third step of the method –*i.e.*, identifying the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

In *Top. 106a21-23*, Aristotle applies the first step of the method –establishing whether the problem to be analysed does involve homonymy– to the way in which "τὸ καλόν" is said:

> The contrary of "τὸ καλόν" in the case of an animal is ugly, whereas in the case of a house is mean, so that τὸ καλόν is homonymous. (*Top. 106a21-23*)

> Τῷ καλῷ [τὸ ἐναντίον] τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ ζῴου τὸ αἰσχρόν, τῷ δ' ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας τὸ μοχθηρόν, ὥστε ὁμώνυμον τὸ καλόν.

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[133] Note that this is not a single account, for it comprises the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν.

[134] Lear assumes that, in addition to being a final cause, visibility and eliciting pleasure are also conditions of τὸ καλόν. This suggests that she interprets τὸ καλόν in Aristotle's philosophy as being response dependent. (Richardson Lear, 2006, pp. 120-127)
It is not clear, however, that all three conditions are met in all cases. It is especially intriguing to reflect on whether the divine intellect experiences pleasure as it thinks of καλά things (See *Met. XII.9 1074b15-26; and Eth. Nic. X 1154b26 ff*).

[135] Irwin's classification, on the contrary, is based on the type of objects that merit the predicate "τὸ καλόν", *i.e.*, natural organisms, actions, and so on.

The first step is achieved by assessing whether the accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different. However, as I have explained in chapter 2, it is not necessary to give the accounts of "N" as said of x and y to know that they are different. In *Topics 1.15*, Aristotle explains and illustrates fourteen different tests to decide whether x and y bear the same name "N" homonymously, none of which requires to give the accounts of "N" as said of x and y.

The example above illustrates the first test, which calls for a comparison of the contrary of "N" as said of x and the contrary of "N" as said of y. If the corresponding contraries are different, then we can assume that "N" as said of x is different from "N" as said of y, without necessarily giving the corresponding accounts of "N".

The second step of the method –establishing the nature of the homonymy by explaining why both x and y bear the same name "N"– corresponds to the second implication I stated above (letter b), namely that my hypothesis concerning the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" entails that a whole array of different objects will merit the name "τὸ καλόν" by being somehow related to at least one of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν

The optimal course of action in order for me to fully test my hypothesis would be to analyse, in each passage where Aristotle predicates "τὸ καλόν" of any object, whether he does so in relation to order, due measure, or definiteness. [136]

However, the use of the expression "τὸ καλόν" is so common, and the amount of passages in Aristotle's extant works where it is used is so large (well over one thousand passages), that an exhaustive revision of them is not possible, at least within the scope of this research.

I shall, however, illustrate the viability of my hypothesis by analysing a passage where Aristotle explicitly predicates "τὸ καλόν" of different objects on account of their having order, due measure, and definiteness:

> At all events, we see that none of the states reputed to be well governed (πολιτεύεσθαι καλῶς) is without some restriction in regard to numbers. The evidence of theory proves the same point. Law is a form of order (τάξις), and good law must necessarily mean good order (εὐταξία); but an excessively large number cannot participate in order: to give it order would surely be a task for divine power, which holds even this universe together. Hence that city-state also must necessarily be the finest (καλλίστη) with whose magnitude (μέγεθος) is combined the above mentioned limiting principle (ὅρος); for certainly τὸ καλόν is usually found in number (πλῆθος) and magnitude (μέγεθος), but there is a measure (μέτρον) of magnitude for a city-state as there also is for all other things –animals, plants,

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[136] We must not forget that it is possible to find cases of things that merit the name "τὸ καλόν" in a way that is not related to any of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν.

> tools; each of these if too small or excessively large will not possess its own power, but in some cases will have entirely lost its true nature and in others will be in a defective condition: for instance, a ship a span long will not be a ship at all, nor will a ship a quarter of a mile long, and even when it reaches a certain size (μέγεθος) in some cases smallness and in other excessive largeness will make it sail badly. (*Pol. VII 1326a27-b1*)

As we see, Aristotle claims that cities, as well as animals, plants and tools, ought to have a magnitude according to their function.

Irwin points out that Aristotle predicates "τὸ καλόν" of cities and bodies, but that he does so on account of their greatness (μέγεθος), which is not included as one of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν in *Met. 1078b1* (Irwin, 2010, p. 389).

In my opinion, however, μέγεθος here refers to magnitude –not necessarily greatness. The magnitude in question has a specific measure (μέτρον), and due measure (συμμετρία) is, indeed, one of the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν. We read the same remarks, in *Politics III 1284b4-15*, where Aristotle explains that the legislator enforces some actions in order to maintain the due measure (or due proportion, συμμετρία) of the city as a whole and of each part in relation to the other parts and the whole, in the same way that an artist would not paint a foot that, on its own is beautiful (κάλλος, *1248b10*) but is not in proportion (συμμετρία) with the animal as a whole. It is safe to conclude, in my opinion, that a city-state merits the predicate "τὸ καλόν" on account of its exhibiting due measure (συμμετρία).

Furthermore, in the passage quoted above, we also read that the due measure (μέτρον) is achieved when the city-state's growth abides by a given limit (ὅρος). Participating in a limit (ὡρισμένον) is also among the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν.

Finally, Aristotle explains that the limiting principle, and consequently the due measure, are present in a city as a result of its having good laws (*see also 1284b4-15*). Law, says Aristotle, is a kind of order (τάξις) and thus good laws are good order (εὐταξία).

All in all, we can conclude that city-states, as well as animals, plants and tools, merit the name "τὸ καλόν" on account of having at least one of the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν, namely, due measure (συμμετρία).

At least in the case of cities, we have seen that due measure comes together with having a limit (ὡρισμένον) to the magnitude (μέγεθος) of the city, which is a result of order (τάξις).

Having laws and therefore order (τάξις) makes for a fine city. But it seems as though having order, due measure, and definiteness makes for the finest (καλλίστη) of cities.

It is a sound hypothesis to say that *Metaphysics XIII 1078a31-b6* gives a general account of the nature of τὸ καλόν, according to which the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" is along the lines of "a final cause in the form of order, due measure, or definiteness".

7.4 Final Remarks

In this chapter, I suggested that *Metaphysics XIII 1078a31-b6* can be read as a general account on the nature of τὸ καλόν, upon which we can base our understanding of the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν", along the lines of "a final cause in the form of order, due measure, or definiteness".

Previously, I have suggested that, for some cases of connected homonymy, there is a primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N" (*e.g.*, substance is the primary being in relation to which other things merit the name "being"). In some other cases, instead of a single N, there is a cluster of N's, all of which are primary, in relation to which other things merit the name "N".

I contend that the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν" belongs to the latter case, which entails that the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν are equally primary in their bearing of the name "τὸ καλόν", and that they are ultimately connected by fulfilling the common condition of being a final cause. That is to say, my proposal for a primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" comprises the cluster formed by the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν together with the common condition.

In order to support the viability of my proposal, I have commented on *Politics VII 1326a27-b1.* In this passage, we read that a city-state merits the predicate "καλά" on account of its laws (order) that establish a limit (definiteness) to the growth of the city as a whole and of each of its parts, all of which results in a specific magnitude (due measure) that promotes the proper function of the city.

That is to say, there is evidence that Aristotle predicates "καλόν" of different sorts of objects on account of their having the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν that he mentions in *Met. XIII 1078a31-b6.*

The hypothesis I am advancing requires to be further tested and retains, therefore, the status of a hypothesis. Some related questions need to be addressed in a further research, for instance:

- Further tests are required to decide whether things ought to exhibit all three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν in order to merit the name "καλόν"; or whether the presence of one of the three forms suffices for a thing to correctly merit the predicate.

- Further tests are also required to identify passages where Aristotle predicates "καλόν" in ways that derive from the primary ones.

- More discussion is needed regarding the extent to which the general sense of commendation that is attached to the use of "τὸ καλόν" –as we learned in chapter 1– derives from or is related to Aristotle's claim that τὸ καλόν is a final cause.

- It is still to be discussed whether being a final cause is the only common condition that the greatest forms of τὸ καλόν –and all things that merit the name "τὸ καλόν" in relation to them– are subject to. For on the one hand, as I have said, the good (*Met. 1078a31-b5*), and the soul (*De An. II 415b15*) are also regarded as final causes.

  On the other hand, it seems that a response in the onlooker –*e.g.*, pleasure– is also closely related to the appreciation of τὸ καλόν. It is necessary to discuss whether this relation is equally relevant for objects of perception and objects of the intellect. And more importantly, it is necessary to discuss whether a response in the onlooker is part of the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" (*e.g.*, as part of the constraints of what can be a correct account of "τὸ καλόν"). Thus far, nothing indicates that this be the case in the context of Aristotle's philosophy.

In all events, we must bear in mind that some of the above questions might have no answers within Aristotle's extant works. The questions are, nonetheless, valuable on themselves.

General Conclusions

The ultimate goal of this research has been to gain an insight into the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy.

In the first chapter, we have surveyed a few texts from different Ancient Greek literary genera, so that we could get a sense of the usages of the expression "τὸ καλόν" and cognates that were most likely known to Aristotle. We learned that "τὸ καλόν" seems to be used as a general term of commendation, to praise natural landscapes and animals, as well as all sorts of craftsmanship; to praise both the physical appearance of people as well as their behaviour; to praise people of royal lineage, as well as deities. Likewise, we learned some of the problems discussed in intellectual circles of the time, *e.g.*, whether "τὸ καλόν" was related to physical or moral attributes, and whether it expressed objective features of things or the attitude of the onlooker. We did not engage with any of these questions any further, but it is worth bearing them in mind for future research.

Regarding the question about the meaning of "τὸ καλόν", two facts prevent this from being a straightforward question. On the one hand, none of Aristotle's extant works include a discussion of this specific topic. On the other hand, the various contexts in which Aristotle appeals to τὸ καλόν as part of the account of things of different sort (*e.g.*, cities, animals, pieces of poetry) suggest that "τὸ καλόν" does not necessarily refer to the same property or set of properties.

What is more, among the examples used to illustrate different tests to identify the presence of homonymy, Aristotle includes "τὸ καλόν" as meaning the opposite of "αἰσχρόν" and the opposite of "μοχθηρόν" (*Top. 1.15 106a21-23*). To say that "τὸ καλόν" can be said homonymously entails that it has different meanings. Therefore, the question for the meaning of "τὸ καλόν" turns into the question for the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν".

In order to address this new question, we need some understanding of Aristotle's concept and use of homonymy. Thus, in this research I have engaged in the study of Aristotelian homonymy, defending the view that Aristotle analyses problems involving homonymy in a methodical way –as suggested in *Top. 106a2-8* and *Met. 1004a28-30*.

The first step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy consists in establishing that the problem in question does, indeed, involve homonymy. In chapter 2, we learned that when the account of "N" as said of x is different from the account

of "N" as said of y, then x and y merit the name "N" homonymously. But we also learned that it is possible to show that the corresponding accounts of "N" as said of x and y are different without giving the actual accounts of "N"; *e.g.*, by showing that the contrary of "N" as said of x is different from the contrary of "N" as said of y, we show that "N" is said in different ways and is, therefore, homonymous.

Once we have established the presence of homonymy, the next step is to assess the grounds for the homonymy, by explaining why objects x and y, despite being different, bear the same name "N". I have addressed this question in chapters 3 and 4. In chapter 3, I have argued that the different types of homonymy highlighted by Aristotle in several passages answer the question, Why do objects x and y bear the same name "N"? Accordingly, I have identified that Aristotelian homonymy can be either unconnected (if the homonymy is by chance, a mere linguistic coincidence) or connected (if x and y bear the same name "N" in different but somehow related ways). If the latter, then several objects can be homonymous in virtue of a relation by their genus; by transference of name; by contributing towards a primary N in relation to which the other objects merit the name "N"; or by deriving from a primary N.

This classification is not meant to be exhaustive; more types of homonymy –or subtypes of the current types– might be found as we expand our knowledge in this area. Moreover, the labels we assign to each of the types of homonymy are not relevant, so long as we follow the method and explain why the homonymous objects x and y bear the same name "N".

In chapter 4, I have contrasted my findings with Irwin's. I have argued that Irwin's interpretation of Aristotelian homonymy does not take into account what I regard as the second step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy. Consequently, some of the types of homonymy he proposes do not explain the grounds for the homonymy; for he reiterates in which respects x and y are different –and therefore merit the same name "N" in different ways– but does not answer why x and y, despite being different, merit the same name "N".

The third step of Aristotle's method for analysing problems involving homonymy consists in identifying, in cases of connected homonymy, the primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". For this purpose, I have discussed Owen's concept of focal meaning, as well as Irwin's proposal of a unified sense of "N" that is equally applicable to all

N's. I have suggested that, with some adjustments, both proposals manage to explain certain cases of connected homonymy, but none of them can explain all cases of connected homonymy.

I have suggested that, for cases of connected homonymy, there are two schemas to describe the structure of the primary meaning of "N". In some cases of connected homonymy, there is a single primary N in relation to which other things merit the name "N". For instance, the substance is the primary thing in relation to which other things merit the name "being".

In some other cases, there is not a single primary N, but a cluster of primary N's in relation to which other things merit the name "N". For instance, according to Aristotle, there are four primary ways in which "cause" is said: formal, material, efficient, and final. The four of them are equally primary, for none of them is referred to in the accounts of the others. And even though the four accounts are different –without any overlap– they are ultimately connected by a common constraint, namely, the four of them answer the question, "Why does this happen?"

I have discussed the homonymy of "cause" in chapter 6, where I also recalled the twenty-four different derivative ways in which "cause" can be said. That is to say, given that the four causes give rise to the four primary ways in which "cause" can be said, the twenty-four derivative ways can be said in relation to each of the four primary ways.

Finally, in chapter 7, I have discussed the homonymy of "τὸ καλόν" in Aristotle's philosophy. The hypothesis I have advanced is that Aristotle offers a general account of τὸ καλόν in *Met. XIII 1078a31-b6*, where he says that τὸ καλόν is a final cause and that its three greatest forms are order, due measure, and definiteness. Accordingly, the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" can be along the lines of "a final cause in the form of order, due measure, or definiteness". That is to say, the primary meaning comprises the cluster of primary καλά things –order, due measure, and definiteness– together with the common condition of being a final cause.

There is plenty of work to do in order to fully test my hypothesis. For instance, we could survey the approximately one thousand passages where Aristotle predicates "καλόν" and cognates of different objects, so that we identify derivative ways in which "τὸ καλόν" can be said. If my hypothesis were correct, then we should be able to find several passages where things merit the name "καλόν" in virtue of some sort of relation with at least one of the three greatest forms of τὸ καλόν.

I have noted that, thus far, my research does not indicate that the primary meaning of "τὸ καλόν" must include a reference to pleasure –or to any attitudinal behaviour. It is possible that, when τὸ καλόν impinges in certain type of objects, then it elicits pleasure in the onlooker, but this does not entail that experiencing pleasure is an indication of the presence of τὸ καλόν –as suggested by Irwin in his description of the aesthetic type of τὸ καλόν. At any rate, further discussion is necessary in this regard.

Likewise, it is worth discussing in more detail whether the constraint that all things that merit the name "καλόν" and cognates are subject to –*i.e.*, being a final cause– can be interpreted as, or give rise to, the sense of commendation that is generally attached to the expression "τὸ καλόν", as we learned in chapter 1. For it makes sense to say that a thing is praiseworthy insofar as it is a final cause.

In order to address these remaining questions in a future research, the same method for analysing problems involving homonymy shall assist us.

Appendix A. Catalogue of the use and explanation of homonymy in Aristotle's works

I)   Passages where "homonymy" is explicitly mentioned, classified according to the purpose of the passage

Passages were "homonymy" is merely mentioned	
An. Prior	32a20
De Caelo	276b3
Gen. Corrup.	328b21
Met.	1006b19, 1046a6, 1059a14, 1086b27
Part. An.	643b7
Phys.	245b16, 249a4
Soph. El.	168a25, 169a22, 170a14
Top.	110b16, 123a27

Passages were "homonymy" is defined	
Cat.	1a
Top.	148a23

Passages were homonymy is contrasted with other forms of multivocity	
Gen. Corrup.	322b31
Soph. El.	166a15
Top.	140a6

Passages were different types of homonymy are distinguished	
Eth. Eud.	1236b25
Eth. Nic.	1096b27, 1129a30
Phys.	249a25

Passage where Aristotle explains how to use homonymy within an argument	
An. Post.	77a9, 85b11, 85b16, 97b30, 97b36, 99a7
De Int.	17a35
Phys.	202a28
Rhet.	1401a13, 1404b38, 1412b12
Soph. El.	165b26, 166a22, 175a37,175b1, 175b5, 175b7, 175b15, 176a5, 176a15, 177a9, 178a26, 178a28, 179a16, 181b1, 182b13
Top.	107a5, 107b7, 139b28, 148a34, 148a37, 148b5, 148b11, 148b18, 157b7,157b8

Passage were Aristotle offers an example of homonymy	
Gen. An	726b24, 734b26, 735a8
Hist. An.	487a8
De Int.	23a7
Magna Mo.	1194b7
Met.	987b10, 990b6, 1019b9, 1035b1, 1035b25, 1059a14, 1060b33, 1079a2
Meteor.	389b31, 389b32
Phys.	248b9
Rhet.	1412b13
Top.	139b21

Passage were Aristotle offers an explanation of an example of homonymy	
An. Post.	99a12
De An.	412b15, 412b21
Eth. Eud.	1236a17
Magna Mo.	1209a30
Met.	991a6, 1003a34, 1030a32, 1034a22, 1034b1, 1079b1
Meteor.	390a12
Part. An.	641a1, 647b18
Phys.	228a25, 248b13, 248b17
Pol.	1253a25
Soph. El.	165b33
Top.	106a22, 106b4, 106b8, 107a5, 107a12, 107a39, 107b16, 107b25, 107b31, 148a34

II)   Passages where Aristotle gives examples of homonymy

Examples of homonymy		
Sculptures, paintings; dead organs/organisms	De An.	412b15, 412b21,
	Gen. An.	726b24, 734b26, 735a8,
	Met.	1035b25
	Meteor.	389b31, 389b32, 390a12
	Part. An.	641a1
	Pol.	1253a25
Parts and wholes	Hist. An.	487a8
	Part. An.	647b18
Possible	De Int.	23a7
Justice	Magna Mor.	1194b7
	Eth. Nic.	1129a30
(Platonic) Forms	Met.	987b10, 990b6, 991a6, 1034a22, 1034b1, 1079a2, 1079b1
Being capable	Met.	1019b9
Universals and particulars	Met.	1035b1
Being	Met.	1060b33
Sharp	Phys.	248b9
	Top.	107b16, 107b25
Anaschetos (proper name, which means "intolerable")	Rhet.	1412b13
Channel	Top.	139b21
Symmetry	Top.	139b21
Colour	An. Post.	99a12
	Top.	107b31
Friendship	Eth. Eud.	1236a17, 1236b25
	Magna Mor.	1209a30
Health/Medical	Met.	1003a34, 1030a32
Plenty	Phys.	248b13, 248b17
One	Phys.	248b13, 248b17
End	Phys.	228a25
To grasp	Soph. El.	165b33
Clear/dim	Top.	106b8, 107a39
Fineness	Top.	106a22
Loving	Top.	106b4
Good	Eth. Nic.	1096b27
	Top.	107a12
Contact	Gen. Corrup.	322b31
Change/Motion	Phys.	249a25
Animal	Cat.	1a

Appendix B. Metaphysics V (Δ). Things said in many ways

a. The forty things said in many ways, discussed in the thirty chapters of Met. V

Chapter	Main term analysed	Derivative term analysed	Cumulative
1	Beginning (6)*		1
2	Cause (4)		2
3	Element (2)		3
4	Nature (5)		4
5	Necessary (4)		5
6	One (6)		6
7	Being (14)		7
8	Substance (3)		8
9	The same (2)		9
	Other (3)		10
	Different (2)		11
	Like (4)		12
	Being Unlike (4)		13
10	Opposites (6)		14
		Contraries (5)	15
11	Prior (4)		16
12	Capacity (3)		17
	Incapacity (2)		18
	Impossible (1)		19
	Possible (3)		20
13	Quantity (1)		21
14	Quality (2)		22
15	Relative (3)		23
16	Complete (2)		24
17	Limit (3)		25
18	That in virtue of which (3)		26
	That in virtue of itself (5)		27
19	Disposition (1)		28
20	Having (3)		29
21	Affection as alteration (2)		30
		Affection as actualised alteration (3)	31
22	Privation (4)		32
23	To have (4)		33
24	To come from something (6)		34
25	Part (5)		35
26	Whole (2)		36
27	Mutilated (1)		37
28	Kind (3)		38
29	False (3)		39
30	Accident (2)		40

* Number in parenthesis indicates the number of ways in which the term in question is said, according to *Met. V*.

b. Classification of the forty things said in many ways

Four things said in one way			
Term	Greek	Chapter	Bekker number
Impossible (1) *	Ἀδύνατον	12	1019 b22
Quantity (1)	Ποσόν	13	1020 a6
Disposition (1)	Διάθεσις	19	1022 b2
Mutilated (1)	Κολοβόν	27	1024 a11

* Number in parenthesis indicates the number of ways in which the term in question is said, according to *Met. V*.

Twelve things said in several ways (with neither a primary way nor a common condition)			
Term	Greek	Chapter	Bekker number
Cause (4)	Αἴτιον	2	1013 b17
Opposite (6)	Ἀντικείμενον	10	1018 a20
Incapacity (2)	Ἀδυναμία	12	1019 b15
Possible (3)	Τὸ ἐναντίον	12	1019 b27
Relative (3)	Πρὸς τι	15	1020 b25
That in virtue of itself (5)	Τὸ καθ᾽ αὐτό	18	1022 a25
Affection (2)	Πάθος	21	1022 b15
Privation (4)	Στέρησις	22	1022 b21
To have (4)	Τὸ ἔχειν	23	1023 a7
To come from something (6)	Τὸ ἔκ τινος εἶναι	24	1023 a25
Part (5)	Μέρος	25	1023 b12
Kind (3)	Γένος	28	1024 a29

Nine things said in several ways with a primary one			
Term	Greek	Chapter	Bekker number
Nature (5)	Φύσις	4	1015 a14
Necessary (4)	Ἀναγκαῖον	5	1015 a34
One (6)	Ἕν	6	1016 b1
Substance (3)	Οὐσία	8	1017 b10
Prior (4)	Πρότερα	11	1019 a11
Capacity (3)	Δύναμις	12	1020 a4
Quality (2)	Τὸ ποιόν	14	1020 b13
That in virtue of which (3)	Τὸ καθ᾽ ὅ	18	1022 a18
Affection (as actualised alteration) (3)	Πάθος	21	1022 b18

Twelve things said in several ways with a common condition			
Term	Greek	Chapter	Bekker number
Beginning (6)	Ἀρχή	1	1012 b34
Element (2)	Στοιχεῖον	3	1014 a26
The same (2)	Ταὐτά	9	1017 b26
Other (3)	Ἕτερα	9	1018 a10
Different (2)	Διάφορα	9	1018 a12
Like (4)	Ὅμοια	9	1018 a15
Being unlike (4)	Ἀλλοιοῦσθαι ἐνδέχεται	9	1018 a17
Contraries (5)	Ἐναντία	10	1018 a25
Complete (2)	Τέλειον	16	1021 b12
Limit (3)	Πέρας	17	1022 a4
False (3)	Τὸ ψεῦδος	29	1024 b17
Accident (2)	Συμβεβηκός	30	1025 a4

Three things about which it is unclear in how many ways they are said			
Term	Greek	Chapter	Bekker number
Being (14)	Τὸ ὄν	7	1017 a7
Having (3)	Ἕξις	20	1022 b4
Whole (2)	Ὅλον	26	1023 b26

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