I turn now to definition in the \textit{Metaphysics}. With an understanding of Aristotle’s reasons for distinguishing different kinds of definition in \textit{Posterior Analytics} 2.10, we can see that the discussion of definition in the central books of the \textit{Metaphysics} concerns immediate definition. It is clear from what Aristotle himself says about his reasons for discussing definition in the context of an examination of substance that when he speaks of definition in the \textit{Metaphysics}, he is speaking of a causal definition. But I need to demonstrate that the causal definition in question is immediate definition and not syllogistic definition.\footnote{For another view of the relation between the discussion of definition in the \textit{Posterior Analytics} and in the \textit{Metaphysics}, see David Charles, \textit{Aristotle on Meaning and Essence}, especially Chapters 10–11. I agree with Charles that definitions are structured according to causation, and that this claim links the discussion in the \textit{An. Po.} and the \textit{Metaphysics}, and that definition by genus and differentiae is definition by basic causal feature (pp. 246–247). I differ from Charles in understanding the discussion of the \textit{Metaphysics} to focus in particular on immediate definitions. Deborah Modrak argues that the concern motivating the discussion of definition in \textit{Metaphysics} VII is a concern with establishing the difference between nominal definitions (which she calls “linguistic definitions”) and causal definitions (which she calls “definitions of essence”). See Modrak, \textit{Aristotle’s Theory of Language and Meaning}, 147ff.} The aim of this chapter is then to clarify the nature of the objects of immediate definition as simple objects. This should help us to understand why Aristotle is most interested in immediate definition among the kinds of definition he has distinguished, and why he takes the objects of immediate definition to have metaphysical priority over other kinds of object. I want to show that what we learned in the \textit{Posterior Analytics} about immediate definition will help us to understand the central books of the \textit{Metaphysics}, and also that the discussion of definition in the \textit{Metaphysics} expands our understanding of the object of immediate definition and of the immediacy of immediate definition. In other words, these two discussions of definition are mutually illuminating.

In the first section of this chapter I examine the reasons Aristotle gives us for excluding various kinds of complex objects as possible
objects of definition proper in *Metaphysics* 7.4–5. I want to show that the objects of syllogistic definition are among the objects he excludes. The definitions Aristotle has in mind in the *Metaphysics* must then be immediate definitions, since they are certainly definitions that state a complete cause, and if we eliminate syllogistic definitions the only remaining type of definition that states a complete cause is immediate definition. In the second section of the chapter I try to clarify the precise sense in which the objects of immediate definition are simple; for while they cannot be complex in certain specified ways, they do have parts—more than that, their simplicity depends on them having parts. The discussions of *Metaphysics* 7.12 and 8.6, which both raise and allegedly resolve the issue of the unity of definition and essence, make clear that that unity is provided by a certain relationship between the parts. It is not clear, however, from the discussions of 7.12 and 8.6 just why the parts and the relationship between them can provide the necessary unity and hence simplicity. In the third section of the chapter I elaborate Aristotle’s suggestion that the unity of the definition and the essence are like the unity of matter and form in the individual composite substance, to try to see how that relationship could provide a model of simplicity. Finally, in the fourth section, I consider a problem that arises from the claim that the matter/form composite provides a model of unity: if this is the case we might expect the definitions and essences in question to be individuals, and yet Aristotle is emphatic that they are in fact universal. The results of the chapter are then: the definition of the *Metaphysics* is immediate definition, and Aristotle, in discussing definition in the context of his examination of substance as essence in the middle books of the *Metaphysics*, elaborates a conception of immediate definition and its object as simple but having parts.

To introduce the claims about definition in the *Metaphysics*, let us consider first Aristotle’s own justification of the discussion of definition at *Metaphysics* 8.1 1042a17–21. In recapping what he has done in the preceding book and explaining why definition was a focus of the discussion of essence, Aristotle says:

Since essence (τὸ ἦν ἔσει) is substance (ὑσία) and the account of this [essence] is a definition, for this reason definition and the as-such (τὸ ὑπ’ ὑσία) were discussed. And since a definition is an account and an account has parts, it was also necessary to know the parts, [i.e.] to know what sort are parts of the substance and what sort are not, and if these are the same [as the parts] of the definition.