Neoplatonic logic and Aristotelian logic-I.

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It is well known that Ennead VI contains an onslaught by Plotinus on Aristotle's Categories, but that his pupil, Porphyry, established both the Categories and Predicables as part of the Neoplatonic and eventually the Scholastic philosophical curriculum. So far as this situation has been studied, it has been for the most part from the standpoint of its external history. Philology has traced many of Plotinus's criticisms to the commentaries of the Middle Academy, and many of Porphyry's expressions to Stoic logicians; historical enquiry has found motives in the social position of the Schools for the Neoplatonic acceptance of Aristotle's logic. This valuable work, however, tends at best to ignore the philosophical understanding of both the criticism and the reinstatement of Aristotle, and at worst to give an erroneous account of the place of Neoplatonism in the history of logic. First, the criticism is of intrinsic philosophical interest, because it aims to shew that 'inseparable' universals, and the whole theory of genus and species, are unable to do the task required of them. Secondly, the logic which Porphyry and his successors reinstate resembles that of the Stoics in being stripped of certain metaphysical implications. The reason for this is not corruption of Platonism by the Stoa, but the inevitable effect of wanting Aristotle the elementary logician without Aristotle the metaphysician. And the result is that a good deal of credit has gone to the Stoics which was due to the Neoplatonists. Useful as it is, Prantl's work needs rewriting.

This must not be misunderstood. In dealing with Neoplatonists we cannot be concerned, as we can in the case of Stoics, with formal logic. I doubt whether there is a single theorem whose discovery can be attributed to them. We are concerned with logic in a wide sense, which can for the present purposes be quite accurately defined as the sense in which the Categories and Predicables are logical doctrines. What Porphyry achieved - what he was driven to achieve - was a logic of this kind, which, merely because of its restricted metaphysical implications, was valuable to Boetius and the Schoolmen and important in the history of philosophy. It allowed Aristotelian logic to become an autonomous

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1 The dialectician leaves τὴν λεγομένην λογικήν πραγματείαν περὶ προτάσεων καὶ συλλογισμῶν, like learning to write, to others (Plot. Enn. I 3,4). If one wished to be malicious, one would read this in the light of what his biographer says about Plotinus's handwriting (Porph. Vit. Plot. §).
science and it removed obstacles to formal developments within it. To understand how this possibility arose from a purely theoretical point of view, it is necessary to grasp the philosophical implications of the interplay between Aristotelian logic and Neoplatonism. Historically this interplay falls into three stages, the acceptance of the Aristotelian concepts, though not necessarily of their use, in the Middle Academy, the dialectical examination of them by Plotinus, and Porphyry's qualified restoration of them.

*Multiplication of the Universal in the Middle Academy*

If in Plato the role of universal is played by the Idea alone, by the time of the Middle Academy, that is, for the Platonists of the first two centuries A.D., the performers of this role have been multiplied. This is due chiefly to the influence of Aristotelian logic on Platonic interpretation. By drawing two independent distinctions, readers of Plato found at least three kinds of form in place of one.

1. They distinguished first between the 'separate', transcendent form, the χωρίστων εἴδος, and the inseparable, immanent form, the ἐνυλον εἴδος. The former is the Platonic Idea, which is the paradigm of the Demiurge; the latter is the εἴδος ἐνυλον or λόγος ἐνυλος of normal Aristotelian theory. In Albinus’s so called Didascalicus they appear respectively as τὰ πρῶτα νοητά, ὡς αἱ ἱδέαι, and τὰ δεύτερα νοητά, ὡς τὰ εἴδη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς ὕλης ἀχώριστα ἄντω τῆς ὑλῆς. Eclectic as it is, this work claims merely to expound Plato; and it must not be thought that there is no warrant in Plato for the distinction. Indeed if a particular possesses what properties it has by participation in Ideas, and such participation is a matter of degree, it seems to follow that these properties are distinct from their archetypes. *Phaedo* 102c, 102d, 103b, and *Parmenides* 130b distinguish the tallness, for example, or the similarity which we possess as individuals from ‘tallness or similarity themselves’. Whether Plato regarded them as universals, i.e. common properties, is doubtful. Anyway they were regularly referred to by the Neoplatonists as τὰ μετεχόμενα, and usually considered universals. Furthermore their nature was believed to be described by the μεριστὴ ὀψία which was an ingredient of soul in the *Timaeus*; they are not μεριστὰ πρῶτοι like bodies, but become divisible when in bodies, and they were identified with those imitations of the Ideas that entered and left the Receptacle. Though

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2 *Plot. Enn. IV* 2,1.
3 *ib. IV* 2,1; 3,19.
4 See F. M. Cornford *Plato's Cosmology*, pp. 183–4, with references.