3 The Multiplication of Being in Aristotle's Categories

3.1 Introduction

One of the results of the preceding section may be that Lloyd (1956, 59) seems to be wrong in asserting that in Plato's view the rôle of the universal is played by the Idea exclusively, and that only by the time of the Middle Academy, that is, for the Platonists of the first two centuries A.D., the performers of this rôle have been multiplied. As a matter of fact the distinction between Plato and his followers of the Middle Academy on this score would seem to be a different one. The ontological problems of participation were felt as early as in the Platonic dialogues (see our section 2), as well as the logical ones concerning predication (which will be discussed in a later section). Well, the Platonists of the first two centuries A.D., introduced explicitly a threefold distinction of the Platonic Form or rather of its status which was (only) implied with Plato. I think, Lloyd is hardly more fortunate in ascribing (ibid.) this introduction chiefly to the influence of Aristotelian logic on Platonic interpretation. It is true, in stating the basic distinction between en hypokeimenoi and kath' hypokeimenou Aristotle tried to face the same cluster of fundamental problems which induced later Platonists to the distinction of the Forms as taken before or after the methexis (cf. Simplicius, In Arist. Categ., 791ff.). However, Plato's disciple, Aristotle (the most unfaithful one, in a sense, as must be acknowledged) was as deeply engaged on the same problems as were his condisciples and the Master himself in his most mature period. It is certainly not Aristotle who played the rôle of a catalyst and was the first to provoke the multiplication of the

* Part I of this contribution is found in this Journal 15 (1977), 81-110.
1 I cannot see why Lloyd thinks the Middle Platonists, instead of making one three-fold division, to have drawn two independent distinctions. For that matter, when summing up (61) his own explanations Lloyd himself does speak of a three-fold division.
Platonic Form in order to solve problems which were not recognized before in the Platonic circle. On the contrary, Plato himself had saddled his pupils with a basic and most intricate problem, that of the nature of participation and logical predication. It was certainly not left quite unsolved in the later dialogues, but did still not have a perspicuous solution which could be accepted in the School as a scholastic one. So any of his serious followers, (who were teachers in the School, at the same time) was bound to contrive, at least, a scholastic device to answer the intricate question. To my view, Aristotle's solution should be discussed in this framework. For that matter, Aristotle stands wholly on ground prepared by his master to the extent that his works on physic and cosmology, too, are essentially discussions held within the Academy (Cp. Werner Jaeger, Aristotle. Fundamentals of the history of his development, Oxford 1949, 308).

3.2 Aristotle's classification of being as given in the Categories

From the logical (semantic) point of view the problem of participation concerns, among other things, the different meanings of terms signifying both essential and accidental qualities (including the so-called "true nature" of things). So it seems to be quite natural to draw the first book of the Aristotelian Organon, the Categories into our discussion. However, a troublesome stumbling-block is found on the interpreters' way, viz. the problem of the proper meaning of the categories.

3.2.1 The common view: categories = predicates

In his Greek Foundations of Traditional Logic Ernst Kapp maintained that much trouble in the study of philosophy and its development had been caused by the fact that students seemed to have to begin their study of Aristotle with a little book "which treats predicates as if they were not predicates" (p. 21; italics mine). On his view this little book, Aristotle's Categories marked an incisive turn in the history of thought, which was practically unavoidable at the same time: 'predicate' (Greek: katégoria, transliterated category) was going to be used in the sense of 'class of predicates' and, accordingly, as 'class of things' signified by such predicates. The (unfortunate) next step (still on Kapp's interpretation) simply was to isolate the 'meanings' involved and to discuss them as meanings of words not combined into statements, i.e. taking the terms on their own, quite apart from any predicative relationship (see Kapp, 25-27).