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Individual Forms in Aristotle's Substance Theory

Aristoteles'in Töz Öğretisinde Bireysel Formlar

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ABSTRACT

There has been contemporary disagreement about Aristotle's substance theory. This disagreement has mainly focused on the problem of whether Aristotelian forms are individual or universal. According to the majority of the criteria which are stipulated by Aristotle in *Metaphysics Zeta*, forms are substances. On the other hand, Aristotle also explicitly outlines in the *Zeta*, and especially chapters 13 and 16, that no universal can be a substance. At these points in his work, Aristotle should have been clearer regarding whether forms are universals or individuals. In terms of the conclusion Chapter 13 of *Zeta*, as well as some other criteria, one may conclude that, if substance is form, then it should be individual. There are many instances, however, where Aristotle says that, since universals are knowable, particulars cannot be known. It seems that, if substances are particulars on the one hand, it is hard to see how they can be knowable. Furthermore, if they are universal, it is hard to say whether individual forms are substances. Since Aristotle never mentioned whether forms could be both universal and particular, this causes difficulties. In order to examine this problem in more depth, I will not only analyse some textual evidence which is often used to justify the view that forms are universal, but also some textual evidence which is used to justify the view that forms are particular. In so doing, I will also identify some possible solutions regarding the problem of the status of forms in Aristotle's substance theory. Lastly, I will suggest that individual forms are substances because they are instances of universals and, hence, may be knowable.

Key Words: Aristotle, Substance, Form, Particulars, Universals.

ÖZET

Aristoteles'in töz anlayışı güncel bir anlaşmazlığa sebep olmaktadır. Bu anlaşmazlık temel olarak Aristoteles tözlerinin tekil mi yoksa tümel mi olduğu problemine dayanmaktadır. Aristoteles'in *Metafizik Zeta*'da ortaya koyduğu ölçütlerin çoğuna göre form töz olarak tanımlanır. Öte yandan Aristoteles, *Zeta* ve özellikle 13. ve 16. bölümlerde hiçbir tümelin töz olamayacağını açıkça belirtir. *Zeta* boyunca Aristoteles'in formun tekil mi yoksa tümel mi olduğu konusunda açık olmadığı da analiz edilebilir. 13. bölüm gereğince eğer form töz ise onun aynı zamanda bireysel olması beklenmektedir. Ancak, Aristoteles'in tümeler bilinebilir olduğu için tikellerin bilinmeyeceğini söylediği birçok örnek vardır. Bu bakımdan töz bir yandan tikel ise, tözlerin bilinebilirliği konusunda ciddi problemler ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu problemler özetle Aristoteles'in formun hem tümel hem de tikel olabileceğini açıkça belirtmemesinden de kaynaklanmaktadır. Problemi daha net analiz edebilmek üzere bu çalışma Aristoteles metinlerinde formların dolayısıyla tözün tikel ve tümel olduğunun vurgulandığı metinleri incelemeyi, ve tikel şeylerin tümelerin birer örnekleri olarak hem töz olabileceği hem bilebileceği ifade edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aristoteles, Töz, Form, Tekil, Tümel.

1. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

In both his earlier work, the *Categories*, and in the central books of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle claims that what ontologically basic is/(are) the individual(s). Individuals or what ontologically basic signify particulars (e.g. "this individual man" (i.e. Socrates) or "this horse") in the *Categories*¹ and the forms of these particulars in *Metaphysics Zeta*. Primarily, though, he states that which is universal is intelligible. It is obvious that there is a discrepancy in his theory—between what the most real and what the most knowable is. In other words, this discrepancy produces an incompatibility between his epistemological and ontological theories. The ontological side of the problem can be stated as (1) that which is the most real, that which exists fully, and that which is not universal, but individual (substance). On the other hand, he claims that (2) the object of knowledge is that which primarily is/exists. As a conclusion, he should have claimed that the object of knowledge signifies what individuals are, and, hence, which individuals primarily exist. What he argues, however, is that knowledge pertains to the universal and that no particular thing is an object of knowledge.

According to Aristotle, the individual coincides with the real, or what is ontologically basic (i.e. a substantial being), whereas the universal (such as secondary substances—man or animal— in case of the *Categories*) is not that kind of entity and is less real than particulars. This feature of particulars makes them prior ontologically. In Aristotle's system, however, the universal has priority epistemologically. In spite of this, Aristotle mainly claims in

¹ If the primary substances did not exist it would be impossible for any of the other things to exist (Aristotle, 1963:2b7). What Aristotle means with any other things is non-substantial categories. Moreover, what primarily basic is primary substance.

the first chapter² of *Zeta* that substances have priority over non-substances, not only ontologically, but also by definition and in terms of knowledge (Leszl, 1972: 283)

I suggest that we need to reconsider the traditional dualism between Aristotle's ontology and epistemology. For this purpose, I will firstly analyse the source of this problem by looking at *Metaphysics Beta* in order to understand the conceptual grounds for this problem. Secondly, I will analyse what Aristotle states about the relationship which exists between universals and particulars in *the Categories* and *De Interpretatione*. Thirdly, the role of individual forms should be underlined in terms of the status of their individuality in his substance theory. Fourthly, I will suggest that this traditional dualism is not as strong as we tend to think and that the relationship between particulars and universals is both mutual and necessary.

1.1. Metaphysics Beta: The Aporia - Whether Principles are Universals or Particular?

Metaphysics Beta plays a key role in understanding the whole of *Metaphysics* since Aristotle outlines the problems that should be solved in *Metaphysics* in that book. In addition, the problems given in that book provide us with some directions for grasping *Metaphysics* as the science of being *qua* being. Moreover, these problems help readers and investigators reach conclusions in *metaphysical inquiry*. These problems also prepare the reader for the kinds of problem which they will encounter during the investigation of being.

Indeed, Aristotle outlines these problems by asking questions which we will need to find some proper answers for during the reading of *Metaphysics*. An *aporia*, in the sense of a particular puzzle and problem, takes the form of a question, but not every question is an *apori*. In other words, it should be stressed that Aristotle asks these question in the form of "yes" or "no" questions. This means that all questions in *metaphysical inquiry* cannot be *aporiai*; rather, they should be dilemmatic. For example, rather than asking how many principles there are, he asks whether there is only just one principle that we can investigate, or whether there are more than one.

Aristotle identifies *Metaphysics* as a first philosophy because it investigates being *qua* being and because it is the search that is 'furthest removed from sense perception' (Aristotle, 2000: 982a 25). In other words, when someone tries to identify something, they might do this by using its physical properties and features. *Metaphysical inquiries*, on the other hand, cannot be easily explained. This is why all *aporiai* should have two sides. Since reaching a conclusion is never easy in metaphysics, we need to criticise both potential answers. Moreover, Aristotle argues that the recognition of particular *aporiai*, not only contributes to our ability to search in *Metaphysics*, it is precisely what enable us to search in metaphysics. One of the problems listed in *Metaphysics Beta* has a key role in understanding Aristotle's substance theory: namely, whether principles³ are universal or particular. In *Beta* 6, Aristotle seems to reach a conclusion about this *aporia*. On the one hand, principles are universal because of their being intelligible. On the other hand, though, Aristotle says that what is most knowable is that which is most real, adding that that which is most real are particulars. According to this book, then, it seems that Aristotle argues that the primary object of knowledge must be what primarily is/exists.

We must...ask whether they (principles) are universal or what we call individuals. (A) If they are universal they will not be substance, for everything that is common indicates not a this but a such, but substance is a this...And if we can actually posit the common predicate as a single this, Socrates will be several animals; himself, and, animal. If each of these indicates a this and a single thing. (B) If they are not universals but of the nature of individuals, they will not be knowable; for the knowledge of the principles there must be other principles prior to them, which are universally predicated of them. (Aristotle, 2000: 1003a7-1003a21)

On the one hand, Aristotle claims that: (C1) no universal can be substance (since substance is "a this", and universal is a such but not a this); on the other hand, (C2) forms are substances (in terms of the main conclusion of *Zeta*); hence, (C3) forms are individual. If we say that forms are universal, the substance-hood of form would be eliminated in terms of these statements. To avoid these difficulties, as well as inconsistency, we should say that substance is form and form is individual. Nevertheless, we will encounter another difficulty with this result in that Aristotle claims that (D) definitions and knowledge are of universal(s) and form(s) (Aristotle, 2000: 1036a26). In other words, if substances are individual forms, we cannot define them. In terms of these premises, we have four possibilities:

² Now there are several senses in which a thing is said to be primary, but substance is primary in every sense—in formula, in order of knowledge, and in time. Aristotle says that when someone knows something most fully, they know what it is, such as what man is or what fire is, rather than knowing its quality or quantity (Aristotle, 2000: 1028b2).

³ In book *Zeta*, Aristotle gives us some possible answers to the question of "what entities may be the substance of things?" In addition, in the final chapter of *Zeta*, Aristotle proposes a new point of departure in his efforts to say what sorts of a thing substance is. The new and final claim in *Zeta* is that a substance is a 'principle and a cause' (*archê kai aitia*, 1041a9). Since Aristotle has some different conceptual backgrounds with which to describe substance (form, essence, cause, and principles), sometimes what he means when he uses one of them may become ambiguous. On the other hand, because of the ideas in *Zeta* 17, it may be said that what Aristotle means by "principles" in *Beta* is "substances" or "forms." It may be claimed that *Beta* is one of the most important sections for the debate of whether forms are universal or individual.

- ✓ It may be suggested that form must be either universal or individual since Aristotle nowhere says that forms can be both universal and substance⁴. Because of this reason:
- ✓ According to C1: each compound, or each individual thing, has its own form. This signifies that form is individual;
- ✓ According to D: although Aristotle claims that there is no universal substance which exists apart from individuals, species-forms (such as man) can be substance for the purpose of reaching their ultimate formulation and knowledge. This, in turn, means that form is universal;
- ✓ It may be said that form is both universal and individual.

I will suggest that, despite the fact that Aristotle does not outline whether form has two senses or whether two different entities may have form, they may both have characteristic features (universality or/and individuality). It will become clear once we provide some textual evidences for the claims that forms are universal *and* that they are individual that there is no explicit distinction between universals and individuals. This means that, epistemologically, all instances (individuals) may be known *qua* members-specimens of their species and that, ontologically, individual forms are substances given that (i) there is no "one over many" apart from individuals and (ii) no universal can be substance. The epistemological and ontological status of form means that universal and individual are mutually-necessary for each other.

We have two main conclusions about *Beta*. According to premise (A), universals are not substances and are not real. This, consequently, supports premise (C1). According to premise (B), on the other hand, particulars are not knowable. This, in turn, supports premise (D). All in all, then, it seems that the substance-hood of form (C2) and the individuality of forms (C3) are still problematic, both ontologically and epistemologically. According to the principle of mutual-necessity, one might reach a possible solution to these problems. It seems like this could be possible by focusing on the relationship between particulars and knowledge on the one hand and substance-hood and universality on the other.

1.2. De Interpretatione and the Categories

In *De Interpretatione*, Aristotle identifies what particulars and universals are:

I call universal that which is by its nature predicated of a number of things, and particular that which is not; man for instance is a universal, Callias particular. (Aristotle, 1963: 17a36)

Regarding this point, it is said that what makes universals different from particulars is that they may be predicated of more than one thing. It may be asked what kinds of predication these are. For example, man is predicated of both Socrates and Callias *qua species*. On the other hand, white is also predicated them *qua qualification*. Thus, it seems that Aristotle has in his mind two kinds of predication; namely, nominal and full predication (Sellars, 1957: 689). The question then arises: "what kinds of predication can be fully predicable of primary substances?" One possible way of answering this question is provided in *Categories*. There, Aristotle calls species, or genera, secondary substances. In addition, he would say that primary substances are subjects⁵ for all other things and that all other things are predicated of them. It seems, however, that Aristotle did not say anything explicit about how universals can exist or how they can be related to particulars. He does not use the concepts "universal" or "particular" in *Categories*. On the other hand, he defines both primary and secondary substances, with the former that which cannot be said of a subject, and the latter that which can be said of a subject.⁶ The primary and secondary substances conform to his definition of the particular and universal in *De Interpretatione*. On the other hand, in the *Categories*, he outlines that definition and name of the species are also predicated of the primary substances.

It is clear from what has been said that if something is said of a subject both its name and its definition are necessarily predicated of the subject. For example man is said of a subject, the individual man, and the name is of course predicated (since you will be predicated of the individual man), and also the definition of man will be predicated of the individual man (since the individual man is also a man) (Aristotle, 1963: 2a19).

It is obvious that, in this passage, Aristotle makes particulars, or individuals, universalised in terms of their definition or knowledge since their definition or name (such as man or animal) are predicated of the individual (i.e.

⁴ Aristotle did not accept that forms or substances can be both universal and particular. On the other hand there is no any explicit statement which is stressed by him that means forms can be either universal or particular.

⁵ Thus all the other things are either said of the primary substances as subjects or in them as subjects. All non-substantial things (e.g. whiteness *qua* qualification) is predicated of primary substances.

⁶ A substance that which is called a substance most strictly, primarily, and most of all, is that which is neither said of a subject nor in subject, e.g. the individual man or the individual horse. The species in which the things primarily called substances are, are called secondary substances, as also the genera of these species. For example the individual man belongs in a species, man, and animal is a genus of the species: so these both man and animal are called secondary substances (Aristotle, 1963: 2a12-2a18)

that Socrates is a man). On the other hand, though, universals are to be instantiated by particulars. One may say that there is no tension in the *Categories* in terms of definition and knowledge of particulars, since individuals are definable with the species which they belong.

2. THE STATUS OF FORMS OF METAPHYSICS ZETA

2.1. Forms are Universal

In Aristotle's texts, there are no explicit statements claiming that forms are universal. Nevertheless, Aristotle outlines that knowledge and definition is of universals and of forms (Aristotle, 2000: 1036a26). Forms are knowable and universal. Moreover, in Z15, Aristotle explicitly denies the definability of particulars. This claim means that there is no scientific knowledge and demonstrations of perishable things because they have matter and destructible things cannot have a definition. The problem can be shown with the following premises: that (1) particulars are indefinable (because of their matter); (2) definitions are not of concrete particular things but of their forms; (3) form is the object of knowledge; (4) nevertheless, we cannot say that forms are particulars because of premise (1); thus, it seems that forms are universal. One may reach this conclusion in terms of features of knowable and definable things. Moreover, any other textual evidence may be shown to reach the view that forms are universal.

Aristotle declares that substance belongs to nothing which is not a species of a genus (Aristotle, 200: 1030a11). This means that substance only belongs to species. The species (such as man) has some members and is predicated of them (e.g. Socrates and Callias are men). According to the description of a universal, a universal is predicated of many things. Therefore, if we say that a species is predicated of many things or that it has more than one instance, it seems that substance is universal. In other words, this statement suggests that Aristotle claims that there is such a thing that is common to many thing (species) and that essence belongs only to them. It is obvious that this conclusion is wrong in terms of the statement that (C1) no universal may be substance.

Another important proof of the claim that forms are universal is that Aristotle does not mention anything about individuation. This means that there are no such criteria for separating an individual from other individuals besides their matter. He explicitly says that Callias and Socrates are different in virtue of their matter but the same with regards to their form, for their form is indivisible (Aristotle, 2000: 1034a8). Obviously, opponents of individual forms expect Socrates and Callias to differ in terms of their form. There is only one explicit factor which distinguishes particulars from one another, and that is their matter. On the other hand, Aristotle does not hold that there are some universal forms which have independent existence apart from the material substances of which they are forms. In other words, Aristotle completely rejects the independent existence of forms or the "Idea" of Platonic ontology (there are Forms, or Ideas, which can exist independently of all individuals or instances of them). Therefore, it may be suggested that Aristotle may allow for some instantiations of universal forms (by definition). They are individuated by their material substrate, hence, it may be suggested that these instances may be called individual forms.

In Z7, however, when Aristotle claims that forms cannot be generated, he means that form exists before generation based on the fact that it exists in the agent that generates the individual (e.g. for man begets man-1032a26). Any two instances of man are the same, not in number, but in species. It seems that if my form were unique, I could not have been given that form by my father.⁷ It is, therefore, hard to say whether forms are individual in virtue of his generation argument. In order to contend with this problem, either form would have to be generated along with the composite or Aristotle would need to abandon his naturalistic account of generation (Halper, 1987: 668).

Thus far, it has been mentioned that Aristotle's substance theory has a discrepancy with regards to whether Aristotelian forms are universals or individuals. What Aristotle says about this problem was analysed specifically in terms of *Metaphysics Beta*. Then, what he means exactly about universals and individuals in *De Interpretatione* was explained and what these correspond to with regards to the *Categories*. Obviously, as we have determined, in *Zeta*, there are some proofs explaining why forms should be universal. Now, the view of some opponents of the universality of forms in Aristotle's substance theory will be examined. A thing can be said to be particular if it is not predicated of, or does not belong to, or is not common to, several things. If we say that this house or this human being (e.g. Heraclitus) has a particular form, that means that their forms are not common to, and are different from, the others (this house's form is different from that house or Heraclitus is different from Socrates). When one examines *Categories*, it seems as if Aristotle claims that forms are universal since they are predicated of more than

⁷ Natural comings to be are the comings to be of those things which come to be by nature; and that out of which they come to be is what we call matter. And that by which they come to be is something which exists naturally; and the something which they come to be is a man or a plant or one of the things of this kind, which we say are substances, if anything is. (Aristotle, 2000: 1032a16-22)

one primary substance.⁸ Forms (species) and genera are predicated of many things, which means that they are universal. According to Sykes (1975), there are three main reasons for why we might want to reach the conclusion that forms are universal.

- ✓ Forms of sensible substances are universal, since they are predicated of particular substances;
- ✓ Form, as the object of knowledge, is universal;
- ✓ Form, as the object of definition, is universal. (Sykes, 1975: 315)

According to Sykes (1975), these premises make form universal. Therefore, the inconsistency in Aristotle's theory is unavoidable. It is necessary to analyse how form (as substance) can be universal, even though it should be *to de ti*. The question is naturally raised, what sorts of parts belong to the form and what sort[s] not to the form, but to the concrete thing. Yet if this is not plain it is not possible to define anything; for definition is of the universal and of the form (Aristotle, 2000: 1036a27-8). Aristotle never gives us an explicit statement regarding the premises behind why form is universal. Nevertheless, especially with regards to the problem of the knowability of first principles, when this premise is outlined, another problem arises. How (if they are not universal) can the first principles be knowable? In *Metaphysics* and other Aristotelian works, we could not detect any direct statement that form is universal. For example, in 1036a27, Aristotle asks what sorts of parts are parts of the form, and what sorts of parts are parts of the combined thing, yet not of the form? If this is not made explicit, according to Aristotle, we would not be able to define anything since definition is of the universal and of the form. Moreover, there are some statements regarding this debate in *Posterior Analytics*.

Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of knowledge: namely, *unqualified* and *qualified* knowledge. The former arises from demonstration—a sort of syllogism consisting of premises and a conclusion. *Unqualified* scientific knowledge pertains to universals, and *qualified* scientific knowledge pertains to particulars. Aristotle says that knowledge of particulars depends on knowledge of universals. For example, we can know that this triangle has angles equal to two-right-angles only if we know that every triangle has angles equal to two-right-angles. Knowledge of universals provides potential knowledge of particulars. When potential knowledge is actualised, we will have actual knowledge of particulars.⁹ So, does this mean that we could reach the conclusion that form is universal only with regards to the debate of knowledge and definition? If so, is it enough to reach a definitive conclusion on the problem of individuality and the substantiality of form? Finally, is it enough to allow us to accept the statement that there are two kinds of form (one individual and one universal)?

In Z8, another passage is given which suggests that form is universal. Callias and Socrates differ because of their matter: their matter is different, but they are of the same form, since the form is indivisible (1034a5-8). As mentioned before, if form is the same in more than one individual, it makes form universal, for what is called universal is what naturally belongs to more than one thing (Aristotle, 2000: 1038b11-12). In terms of the principle of mutual-necessity, the premise of the universality of form is used by Aristotle only in terms of the knowledge of them since, when one tries to identify both Socrates and Callias, he reaches the same conclusion: i.e. that they are both men. Their definition means that they have the same form and that that form is universal. According to Sykes (1975: 322), Aristotle's metaphysical system is expounded in terms of a hierarchy. In this hierarchy, particular sensible substances are located at the base, while the unmoved mover, or god, is located at the top. It seems, then, that the form of particular substance is an intermediate between them both. Thus, they are higher than particular substances; and, furthermore, they are more "substantial" than sensible and particular substances.

2.2. Forms Are Individual

The main conclusion of Z13 is that no universal can be substance. In addition, as we mentioned before, based on some arguments and textual evidence, forms are also considered by Aristotle as being primary substances. Naturally, if no universal can be substance, one should say that forms are individuals. Although there are some supportive arguments which are posited by Aristotle (i.e. the individuality of forms), these are not explicit.

For it seems impossible that any universal term should be the name of a substance. For primary substance is that kinds of substance which is peculiar to an individual, which does not belong to anything else; but the universal is

⁸ Aristotle did not use the terms "form" or "matter" in *Categories* but, rather, "species" and "genera"; namely, secondary substances can be considered as a "form" (or "species-form"). He claims that, after primary substances, species and genera should be the only other things which are called secondary substances, for only they, of all things predicated, reveal the primary substance.

⁹ If someone knows that every triangle has two right angles, he knows in a sense of the isosceles too that it has two right angles. Potentially even if he does not know of the isosceles that it is a triangle. But one who grasp[s]... the latter proposition does not know the universal in any sense, neither potentially, nor actually (Aristotle, 1975: 71a17-20, 75b21-29, 86a25-2).

common, since that is called universal which naturally belongs to more than one thing. Of which individual then will be the substance? Either of all or of none. But it cannot be substance of all; and if it is to be the substance of one, this one will be the others also; for things whose substance is one and whose essence is one and themselves also one. (Aristotle, 2000: 1038b8-15)

It is obvious that this passage eliminates the substantiality of species and universals. If something belongs to more than one thing (such as man, which describes both Socrates and Callias), one could not both say that that thing is one (since it belongs to more than one thing) and that that thing's essence is one (since that thing and its essence is same). If a universal were the substance of these things, they would have one substance and should be one. Thus, no "one," over many, can be substance. In addition, in terms of his equality of essence claim (this will be examined in a minute), many things can share the same essence. Another related argument in the same chapter is that the universal is predicable of some subject, whilst substance means that which is not predicable of a subject (Aristotle, 2000: 1038b135-16).

In *Categories*, Aristotle says that primary substance signifies a "this," whereas secondary substance signifies a "such." Moreover, in *Z6*,¹⁰ Aristotle provides another argument which I will call "the equality of essence" claim, which can be seen as a proof for the individuality of forms in one sense. "We must inquire whether each thing and its essence are the same or different. This is of some use for the inquiry concerning substance; for each thing is thought to be not different from its substance, and the essence is said to be the substance of each thing". (Aristotle, 2000: 1031a15-18). Each thing then and its essence are one and the same in no merely accidental way... to know each thing, at least to know its essence, so that even by the exhibition of instances it becomes clear that both must be one.

It seems that Aristotle has two different meanings of "being same as with its (the subject's) essence" in the equality of essence claim. Firstly, he claims that substance is *tode ti*, this means that each thing is thought to be homogenous with its essence. In other words, if we say that something is equal to its essence, it will have to be *one in number*. On the other hand, according to the second premise, for one to know something, firstly, one needs to know what it is, or what its essence is. This means that this thing should also be equivalent to its formula or definition. All in all, he equates individuality with being one in number, on the one hand, and being one in form with universality, on the other hand¹¹ (since, as I outlined before, knowledge is of universals and forms and, in this sense, form equates with what essence is). Some textual evidences were mentioned above which claim that forms are individual. In *Zeta*, Aristotle claims that this-ness is the main characteristic of primary substances. This is the main reason why no universal can be substance. At the beginning of *Zeta*, Aristotle gives us two main characteristics of substance. Substance is a "this" (*tode ti*) and a "what it is" (*ti esti*). There are several senses in which a thing may be said to be, as we pointed out previously in our book on the various senses of words; for in one sense it means what a thing is or a this. (Aristotle, 2000: 1028a11-13).

Substance must be a "this" means that it is not universal, since a universal is a "such," not a "this." On the other hand, substance must be what a thing is seeing as knowing something equates to knowing what it is;¹² as we have mentioned, though, knowledge is of universals. According to Hartman (1976), there is no inconsistency in Aristotle's theory since the criteria of individuality signifies the form. It is clear in Aristotle's earlier work that the particular thing is the primary sort of being, whereas universals (not only accidentally but also essentially predicated) are dependent on their instances.¹³ Moreover, in Aristotle's later works—especially *Metaphysics* and its central books—, he claims that substance must be a "this" and a "what it is" and that it should be separable (Aristotle, 2000: 1028a33, 1028b33). It seems that all these features signify the individual form. Additionally, we also have the main conclusion of *Zeta* 13, in which Aristotle explicitly says that substance should be form and a "this."

If form is substance, form should be individual rather than universal. The main reason for this is that a substance should be peculiar to what it has. Universals, on the other hand, can be predicated of more than one thing. This explicitly eliminates universals from being a candidate for substance-hood. In addition, being both a "this" and being separable are other features of substance-hood. But now let us resume the discussion of the generally recognized substances. These are the sensible substances, and sensible substances all have matter. The substratum

¹⁰ According to Menn (2011, p. 176), Aristotle is neutral on whether the primary entities will be form or composites, individual or universal, in *Zeta*, chapter 6. Frede and Patzig (1988; cited in Menn, 2011, p. 176), on the other hand, claim that Aristotle, in saying that the primary substance is its own essence, is saying that primary substances are forms (individual).

¹¹ If they (first principles) are one in kind, nothing will be numerically one, not even unity itself and being itself. And how will it be possible to know, if there is not to be something common to a whole set of individuals? (Aristotle, 2000: 999b24)

¹² There is knowledge of each thing only when we know its essence (Aristotle, 2000: 1031b10).

¹³ Although Aristotle did not use the concepts "accidentally" or "essentially predicated", according to Hartman, there is a clear difference between the kinds of predication of universals.

is substance, and this is in one sense the matter (by matter I mean that which, not being a this actually, is potentially a this), and in another sense the formula or form (which being a this can be separately formulated), and thirdly the complex of matter and form, which alone is generated and destroyed, and is without qualification, capable of separate existence; for of substance in the sense of formulae some are separable and some are not. (Aristotle, 2000: 1042a24-32).

Whereas Aristotle says that substance is separable, he states that matter is not. He means that substance can exist on its own. In other words, substance or form can exist in separation from its accidents. All in all, Hartman (1976) suggests that individual forms meet all criteria for being substance in Aristotle's theory since each material object has—and is identical to—its own individual essence or form. It is, in a clear way, knowable and definable; it is prior to the accidents it may at any time have and to the matter that may at any time constitute it in that it may go on existing long after they are gone: viz., it is a "this" (Hartman, 1976: 548).

To make this suggestion clearer, we may look at Hartman's (1976) river case. We can step into the same river twice, since this is a particular river, and it is not some water, and its form is not a universal. With this example, Hartman means to say that the form of the river is individual, not universal, for the claim is not just that there is some river or other here now, just as there was last week, but rather that *this particular river* is still here. It is here because the essence that was here last week is here, not because the particular water is still here. In other words, the thing is a form, rather than a parcel, of matter (Hartman, 1976: 550). The particular matter of which the substance is made could disappear, while the substance itself remains. When we say that a substance still exists, we mean that its form still exists (Hartman, 1976: 554). This is also why Aristotle rejected the substance-hood of matter in Z3. Moreover, if substance was *this* form and *this* matter, we could not step into the same river twice, since it is not the river which we stepped into last week—it is only some water.

In Z4, Aristotle says that the essence of each thing is what it is said to be in virtue of itself. 'For being you is not being musical ... [who] you are in virtue of yourself is your essence' (Aristotle, 2000: 1029b13). In terms of the river case, being this river is not being some water or being other rivers. Moreover, being Socrates is not the same as being Callias since the essence of Socrates is what he is said to be in virtue of himself. It is, thus, clear that essence is primarily attached to an individual person rather than to a species, for you are singular. Lastly, according to Hartman, to say that your essence is different from mine is not to say that you and I have different essential properties. It means that we are the members of the same species, and this species defines what we share in common. Nevertheless, our substances are separate. In Z4, Aristotle claims that 'nothing, then, which is not a species of a genus will have an essence – only species will have it' (1030a13). This might mean that Aristotle is arguing that only species, or secondary substances, or universals, have essence. In this sense, then, he has eliminated the substance-hood of individuals. Hartman (1976) claims that the above statement means that it is the species that determines what the essence of something is. Therefore, in accordance with the principle of mutual-necessity, all species and individuals require each other to be definable and to exist.

2.3. Forms Are Both Individual And Universal

As has been mentioned before, there are also no explicit statements in Aristotle's texts that forms are both universal and individual. As I have claimed, however, the Aristotelian dualism between his ontology and epistemology is not strong and, consequently, that universals and individuals are interdependent concepts in Aristotle's account. In terms of his substance theory, forms are substance and individual in virtue of what Aristotle says substance is. On the other hand, given that both knowledge and definitions must be of universals and forms means that, in order to have knowledge of individuals, it is first necessary to know what their species is. I would suggest that form has two different characteristics in Aristotle's substance theory, however, and that these two characteristics do not make Aristotle inconsistent given the relationship between his ontological and epistemological accounts.

Particular material substances not only share with others of their species a universal form, but they both also have particular form of their own—i.e. an instance of that universal form—which is not the form of any other thing. The form of man, for instance, is the human soul, just as the form of Socrates is the soul of Socrates. Therefore, a particular man is an animal, a substance, and a "this" (Sellars, 1957: 700). Socrates and Callias are the specimens of the same species. This means that they have the same form *qua species*. Moreover, one may know them from their species (Socrates and Callias are men). On the other hand, ontologically, man *qua species* could not exist above many men. It is a species-form of Socrates, Callias and others and only has the role of making them knowable. Nevertheless, what makes Socrates Socrates is not man *qua species*; rather, it is Socrates himself. And this, in turn, signifies form *qua individual*.¹⁴ Sellars (1957: 700) gives this example in terms of being in virtue of itself: What

¹⁴ The essence of each thing is what it is said to be in virtue of itself. For being you is not being musical, for you are not musical in virtue of yourself. What then in virtue of yourself is your essence. (Aristotle, 2000: 1029b15:)

may plausibly be said to exist, only while a man is healthy, is not health in general, but "his health." What exists only while the bronze sphere exists is not the shape of a sphere but the spherical shape of "that sphere." On the other hand, according to Woods (1993:409), Aristotle is neutral regarding the question of whether the form of a house is unique to the house or whether the structure is shared by all houses. It seems that the form "house" will not enjoy an existence over and above particular houses since it will be embedded in matter. All in all, the substance of a particular is its form or essence in some sense. A particular, therefore, must not only have its species form, but a form in another sense: its substance.

3. CONCLUSION

I have explored a solution to the problem of whether principles are universals or particulars. This problem was generated by premises given by Aristotle in *Metaphysics*. Namely: (1) those things which are most real are individuals; (2) those things which are most knowable are what are most real; and (3) those things which are most knowable are universals. I assumed that this problem emerged because of a strong dualism, not only between particulars and universals, but also between Aristotle's ontological and epistemological approaches.

I have analysed how this problem occurs in the Aristotelian texts. A chapter of *Beta* was analysed as being where the problem initially is stated. Then, both *Categories* and *De Interpretatione* were examined in order to grasp the conceptual background of the problem. Furthermore, I discussed the status of form in Aristotle's substance theory, especially with relation to the central books of *Metaphysics*. Many passages evidenced that Aristotle had in mind two main characteristics of form. One is that form is individual; since it is what substance is, then it must be something separable and a "this." On the other hand, since knowledge and definitions consist of universals and form, it is possible to claim that forms are universal. Finally, although there is no an explicit statement given by Aristotle to defend this, I suggest that form could be both universal and individual in terms of being both mutually and necessarily dependent.

I might concur with Sellars (1957) and Hartman's (1976) views that all statements regarding substance show that they are of individual form(s). On the other hand, when Aristotle claims that substance pertain to the possibility of knowledge and definitions, one has to conclude that he means that that which has substance is also universal. Since there are, however, no multiple sense of form in Aristotle's substance theory, it seems that his theory is inconsistent. Nevertheless, I have suggested that Aristotle has in his mind two characteristics of form because he does not have two different ontological and epistemological accounts of substance. Therefore, we should analyse his theory by looking at both sides of his account.

I have called this the principle of mutual-necessity. This principle states that there are no sharp distinctions between individuals and universals and that there is a necessary relationship between them in terms of the knowledge of individuals and the being of universals. On the one hand, ontologically, form is substance. For if we say that form is individual, we would reach the conclusion that substance should naturally be individual since it is peculiar to what it has. Epistemologically, on the other hand, knowledge and definition pertain to being universal and having a form; this, in turn, means that form is universal. According to the Principle of Mutual-Necessity, Aristotle has two senses of form in his substance theory: it is universal in terms of its definition and knowledge, but it is also individual. One might say that this is an obvious inconsistency since this conclusion suggests that Aristotle has a strong dualism between individuals and universals. When we analyse Aristotle's system through the lenses of our principle, though, it seems that Aristotle's system does not have two different ways of taking knowledge and being into account and, ergo, makes individuals and universals dependent on one another

Aristotle claims that particulars are not knowable *qua* particulars since they can only be knowable *qua* particulars when they are universalisable. This means that they can only be knowable *qua* a universal. On the other hand, as Aristotle argues, our scientific knowledge begins with particulars (perception). It is only then that we may reach a general conclusion or a piece of scientific knowledge. This view, therefore, makes particulars and universals necessary epistemological conditions for each other. Furthermore, I have claimed that the statement that form is universal occurs only in terms of knowledge and definition. Hence, in terms of the ontological status of individual form(s), there is no explicit statement regarding the universality of form.

In conclusion, if we say that forms must either be universal or particular, it seems that this problem of inconsistency could not be resolved. If, on the other hand, we argue that there are two characteristics of form (*qua* species-form/universal and *qua* individual) and that the substance of each thing is its individual form, it may seem that it is not completely unique, but also an instance of a species/form. It might be claimed that the individual form is both the substance of the thing and definable since it shares its definition with the species/form whose instance it is. We reach this point because it is obvious that substance is both "this something" (*tode ti*) and "what it is" (*ti es ti*). This means that Aristotle is not willing to reject the one at the expense of the other. Moreover, in Z6, he claims

that there is knowledge of each thing only when we know its essence (1031b7). This signifies one of the descriptions of substance: *ti es ti*. On the other hand, in the same book, he claims that each thing and its essence are one and the same in no merely accidental way (Aristotle, 2000: 1031b20). It seems that this signifies another description of substance: *to de ti*. In addition, Aristotle adds that to know each thing *at least* is to know its essence. Furthermore, not only are a thing and its essence one, but their form is also the same.

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