

## ARISTOTLE AND INDIVIDUAL FORMS: THE GRAMMAR OF THE POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS AT *METAPHYSICS* A.5, 1071a27–9<sup>1</sup>

A crucial sentence in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* A.5, 1071a27–9, reads: καὶ τῶν ἐν ταύτῳ εἶδει ἕτερα, οὐκ εἶδει ἄλλ' ὅτι τῶν καθ' ἑκάστον ἄλλο, ἧ τε σὴ ὕλη καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ κινῆσαν καὶ ἡ ἐμή, τῷ καθόλου δὲ λόγῳ ταῦτά. A great deal turns on correctly identifying the antecedent to the phrase καὶ ἡ ἐμή: does it refer to all three terms, ὕλη, εἶδος, and τὸ κινῆσαν, or only, as the feminine singular form might suggest, to ὕλη? For, on the former reading, it has been taken as evidence of Aristotle's belief in the immortality of the individual soul.

Ross's translation runs: 'And those [that is, the causes] of things in the same species are different, not in species, but in the sense that the causes of different individuals are different, *your matter and form and moving cause being different from mine*, while in their universal formula they are the same.'<sup>2</sup> In his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, Ross gives no indication of a problem here, but it is clear that he takes 'mine' as including 'matter and form and moving cause'. In this, he is in agreement with the great majority of commentators and translators, so far as we have determined, beginning with the commentary on the *Metaphysics* ascribed to Alexander of Aphrodisias but almost certainly datable to the twelfth century, and possibly the work of Michael of Ephesus.<sup>3</sup> Pseudo-Alexander parses Aristotle's meaning as follows: οὐ μόνον δὲ τῶν ἐτέρων γενῶν ἕτερα τὰ αἴτια, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν ἕτερα, τῷ ἀριθμῷ δέ· ἄλλη γὰρ ἡ σὴ ὕλη καὶ ἄλλη ἡ ἐμή τῷ ἀριθμῷ, ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ ποιητικόν (CAG 1, 684.21–4 Hayduck). We may note too that the Hebrew translation by Moses ben Samuel ibn Tibbon (1255) of Abu Bischr Mattà's lost Arabic version of Themistius' lost Greek commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* A, in the Latin version by the editor Samuel Landauer, reads *ad* 1071a28–9: *Nam materia non est absolute materia hominis, sed materia mea est mea materia, et materia tua est tua materia, ueluti alia forma tua est, alia mea, non forma uniuersalis, sed singularis. et hoc idem est dicendum de mouente*.<sup>4</sup> Like Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius evidently supposed ἡ ἐμή to include all three antecedents.

<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Mary Louise Gill and Silvia Fazzo (who are inclined to agree with our argument) and Concetta Luna (who is not) for helpful comments in conversation and *per litteras*. Thanks too to Regina Höschele, who read the text over with her customary acumen, and to Brad Inwood and Donald Russell for helpful comments. The anonymous referee restrained us from some unwarranted speculation on the philosophical implications of the passage in question.

<sup>2</sup> In J. Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (Princeton, 1984), 2.1692. Cf. H. G. Apostle, *Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Bloomington, 1966), 202: 'as in the case of your matter and your form and your moving cause, on the one hand, and mine, on the other'.

<sup>3</sup> That books E–N of the commentary ascribed to Alexander are by Michael of Ephesus is shown in detail by C. Luna, *Trois études sur la tradition des commentaires anciens à la Métaphysique d'Aristote* (Leiden, 2001), with reference to previous literature.

<sup>4</sup> S. Landauer (ed.), *Themistii In Aristotelis Metaphysicorum librum paraphrasis hebraice et latine* (Berlin, 1903) = *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* 5.5, 12–13. On this work, cf. S. Pines, 'Some distinctive metaphysical conceptions in Themistius' commentary on Book Lambda and their place in the history of philosophy', in J. Wiesner (ed.), *Aristoteles Werk und Wirkung* (Berlin, 1987), 177–204.

The Latin translation of the *Metaphysics* by William of Moerbeke, which Saint Thomas employed as the basis of his commentary, seems to reproduce the construction of the Greek: *Et eorum quae sunt in eadem specie, diuersa non specie; sed quia singularium, aliud tua materia et species et mouens, et mea; uniuersali autem ratione, eadem.*<sup>5</sup> *Mea* here is presumably feminine singular, like ἡ ἐμῇ, rather than neuter plural (all three antecedents in Latin are feminine—*mouens* stands for *causa mouens*, as Thomas takes it—and so the plural pronoun would have been *meae*). Thomas's comment on the passage runs (p. 581): *Sicut hominis causa ut materia, elementa, scilicet ignis etc.; et causa ut forma, 'species propria,' scilicet anima; et causa mouens est aliquod extrinsecum; sicut pater est causa mouens propinqua, et causa remota sol,* and so on. Thomas understands the notion that you and I each have a distinct εἶδος to signify that the individual soul constitutes a 'particular species', and as such is immortal.<sup>6</sup> So too the anonymous Latin translation known as the *Media* reads: *Et quae sunt in eadem specie, diuersa, non specie, sed ipsorum secundum diuersum aliud, tua materia et species et mouens et mea, uniuersali ratione eadem fiunt.*<sup>7</sup>

Unlike the Latin translators, scholars rendering the phrase into modern languages such as French, Italian, or German are required to make a choice, and in general they have opted for the plural pronoun. Thus, Tricot translates: 'ta matière, ta forme, ta cause efficiente ne sont pas *les miennes*' (not *la mienne*).<sup>8</sup> So too, Reale renders: 'la tua materia, la tua forma e la tua causa efficiente numericamente non sono identiche *alle mie*' (not *alla mia*, which would unambiguously refer only to the first member of the series).<sup>9</sup> Again, Schwartz gives: 'So sind dein Stoff, deine Form und dein Bewegendes

<sup>5</sup> In M.-R. Cathala, O.P., rev. P. Fr. Raymundi and M. Spiazzi, O.P., *S. Thomae Aquinatis In duodecem libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio* (Turin, 1950), 577; cf. G. Vuillemin-Diem (ed.), *Aristoteles Latinus* 25.3.2, *Metaphysica*, 1–14, recensio et translatio G. de Moerbeka (Leiden, 1995), 253, with different punctuation.

<sup>6</sup> For Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Thomas evidently consulted, besides William's translation, the *Translatio Anonyma* or *Media* (see next note), and the *Translatio Vetus*, a Latin translation from Averroes' Arabic text which ends at 1007a31, thus before the passage under discussion (perhaps too the lost part of the *Translatio Iacobi* or *Vetustissima*, by a Iacobus Veneticus Graecus philosophus who was at work in 1125–50; again, the surviving text ends at 1007a31). He also had available the *Translatio Scotti*, Michael Scotus' translation of Averroes' commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, rendered into Latin in 1220–4 and known as the *Metaphysica noua*.

<sup>7</sup> G. Vuillemin-Diem (ed.), *Aristoteles Latinus*, 25.2, *Metaphysica*, *Translatio Anonyma sive 'Media'* (Leiden, 1976), 210; this translation, made directly from the Greek, dates to the late twelfth century. It is worth noting that a majority of the MSS of the *Anonyma*, and a few of William's translation, present the variant *et in ea* (some of the *Anonyma* read *et ea* for *et mea*). So too, the Latin translation used by Albertus Magnus reads: *et quae sunt in eadem specie, diuersa, non specie, sed ipsorum secundum diuersum aliud, tria materia et species et mouens et in ea uniuersali ratione eadem sunt.* Albertus' commentary (book 11 tr. 1 ch. 15: *Qualiter principia referuntur ad principia uniuersaliter et particulariter*) runs: *Similiter ea quae sunt diuersa numero, sunt tamen in eadem specie, principia habent diuersa non specie, sed numero, sicut forma Platonis differt a forma Socratis, et materia Platonis a materia Socratis non differt nisi numero* (Alberti Magni Opera Omnia, curauit Institutum Alberti Magni Coloniense, B. Geyer praeside, 16.2, *Metaphysica*, 6–13 [Monasterium Westfolorum in aedibus Aschendorff, 1964], 480–1).

<sup>8</sup> Aristotle: *La Métaphysique* (Paris, 1970<sup>2</sup>), 2.662; in n. 1 on the same page Tricot refers to Thomas (p. 700, no. 2483): *anima et corpus sunt materia et forma hominis.* J. Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, *Métaphysique d'Aristote* (Paris, 1879), 3.170, is still more explicit: 'Et, par exemple, la matière dont vous êtes fait, votre forme et votre moteur, ne sont, ni ma matière, ni ma figure, ni mon moteur.'

<sup>9</sup> Aristotele *Metafisica* (Milan, 1993). Cf. A. Carlini (trans.), *Aristotele, La Metafisica* (Bari, 1928), 380: 'onde la materia, la forma, la causa motrice son diverse per te e per me'; C. A. Viano (ed.), *La Metafisica di Aristotele* (Turin, 1965), 505–6: 'saranno diverse per cose che sono nella stessa specie, e in questo caso non saranno diverse per specie, ma individualmente, nel senso che

andere als *meine*' (not *meines* or *meiner*).<sup>10</sup> In French and Italian, as in Spanish and German, the singular pronoun, if it agreed in gender with the first term of the series, would refer unambiguously to that term and that alone.

Discussion of the passage by modern scholars has for the most part focused on the compatibility of the doctrine of individual forms with views that Aristotle expresses elsewhere, which would appear to restrict the idea of forms to types or species. Thus, Deborah Modrak, after a comparison with other passages that might suggest the doctrine of individual forms (for example 1039b5), concludes that 'the Aristotelian form is a universal in the sense in which a word-type is a universal'.<sup>11</sup> Modrak acknowledges that the passage in *A.5* is the most promising for the alternative view, but points, among other things, to the fact that the possessive pronouns are applied only to *ὑλη*. Modrak thus renders the passage: 'And of things in the same species, these are different not by species but because the [cause] of one individual differs from that of another, as your matter and the form and the moving principle *and my matter*' (376–7), and she objects to Ross's version as misleading (n. 37).

Writing partly in response to Modrak, Michael Frede and Günther Patzig, in their edition of *Metaphysics Z*, defended the Aristotelian credentials of individual forms, with special reference to the passage under discussion.<sup>12</sup> Thus, under the heading, 'Sind Formen allgemein oder individuell?' (1.48–57), they remark (52) that

Modrak hat dieser Interpretation zu entgehen versucht, indem sie annahm, dass das Possessivpronomen (*σῆ* bzw. *ἐμῇ*) nur auf *ὑλη* zu beziehen sei; aber der Gedankengang zeigt, dass sich *ἡ τε σῆ ὑλη καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ κινῆσαν καὶ ἡ ἐμῇ* in 1071a28–29 nicht nur auf die Materie, sondern auf alle Erklärungsprinzipien bezieht, dass sich entsprechend auch das *ἐμῇ* in 1071a29 auf sämtliche Erklärungsprinzipien bezieht und dass folglich das Possessivpronomen vor *εἶδος* und *τὸ κινῆσαν* nur aus stilistischen Gründen fehlt.

Frede has recently reaffirmed his position in unequivocal terms, arguing that in the passage in *A.5* Aristotle makes it clear that 'each particular sensible substance, as well as having its own particular matter and moving cause, also has its own form', and again: 'I conclude that Aristotle here does commit himself to individual forms.'<sup>13</sup>

la tua materia, la tua forma, e la tua causa motrice sono *diverse dalle mie*, anche se non identiche dal punto di vista della loro definizione universale'; H.-G. Gadamer, *Aristotele, Metafisica Libro XII*, trans. C. Angelino (Genoa, 1995), 33 (orig. *Aristoteles Metaphysik XII* [Frankfurt am Main, 1970]): '*diverse dalle mie*'. There is some ambiguity in R. Bonghi (trans.), *Aristotele, La Metafisica*, completed by M. F. Sciacca (Milan, 1945), 3.181: 'Anzi, fuori che analogicamente, sono ancora diverse insino le cause di cose che sono nella stessa specie, ma non già per rispetto alla specie, ma perché altra è la causa di ciascun singolare: altra la tua materia, e il tuo movente e la tua specie; *altra la mia*; e non anco identiche che non nella nozione universale'; despite the singular, however, 'altra' would appear to include all three antecedents.

<sup>10</sup> *Aristoteles: Metaphysik. Schriften zur Ersten Philosophie*, übersetzt und herausgegeben von Franz F. Schwarz (Stuttgart, 2001 [1970]). Contrast Eug. Rolfes (trans.), *Aristoteles Metaphysik* (Leipzig, 1904), 2.91: 'so hat man das eine Mal als Prinzipien deine Materie, dein Bewegendes, deine Form, das andere Mal meine Materie'. H. G. Zekl, *Aristoteles Metaphysik* (Würzburg, 2003), partially evades the problem by translating: 'Der Stoff, aus dem *du* bist, und die Erscheinungsform, und was dich hervorgebracht hat—und so entsprechend bei *mir*.' Cf. J. H. von Kirchmann, *Die Metaphysik des Aristoteles* (Berlin, 1871), who translates: 'bei Dir und mir der Stoff und das, was die Bewegung gegeben hat, und die Form verschieden sind'.

<sup>11</sup> D. K. Modrak, 'Forms, types and tokens in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 17 (1979), 384.

<sup>12</sup> M. Frede and G. Patzig (edd. and trr.), *Aristoteles 'Metaphysik Z'*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> 'Introduction', in M. Frede and D. Charles (edd.), *Aristotle's Metaphysics Lambda* (Oxford, 2000), 25–6. Frede and Patzig do not conclude, as Thomas and ps.-Alexander did, that the individual form is identical with the soul.

Scholars were not slow to respond in turn to Frede and Patzig. Michael Woods, for example, argued that the thesis of individual forms is not supported by passages they cite in *Metaphysics Z* and is in itself philosophically incoherent.<sup>14</sup> So too, Mary Louise Gill, in a thorough examination of the problem of individuals in Aristotle, writes:

The favorite passage for the defence of particular forms is *Met. A.5*, where Aristotle states that different substances have different causes and elements. . . . This passage provides the best evidence available that Aristotle was committed to particular forms. But it is not very good evidence.<sup>15</sup>

Gill argues:

Far from supporting a commitment to forms that are in themselves particular, this passage appears to support a notion of proprietary matter and form—matter and form individuated with reference to the objects whose matter and form they are. Here physical objects are treated as the basic particulars. (69)

Finally, Alan Code has recently countered Frede's interpretation by taking the three elements—matter, form, and moving cause—as a group or collectively; he paraphrases:

If so, then my cause is different from your cause in the sense that the triple that serves as your matter/form/moving cause is different from the triple that serves as mine. When your cause and mine are construed in this collective manner, then of course your cause and mine will be different even if our forms are not, provided that we have different material or different efficient causes.<sup>16</sup>

We have presented the above range of views in order to indicate how much seems to hang on the meaning of the sentence in question in *Metaphysics A*. Our own contribution is confined to the grammar of the possessive pronouns, and we leave it to others to determine whether and how the evidence we produce in this connection may affect the larger philosophical issues at stake. We begin by noting that the occurrence of the possessive pronoun with ἑλῃ alone in the phrase, ἡ τε σὴ ἑλῃ καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ κινήσαν, is not in itself decisive for restricting its application to that term only, as Modrak seems to suggest. In Greek, when a series of items is governed by what in French is called an *adjectif épithète*, that is, a qualitative, quantitative, possessive, personal, or numerical adjective, then 'on ne le repète que pour des raisons de clarté, ou afin de produire un effet: le plus souvent, il s'accorde en genre et en nombre avec le substantif qui est le plus proche de lui'.<sup>17</sup> There is thus nothing irregular in the

<sup>14</sup> M. Woods, 'Particular forms revisited', *Phronesis* 36 (1991) 75–87; cf. id., 'Form, species, and predication in Aristotle', *Synthese* 96 (1993), 299–415, for further discussion and defence of the view put forth in the review.

<sup>15</sup> M. L. Gill, 'Individuals and individuation in Aristotle', in T. Scaltsas, D. Charles, and M. L. Gill (edd.), *Unity, Identity, and Explanation in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Oxford, 1994), 55–71; discussion of *A.5* passage on 68–70, with ample reference to earlier literature, esp. 68, n. 34. In her earlier review of Frede and Patzig (*Journal of the History of Philosophy* 28 [1990], 603), Gill notes that the authors call 'attention most notably to a passage in *Metaphysics A.5*'.

<sup>16</sup> A. Code, 'Lambda 5', in M. Frede and D. Charles (edd.), *Aristotle's Metaphysics Lambda* (Oxford, 2000), 178.

<sup>17</sup> J. Humbert, *Syntaxe Grecque* (Paris, 1954), 70–80 = § 122. We may note that clarity is just what Aristotle would have wanted here, so the absence of the adjective is perhaps telling. For agreement with the nearest (final) noun, Humbert cites Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 437; for the possessive, add e.g. Euripides, *Alcestis* 837 (Heracles speaking) ὦ πολλὰ πλᾶσα καρδία καὶ χεῖρ ἐμή (in agreement with the last member, presumably), *Orestes* 466 οἷς, ὦ πάλαινα καρδία ψυχὴ τ' ἐμή, *Iph. in Aul.* 1399 διὰ μακροῦ καὶ παῖδες οὔτοι καὶ γάμοι καὶ δόξ' ἐμή, *Alcmeon* 72

limitation of the possessive *σῆ* to the first noun only, as opposed to repeating it with each of the subsequent nouns.<sup>18</sup> Now, in prose it is very common to use the article in combination with the possessive, as here (*ἡ τε σῆ*), when referring to a specific object;<sup>19</sup> but no rule is given in the handbooks concerning the repetition of the article with subsequent elements in the series. We have checked a wide sample of Greek literature, and it seems, in fact, that the formula represented by *ἡ τε σῆ* followed by *τό . . . τό* is relatively rare (in the Romance languages and in German, one must repeat the possessive if subsequent terms differ in gender from the first, as evidenced in the translations of Tricot, Reale and Schwartz quoted above); the more common pattern is that of Demosthenes, *De corona* 218: *καί μοι λέγε ταύτας* [sc. *ἐπιστολάς*] *λαβών, ἔν' εἰδήτε, ἡ ἐμὴ συνέχεια καὶ πλάνοι καὶ τάλαιπωρίαὶ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ ψηφίσματα, ἃ νῦν οὗτος διέσυρε, τί ἀπειργάσατο*.<sup>20</sup> Some examples, moreover, suggest that the article with a subsequent term may mark a contrast with the preceding possessive, for example Isocrates, *Nicocles* 63 *ταχέως ὄψεσθε καὶ τὸν βίον τὸν ὑμέτερον αὐτῶν ἐπιδεδωκότα καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν ἐμὴν ἠϋξημένην καὶ τὴν πόλιν εὐδαίμονα γεγεννημένην*, where it is plausible to understand 'your lives, my reign, and the city' (cf. *Ar. Av.* 641–3, cited in n. 18). There is thus some reason for supposing that Aristotle's meaning may have been 'your matter, and the form and moving principle (sc. associated with it)'.

*χαῖρ', ὦ γεραίε· τὴν τε παῖδ' ἐκδοὺς ἐμοὶ γαμβρὸς νομίζῃ καὶ πατὴρ σωτήρ τ' ἐμός, Heracles* 1154 *Θησεὺς ὁδ' ἔρπει συγγενὴς φίλος τ' ἐμός, Demosth.* 59.1 *ὁ τε κηδεστὴς καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἡ ἐμὴ, Josephus, Jewish Antiquities* 18.293 *δεδιακονήσεται γάρ σοι προθυμία τε καὶ ἰσχύι τῇ ἐμῇ*.

<sup>18</sup> For repetition with a view to effect, Humbert cites Homer, *Od.* 11.202, *σὸς τε πόθος σά τε μῆδεα*; but in fact the repetition is quite common, and does not always seem to be exploited for the sake of emphasis, e.g. *Hdt.* 1.88 *Οὔτε πόλιν τὴν ἐμὴν οὔτε χρήματα τὰ ἐμὰ διαρπάζει; 7.52 Οὔτω μὴδὲ τοῦτο φοβέο, ἀλλὰ θυμὸν ἔχων ἀγαθὸν σῶζε οἰκόν τε τὸν ἐμὸν καὶ τυραννίδα τὴν ἐμὴν; Soph. Aj.* 848 *ἀγγεῖλον ἅτας τὰς ἐμὰς μόρον τ' ἐμόν; Ar. Av.* 641–3 *Πρῶτον δέ τοι εἰσέλθ' εἰς νεοστιάν τε τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ τὰμὰ κάρφη καὶ τὰ παρόντα φρύγανα; Eccl.* 921–3 *ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν ποθ' ὑφαρπάσαιο τὰμὰ παίγνια· τὴν δ' ἐμὴν ὦραν οὐκ ἀπολεῖς οὐδ' ἀπολήψῃ; Hippocrates, Oath* 16 *διατηρήσω βίον τὸν ἐμὸν καὶ τέχνην τὴν ἐμὴν; Lysias* 1.26 *ἐξαμαρτάνειν εἰς τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ εἰς τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἐμούς; Septuagint (Gen. 27, 36) τὰ ἐμὰ πρωτοτόκια καὶ τὰς ἐμὰς εὐλογίας*.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. H. Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. G. M. Messing (Cambridge, MA, 1963<sup>2</sup>), §§ 1182–3, 1196.

<sup>20</sup> For example, Demosthenes 44.10 *καὶ γίνονται ἐξ αὐτοῦ νείεις τρεῖς, Ἀριστόδημος τε οὔτοσι ὁ πατὴρ ὁ ἐμός καὶ Ἀβρώνυχος ὁ θεῖος καὶ Μειδυλίδης; 29.43 τοῦτον δ' ὀγδοήκοντα μῆνας καὶ τὴν μητέρα τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν οἰκεῖν; Isocr. Aegin.* 19 *οἱ μῆς ἡμέρας ἀπέκτειναν αὐτόχειρες γενόμενοι τὸν πατέρα τὸν ἐμὸν καὶ τὸν θεῖον καὶ τὸν κηδεστὴν καὶ πρὸς τοῦτοις ἀνεψιούς τρεῖς* (cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiq. Rom.* 9.30.2). When the possessive alone modifies the first item in a series it is commonly omitted with subsequent terms and they too lack the article, e.g. Homer, *Od.* 12.211–12 *ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔνθεν ἐμῇ ἀρετῇ βουλῇ τε νόω τε ἐκφύγομεν, Hdt.* 3.52 *Ὁς ἔων ἐμός τε παῖς καὶ Κορίνθου τῆς εὐδαίμονος βασιλεὺς ἀλήτην βίον εἶλεο, 5.24 ἐμός τε σύσσιτος ἔων καὶ σύμβουλος, Eur. Heracles* 492 *θνήσκει πατὴρ σὸς καὶ τέκν'*, Isaeus 5.33, Aeschines, *Tim.* 49, Aristotle, *SE* 179b38 *Ἔνιοι δὲ καὶ τῷ διττῷ λύουσι τοὺς συλλογισμούς, οἷον ὅτι σὸς ἐστι πατὴρ ἢ υἱὸς ἢ δοῦλος* (Plato, *Sophist* 218B *τὸν Σωκράτους μὲν ὁμῶνυμον, ἐμὸν δὲ ἡλικιώτην καὶ συγγυμναστήν* is different, since both nouns refer to the same person). More significantly, even when the definite article accompanies the possessive modifying the first term, it is not repeated afterwards, e.g. Dinarchus, *Dem.* 109 *παρασημασμένη τὰ ὑμέτερα τέκνα καὶ γυναῖκας; Demosthenes* 32.15 *ὁ σὸς κοινωνὸς καὶ πολίτης, ὁ Ἡγέστρατος, Anaximenes, Rhet. proem.* 7 *ὅτι παραδείγματά ἐστι τοῖς πλείστοις τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῖς μὲν ὁ νόμος, τοῖς δὲ ὁ σὸς βίος καὶ λόγος, Dion. Hal. Antiq. Rom.* 6.59.3 *διὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ὁμότητα ἢ φιλοχρηματίαν* (cf. 8.29.2); Joseph. *Vit.* 389 *Τιβεριὰς δὲ μέλλουσα δεύτερον ἀφανίζεσθαι στρατηγία τῇ ἐμῇ καὶ προνοία τῇ περὶ αὐτῆς δὲ οὕτως κίνδυνον διέφυγεν*.

The issue, however, is not simply the syntax of ἡ σή but of ἡ ἐμή. The rules concerning repetition of the pronoun are irrelevant to the more unusual case of a possessive that refers back to a series of antecedent nouns in which only the first has a pronoun attached to it. The norm in Greek is that a pronoun referring to a compound antecedent involving terms of different genders appears in the neuter plural; if it is singular, it invariably agrees with the last term. What is more, Aristotle follows this usage quite strictly, as we have confirmed by examining the *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Eudemian Ethics*, *Magna Moralia*, *Rhetoric*, and *Poetics*. The few apparent exceptions are easily explained, and do not constitute violations of the rule.<sup>21</sup> Does a possessive pronoun that is meant to refer back to a triad of antecedents in different genders, of which the first alone bears a possessive modifier, follow the rule concerning compound antecedents generally? If this is what Aristotle intended, then he ought to have written καὶ τὰ ἐμά. Or might it, exceptionally, be attracted somehow to the preceding singular pronoun, so that in effect one understands καὶ ἡ τε ἐμή ὕλη καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ κινήσαν, with the pronoun covering all three terms?

The difficulty is in finding parallels that would decide the matter. We have not found any strictly analogous cases in the Aristotelian corpus, although the following, not involving a possessive pronoun, is suggestive (*Met. H.1*, 1042a22-4): περὶ δὲ τῶν ἰδεῶν καὶ τῶν μαθηματικῶν ὕστερον σκεπτέον· παρὰ γὰρ τὰς αἰσθητὰς οὐσίας ταύτας λέγουσί τινες εἶναι· ταύτας evidently refers to τῶν ἰδεῶν alone, not to the compound τῶν ἰδεῶν καὶ τῶν μαθηματικῶν. There is a similar instance (although in this case it involves a disjunction) immediately following the passage under consideration in *Met. A.5*, 1071a30: τὸ δὲ ζητεῖν τίνες ἀρχαὶ ἢ στοιχεῖα τῶν οὐσιῶν καὶ πρὸς τι καὶ ποιῶν, πότερον αἱ αὐταὶ ἢ ἕτεραι. Where the reference back is to multiple antecedents, in turn, the neuter plural possessive seems to be preferred. Thus, at *Hdt. 1.88*: Κροῖσος δὲ ἀμείβετο· ‘Οὐτε πόλιν τὴν ἐμὴν οὔτε χρήματα τὰ ἐμὰ διαρπάξει· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ ἔτι τούτων μέτα· ἀλλὰ φέρουσί τε καὶ ἄγουσι τὰ σά’, τὰ σά includes both πόλιν and χρήματα, although, given the frequency with which τὰ

<sup>21</sup> Examples of a neuter plural pronoun referring back to a sequence of terms in different genders are *Met. A.8*, 988b32; *B.2*, 997a27; 5, 1001b30, 1002a4, 1002a15, 1002a25, 1002b9; *A.26*, 1023b32 (possible); 28, 1024b23; *Z.10*, 1034b30, 1035a19 (*ioutōn* is surely neuter); *Θ.9*, 1050b27; *K.2*, 1060b12; 2, 1060b14; 4, 1061b23; *A.4*, 1070a31; *M.2*, 1076b17; 9, 1085a19 (forward attraction, perhaps, to πάθη); 9, 1085b35; *N.2*, 1089a35; *NE A.6*, 1096b17; 7, 1097b2; 8, 1098b24 (neuter pronoun referring to three feminine antecedents); 12, 1101b30; *B.6*, 1107a10; *A.3*, 1124a17; *E.2*, 1130b2; *Z.2*, 1139a17; 6, 1141a5; *H.4*, 1148a25, 1148a31, 1147b30; *Poetics* 58a22; *Rhetoric A.5*, 1361a12; 10, 1370a3; 11, 1371b10; *B.8*, 1385b29; *Γ.10*, 1410b20; 14, 1414b19. *MM A.33*, 1194a21; *B.6*, 1201a36; *EE A.8*, 1218a21; *B.2*, 1220b13; 3, 1220b22; 7, 1223a27; 8, 1225a5. So too, a sequence may be said to be ‘the same’ (neuter plural), e.g. *Met. N.6*, 1093a10. With words such as ‘each’ (*hekateron*) or ‘every one’ (*pan*), or when things are declared to be ‘the same thing’ (*auto*), the neuter singular will be employed after a series of terms of mixed gender, e.g. *Met. A.4*, 985a3; *A.26*, 1024a6; 28, 1024b12; *A.4*, 1070b29. The neuter term (plural or singular) may also precede the sequence, e.g. *Met. M.2*, 1076b22; 9, 1085a35; *NE Z.4*, 1140a2; *Poetics* 52b18 (adj.). Similarly, the verb following such a sequence is normally in the singular, indicating that the subject is treated as neuter plural: *Met. E.1*, 1025b1; *Z.10*, 1035b27; *Θ.8*, 1050b2; *A.9*, 1074b31; *M.10*, 1087a3; *N.2*, 1089a33; *NE Γ.2*, 111b8; *Poetics* 60b12; *Rhetoric A.1*, 1354a16; *MM A.5*, 1186a5; *A.33*, 1119b35; *EE Θ.3*, 1248b28; for verb preceding, cf. *Met. H.1*, 1042a5; *Θ.8*, 1050b22; *A.4*, 1070a36; 5, 1071a2; *NE Θ.13*, 1162b6; *K.5*, 1176a17; *Rhetoric Γ.7*, 1408a19; *MM A.34*, 1196b18; *EE H.8*, 1241b1; *Θ.3*, 1428b36. Exceptions take the form of agreement with the nearest term, whether final, e.g. *Met. A.3*, 984a23 (predicative adjective *aition*); *NE A.9*, 1099b32 (adj.); *Θ.3*, 1156b24; *Poetics* 51b33; *Rhetoric Γ.2*, 1405a10; or initial, e.g. *Met. K.5*, 1062a29; *A.4*, 1070a33; *MM A.19*, 1190b10; contrast *aitia* (pl.) in *Met. A.10*, 1075b27. Humbert (ibid.) illustrates the rule with Homer, *Il.* 11.244.

σά signifies 'your possessions', it is possible that the expression is employed here absolutely, without reference to an antecedent. An apparently contrary case, in which a singular possessive seems to refer to two preceding terms, is Demosthenes, *De corona*, 317 ἡ μὲν ἐμὴ πολιτεία καὶ προαίρεσις, ἃν τις σκοπῇ, ταῖς τῶν τότε ἐπαινουμένων ἀνδρῶν ὁμοία καὶ ταῦτὰ βουλομένη φανήσεται, ἡ δὲ σὴ ταῖς τῶν τοὺς τοιοῦτους τότε συκοφαντούντων; but in fact the terms πολιτεία καὶ προαίρεσις constitute a hendiadys, as is clear from βουλομένη (cf. Hippocrates, *Oath* 3.13 κατὰ δύναμιν καὶ κρίσιν ἐμὴν; Demosthenes, *On the Crown* 286 τήν τ' ἐμὴν εὐνοίαν καὶ προθυμίαν μεθ' ἧς τὰ πράγματα' ἔπραττον). Towards the beginning of Heliodorus' *Ethiopica* (1.2.4), the hero Theagenes says to Chariclea, 'Have you not even abandoned me after death, ἀλλὰ φάσμα τὸ σὸν καὶ ψυχὴ τὰς ἐμὰς περιέπει τύχας;' 'ἐν σοὶ' ἔφη 'τὰ ἐμὰ' ἡ κόρη 'σώζεσθαί τε καὶ μὴ.' τὰ ἐμὰ conceivably refers back inclusively to φάσμα τὸ σὸν καὶ ψυχὴ (note the possessive adjective only with the first member in the antecedent clause); but again, it perhaps means simply 'my affairs, my life' in general. Antisthenes fr. 118 (cited in Arrian, *Epicteti diss.* 3.24.67) is not an exact parallel, although πάντα ταῦτα = τὰ ἐμὰ: οὕτως ἐλευθερία γίνεται. διὰ τοῦτο ἔλεγεν [ὁ Διογένης] ὅτι 'ἐξ οὗ μ' Ἀντισθένης ἡλευθέρωσεν, οὐκέτι ἐδούλευσα.' πῶς ἡλευθέρωσεν; ἄκουε τί λέγει· 'Ἐδίδαξέν με τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ οὐκ ἐμὰ. κτήσις οὐκ ἐμὴ· συγγενεῖς, οἰκεῖοι, φίλοι, φήμη, συνήθεις, τόποι, διατριβή, πάντα ταῦτα ὅτι ἀλλότρια.' Σὸν οὖν τί; 'Χρήσις φαντασιῶν.' So too the following from Aeschines Socraticus 35.78–81 (from his *Callias*): ἐκεῖνος μὲν οὖν σκαιοῖς ἴσως πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ παῖδας χρήσεται τοῖς λόγοις, πατρικὴν ἅμα πολιτικὴ παρρησίαν ἄγων, τὰ δ' ἐμὰ λόγου μὲν ἔνεκα ἐπιεικέστερα ὄντα τυγχάνει, ἔργῳ δὲ οὐ πόρρῳ φαίνεται πλουτούντων ἀποστατεῖν.

Although we refrain from entering into the philosophical issues raised by the passage under consideration, we may note that an emphasis on 'your matter versus mine' might support the idea that matter is being treated as the individuating principle of things that share the same form.<sup>22</sup> With respect to the moving cause, for example, it would be not so much one's father, who would be different for you and me (unless we are brothers), as the εἶδος instantiated in the parent that is the cause, and that is the same for all creatures of a given species—and is itself differentiated by matter.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, although we have limited our investigation to the use of the possessive pronoun, the grammar of the final part of the previous clause, καὶ τῶν ἐν ταύτῳ εἶδει ἕτερα, οὐκ εἶδει ἀλλ' ὅτι τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον ἄλλο, can on one reading support the restriction of the pronoun to ὅλη. We render: 'of the things that belong to the same species, the causes are different, not by virtue of the form but rather because there is something different in each of the different individuals'; that is, we take ἄλλο as

<sup>22</sup> Silvia Fazzo writes (*per litteras*): 'I incline to take matter as the *principium individuationis*. But whatever view should be attributed to Aristotle on this point, all we may assume from this passage is that forms are not a unique principle for all beings sharing the same form in the same way in which the prime mover is.' For Alexander of Aphrodisias' interpretation cf. Fazzo, *Aporia e sistema: studi sulle Quaestiones di Alessandro di Afrodisia* (Pisa, 2002), 157: 'A partire dall'esame dagli enti matematici, senza materia (che sono identici fra loro, per esempio linee con linee, punti con punti, sia di numero che per specie) Alessandro definisce per converso il ruolo della materia come principio di individuazione negli enti materiati: è la materia a rendere numericamente diverse sostanze la cui forma è uguale. Questo è ciò che in altri contesti Alessandro espressamente asserisce, quando scrive: "Le reciproche differenze tra gli individui della stessa specie, per le quali Socrate e Platone sono diversi nella sostanza, non sono di tipo primario, bensì solo accidenti dovuti alla materia che fa da sostrato a questi individui"' (the reference is to the Arabic version of *De providentia* 91.1ff. Ruland).

<sup>23</sup> This point was suggested to us by Silvia Fazzo.

distributive, ‘a particular cause for each of the individuals’. The ‘something different’ in this case could conceivably be taken as the  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$ , which is the principle that individuates the form and moving cause.<sup>24</sup> This is, however, an exceedingly difficult sentence and subject to various interpretations; we offer the above as a suggestion only.

Although the parallels we have been able to assemble do not prove incontrovertibly that  $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \eta\ \epsilon\mu\eta$  refers to  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$  only and not to the next two antecedent terms, we believe that Aristotle’s consistency in using a neuter plural pronoun to recapitulate a series of terms of diverse genders, together with the similar use of the possessive in other Greek literature and the relatively unusual shift within the antecedent sequence from the article and possessive to the article alone, tend to confirm that by the singular possessive pronouns Aristotle meant to indicate that matter, and matter only, can be said to be possessed individually.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Ross, who in his commentary writes: ‘ $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron$  sc.:  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon$   $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron$ ’. To the parallels adduced by Ross, Silvia Fazzo adds *Met. B*, 995a26 ( $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\varsigma = \alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\iota$   $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\varsigma$ ), and compares Alexander of Aphrodisias ad loc. (172.4–7), who offers this as a second interpretation, after suggesting that  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\varsigma$  signifies ‘not suitably, not as it should be’; Fazzo notes that when Alexander offers two explanations, he generally prefers the latter.