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Myles Burnyeat, *A Map of Metaphysics Zeta*. Pittsburgh: Mathesis Publications, 2001. Pp. x, 176.

The central chapter of Burnyeat's *Map* is organized like a commentary, moving through *Metaphysics Z* (and parts of H) section by section. But unlike a commentary, it does not strive for comprehensiveness. Its aim is to describe the general lay of the land—what is being argued for where, in what way, and why—and so its exegesis is limited to Aristotle's "signposts." For example, every time Aristotle says "we must investigate" or "as we have seen," Burnyeat asks "where?" As far as possible, he tries to construct his map on philological evidence, remaining neutral on many of the substantive issues that have defined readings of *Z*. The hope is that, map in hand, we can interpret *Z*'s notoriously obscure arguments with a better sense of their place in Aristotle's overall project.

Burnyeat defends two interesting and controversial claims about how *Z* should be read. First, he argues that *Z* is not a linear, continuously building treatise. After the introductory material in *Z1–2*, it divides into four clearly defined sections, each marked by a fresh start: (i) *Z3*, (ii) *Z4–6* and *10–11*, (iii) *Z13–16*, (iv) *Z17*. (Burnyeat argues on philological and philosophical grounds that *Z7–9* and *Z12* are later insertions.) Previous commentators have noted the division into four sections, but Burnyeat goes beyond them in arguing that the sections are completely independent of each other: "the aim of Aristotle's procedure is to show that each of his four starting points leads *independently* to the same conclusion: substantial being is form" (4–5). Thus, an interpreter must take care not to use arguments or conclusions from one section in interpreting another. Among the evidence Burnyeat offers for his independence thesis is a careful study of Aristotle's cross-references in *Z*. Burnyeat notes that of the twenty-six forward- and back-references in the original text (before the addition of *Z7–9*), only one (1039a19–20) connects two different sections, and this solitary violation is relatively innocent (51–52). Those who reject Burnyeat's non-linearity thesis must explain why Aristotle, "an indefatigable cross-referencer," never explicitly signals his importation of results from one section into another (52).

Second, Burnyeat argues that each of the four disjoint investigations comprising *Z* has a two-level structure: it begins with a "logical" investigation using only the abstract, topic-neutral concepts of the *Organon*, then proceeds to a "metaphysical" investigation using the concepts of matter and form.¹ 'Logical' here transliterates, rather than translates, the Greek *logikos*, which Aristotle uses several times in *Z* to mark the distinction of levels. One of the highlights of Burnyeat's book is a thorough discussion of the use of this word in Aristotle: "logical" discussions abstract from principles appropriate to the particular subject matter at hand, whether this be ethics, physics, or first philosophy (21–22).

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Often, they rely on specific discussions from the *Organon*, and they tend to use neutral, non-Aristotelian examples (124–25). ‘Metaphysical’, though not Aristotle’s word, aptly characterizes discussions that require prior familiarity with Aristotle’s hylomorphic physics and so must come “after the physical works” in the order of learning.

Although it is difficult to discern a two-level structure in Z3, which immediately deploys the concepts of matter and form after a preliminary definition of “subject,” Burnyeat makes a compelling case for two-level structure in the other three sections of Z. The proposal that the substantial being of a thing is its essence is discussed in Z4–6 in terms familiar from the *Organon*, with no mention of matter or form; only in the “metaphysical” discussion of Z10–11 do we get the conclusion that *form* is essence and primary substantial being. Similarly, Z13–14 stay at the “logical” level in discussing the proposal that the substantial being of a thing is a universal under which it falls; matter and form do not make their appearance until Z15–16. And the first half of Z17 (up to 1041a32) uses the conceptual apparatus of the *Analytics* to clarify the notion of “cause of being,” while the second half identifies the form of a hylomorphic composite as the cause of its being. In each case, the hylomorphic concepts are deployed in the “metaphysical” sections to resolve puzzles raised in the “logical” sections (for example, the worry about the definability of substantial being at the end of Z13).

Why the two-level approach? Aristotle’s most serious philosophical interlocutors in Z are Platonists, and for Platonists the route to first principles is through the abstract sciences (mathematics and dialectic). Aristotle needs to convince his readers to start instead with *physics*, and he does this by showing that a “logical” investigation of primary substantial being leads to puzzles that can be resolved only by appeal to the hylomorphic analysis of concrete particulars (81). I wonder, however, whether the picture can be as neat as this. As Burnyeat himself observes, in *Metaphysics* H and Θ Aristotle “reworks” the form-matter distinction in terms of the concepts of actuality and potentiality (69; cf. 76, 130), which count as “logical” (they appear in the *Organon* as well as the logical subsections of Z (49)). This reworking is necessary for Aristotle’s discussion of immaterial separate substance in *Metaphysics* Λ , because “the concept of form belongs within the form-matter contrast and cannot be extended to the wholly immaterial. It is the *logical* concepts of potentiality and actuality which range over both sensible and non-sensible things” (130 n. 8). Insofar as the physical concepts of form and matter are deployed in first philosophy, then, they must be understood in terms of these more general “logical” concepts. It is tempting to conclude that the logical level of discussion *is* adequate for first philosophy after all. Burnyeat does not anticipate this temptation and does nothing to dispel it. It would have been helpful if he had explained why we couldn’t have deployed the concepts of actuality and potentiality *directly* to

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solve the puzzles raised in the logical subsections of *Z*, without bringing in form and matter at all.

Burnyeat's two theses have profound implications for the interpretation of *Z*. Take, for example, the ancient debate about whether substantial forms are individual or general. The debate has always centered around the interpretation of passages from *Z*13. But as Burnyeat points out, *Z*13 (a "logical" chapter) does not even mention form. We can take its conclusions to apply to form only if we import *Z*10–11's conclusion that substantial being is form. But if Burnyeat is right that *Z*10–11 and *Z*13 belong to independent investigations, neither presupposing the other, then this importation is illicit. Thus, "[t]o regard *Z*13 as the crucial text for the particularity of form is a complete misunderstanding of its role in the overall structure of *Z*" (52). Instead, we need to look at *Z*13 in light of *Z*15–16's hylomorphic clarifications: it is the setup, not the punch line.

There is much more in Burnyeat's book than I have been able to convey here. Although the centerpiece of the book is the map of *Z*, Burnyeat warns us against tunnel vision: "Zeta is better read, and more easily read, when it is taken as part of an ever-widening context" (3). Accordingly, he supplements his map with illuminating discussions of *H*1's summary of *Z*, the place of *Z* in *ZH*Θ, the place of *ZH*Θ in the *Metaphysics* as a whole, the purpose and composition of *Λ*, and the character of the *Organon*. Burnyeat's careful scholarship and keen philosophical sensibilities pay dividends throughout. This book deserves a place next to Ross's commentary on every Aristotle scholar's shelf.

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Notes

¹ As Burnyeat acknowledges (8 n. 7), Alan Code makes a similar distinction between two levels of discussion in "Aristotle's *Metaphysics* as a Science of Principles," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 51 (1997): 357–78.