The Largest Kinds of Animals:
Aristotle's *Historia Animalium I* 6. 490b7-491a6

Masami ITO

In *HA I* 6 Aristotle enumerates seven largest kinds of animals : that of birds, that of fishes, that of cetaceans, that of the hard-shelled animals, that of the soft-shelled animals, that of the soft-bodied animals, and that of insects. And he remarks that among the remaining animals we find no large kinds. Why Aristotle doesn't reckon the live-bearing four-footed animals and the egg-bearing four-footed animals here, though they seem to be, and he treats them as, very large kinds ?

Gotthelf says it is because 'the live-bearing four-footed animals' and 'the egg-bearing four-footed animals' are not ordinary expressions that they are excluded from the list. For if they had been recognized by people as the designations of very large kinds of animals, they would have had names or name-like expressions. In contrast, he says, the seven largest kinds are designated by either names or name-like expressions which are commonly used by people and represent 'kinds into which animals have already been divided (sc. by people) (490b7-8)'. But, he says, Aristotle argues at 490b19 f. that the live-bearing four-footed animals and the egg-bearing four-footed animals should be treated as the largest kinds along with the seven largest kinds.

But it is questionable that 'the hard-shelled animals ($\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\dot{o}\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\kappa\acute{o}\delta\epsilon\rho\mu\alpha$)', 'the soft-shelled animals ($\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\mu\alpha\lambda\alpha\kappa\acute{o}\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\kappa\alpha$)', 'the soft-bodied animals ($\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\mu\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\kappa\iota\alpha$)', and 'insects ($\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\check{\epsilon}\nu\tau\omega\mu\alpha$)' are ordinary expressions of very large kinds of (bloodless) animals. While the hard-shelled animals were commonly called 'oysters', Aristotle included sea urchin and ascidians among them, and the others had no name. Then, it seems that the absence of ordinary expression is not the only reason for the exclusion of the live-bearing four-footed animals and the egg-bearing four-footed animals from the lists of the largest kinds of animals.

Grasp of the kind ($\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu o\varsigma$) of animals in question gives us a clue to investigate the properties (sc. differentiae) in which they are differentiated from the other animals and by which they are identified as such. For the kind of animals in question limit the range of animals with which they should be compared. We also get at the nature of the animals in question at first by classifying them into the kind. The seven largest kinds can offer the first grasp of the animals, which is not descriptive but intuitive.

In *HA I* 6 Aristotle describes the way of investigation, not the way of putting the data in order. The seven largest kinds give us the first clue to the investigation, but the kind of the live-bearing four-footed animals and that of the egg-bearing four-footed animals do not. For the latter are not intuitive but descriptive, and are the kinds which are set in the course of arranging the data. That is the reason for the exclusion of them from the list of the largest kinds.