

Progress of Λ 's First Half

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This paper aims to present a novel way to understand the first half of Book Λ in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which has been regarded as irrelevant or preliminary to the main project of the book. I begin by reviewing the recent common trend, which re-evaluates Λ 's first half focusing chiefly on its first chapter, and by examining a few major interpretations. My verdict is that all of them cannot avoid difficulties interpreting the first chapter, especially its first two sentences. Accordingly, I claim that the importance of the first chapter as a full-fledged sketch of Λ 's main program should be considered in a deflationary manner; the aims and scope of Λ as a whole need to be re-established, considering the entire book. My suggestion for salvaging the significance of Λ 's first half and better appreciating the structure of the entire book is that we perceive Λ as a study in which Aristotle *exhaustively* and *gradually* investigates the principles of being, i.e., the celebrated four causes in totality. In this study, he first introduces the most basic model consisting of the form (and its privation) and matter, then continuously modifies this model by adding new causes and clarifying their roles and statuses. Next, I examine the validity of my suggestion by analyzing Λ 's third chapter as a test case. This chapter has been considered a disordered accumulation of discrete propositions. I split it into two parts and argue that the chapter's first half can be understood as an introduction of the moving cause and the second half as a clarification of its status, especially its relationship with the form and hylomorphic compound. I conclude the paper with a brief discussion on the prospective understanding of Λ 's second half and inevitable limits of the recent interpretations including my own.