

Segalerba, G. *Semantik und Ontologie, Drei Studien zu Aristoteles*. Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2013. xvii, 546 p. 125,25\$ (pb). ISBN-13 978-3039112777.

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The thesis defended in this book is that the notion of substance in Aristotle's *Categories* 'runs parallel' (*parallel laufen*) with his notion of substance in the *Metaphysics*, and there is thus some sort of continuity in respect to substance in these two works. According to Segalerba, Aristotle's notions of first and second substance in the *Categories* and in the *Metaphysics* run parallel because in both works Aristotle operates with a distinction between individuals (first substances) and universals (second substances) such that universals, although dependent on individuals, are part of extralinguistic and extramental reality. Segalerba intends to show that this continuity is motivated by Aristotle's eagerness through the *Categories* to the *Metaphysics* to oppose degrees of instantiation in favor of the view that universals are neither independent from their individuals nor paradigms of properties, but rather express the 'program' of what their individuals are.

To prove his point, Segalerba produces an extensive and complex review of Aristotle's Ontology by studying texts such as *De Ideis*, the *Categories*, the *Sophistic Refutations*, *De Interpretatione*, *De Anima*, and the *Metaphysics*. This review consists in three long essays meant to be interconnected: (I) The first essay deals with Aristotle's notion of second substance and universals (*Aspekte der aristotelischen Theorie der Zweiten Substanzen und der Universalien*). This essay is basically a study of the notion of second substance in the *Categories* and an explanation of how this notion is intended to oppose Plato's theory of ideas and avoid the snares of the Third Man Regress. (II) The second essay (*Aspekte der Substanz bei Aristoteles*) purposes to show the continuity of

Aristotle's notion of substance through the *Categories* to the *Metaphysics*. To do this, Segalerba produces a comparative study of the notion of substance in the *Categories*, *De Anima*, and *Metaphysics* VII. In this study particular attention is given to the notion of perceptible substance as τὸδε τοιόνδε in *Metaphysics* VII 8, the relationship between Matter and Form in *Metaphysics* VII, VIII, and IX, the structure of definition in *Metaphysics* VII and VIII, the incompatibility of substance and the general in *Metaphysics* VII 13 and 16, the relationship between sensible and non-sensible substance, and the notion of eternal, immobile, non-sensible substance in *Metaphysics* XII. (III) The final essay (*Synonymie in der Kategorien-Schrift gegen Nicht-Homonymie im Argument aus dem Bezüglichen (Relativa)*) is an analysis of the 'Argument from the Sciences' and the 'Argument from the Relatives' in Aristotle's *De Ideis*. With this analysis, Segalerba tries to show how Aristotle constructed his notions of synonymy, non-homonymy, homonymy, and predication as a critical response to Plato's theory of forms or ideas. Segalerba argues that the object of Aristotle's critique must be the theory of ideas as it is found in the *Phaedo*, however—Segalerba points out—Aristotle does not provide a fair representation of that theory.

The main points of each of these three essays are the following: (I) Plato, in Aristotle's view, took ideas to be both instantiated and instantiations, for ideas themselves in some way have the properties individuals have by participated in them. The difference between ideas and individuals is that ideas, which are universals, are independent, whereas individuals depend on ideas to be what they are. As a consequence, ideas and individuals represent two different levels of reality such that individuals are in a lesser degree what their universals are. According to Segalerba, this platonic picture is problematic for Aristotle. The problem is that if ideas are instantiations of properties, then they must be individuals. This is wrong for several reasons. First, this may involve a contradiction, for the same thing cannot be general and individual at the same time. Second, the general cannot have properties, for only individuals have properties. Third, what would then be the point of ideas? Plato explains individuals by means of ideas, but by doing so he is actually explaining individuals by means of other individuals. Finally, if ideas, as well as individuals, instantiate the same property, and ideas are meant to explain why individuals have that very same property, it seems that an infinite regress may arise.

Contrary to Plato, Segalerba argues, Aristotle took individuals or first substances not to be instantiations of any property, but just to be properties that are not predicable in any way of any other entity. As a consequence, individuals, according to Aristotle, are not reducible to anything else and are therefore both independent and one in a strong sense. Universals or second substances, on the other hand, merely express or mirror what their individuals are, i.e. they express the ‘program’ involved in what each one of their individuals is. Since what it is to be a universal consists in just expressing what its individuals are, it follows that universals (i.e. the general) are dependent on their individuals to be what they are. Further, insofar as universals merely express what their individuals are, universals are not in any way what their individuals are and it makes no sense to talk of two different levels of reality—i.e. two different levels of being something—as Plato implied. Universals are thus contained in their individuals, and to the extent that they are contained in their many individuals, they can be said to be divisible and not one. Nonetheless, universals are in Aristotle’s view as much a piece of extralinguistic and extramental reality as individuals are.

(II) According to Segalerba, in *Metaphysics Z* Aristotle ‘deepens’ (*vertiefen*) or engrosses the notion of substance he had developed in the *Categories*. An individual or first substance is in the *Metaphysics*, just as in the *Categories* (5, 3<sup>b</sup>10-23), a concrete entity that has properties (*Met.* VII 1, 1028<sup>a</sup>12 and 1029<sup>a</sup>28). While a universal or second substance is, just as in the *Categories*, what brings to the front the essential identification of an individual, i.e. the expression of what an individual is. The difference between the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics* in regard to individuals is that in the *Categories* individuals are presented only as concrete objects, while in the *Metaphysics* they are regarded not only as concrete objects but also as analyzable. As for universals, or second substances, Segalerba thinks that just as in the *Categories* they are in the *Metaphysics* real extralinguistic and extramental entities. He holds this view on the basis of *Metaphysics* VII 13, 1038<sup>b</sup>30-1039<sup>a</sup>3 (pp. 277-280) and the particular fact that in this text second substance is labeled as τοιόνδε (something of a particular sort or quality) much in the same way as it is labeled as ποιόν (something of a certain sort or quality) in the *Categories* (3<sup>b</sup>15).

(III) Segalerba ends his work where the reader may have expected him to start from. He ends by carefully comparing *De Ideis* and the *Categories*. In his view, the Ontology under attack in *De Ideis* and the Ontology presented in the *Categories* exclude one another, imply different understandings of Synonymy, involve different theories of predication, and give different answers to the question how a plurality of entities belong to the same class and can share the same name, i.e. what the conditions for having the same property and meaning are. This is so because in *De Ideis* the ‘Argument from the Sciences’ and the ‘Argument from the Relatives’ denounce a conception of reality where a plurality of items has in common a property that is embodied by a different single entity independent from them, i.e. the idea. While the idea is just what it is, the items that are constituted into a class by the idea are what they are by having in a lesser degree the property of the idea. The idea thus explains why a plurality of items constitutes a class and why some items share a property in common. In this Ontology the idea functions as a paradigm while the items, whose common property is embodied by the idea, are understood as copies of the idea. For all these reasons, the idea explains and is responsible for synonymous predication. In contrast, in the *Categories*, it is individuals that are responsible for synonymous predication, for it is individuals who are the actual independent bearers of properties, while universals are named and predicated after them as expressions of what individuals are. Moreover, in the *Categories* the relationship between individuals and universals does not have anything to do with paradigms and copies, for universals, although dependent on their individuals, are not at all what their individuals are, they simply express or mirror what individuals are.

What is Segalerba’s major contribution to Aristotelian scholarship in this book? Segalerba’s major contribution to Aristotelian scholarship in this book is to be found in the third and last section of the book and it lies in the dialogue he establishes between Owen (1957), Leszl (1975), Barford (1976), Rowe (1979), Fine (1993), Liske (1995), and Baltzly (1997) concerning the interpretation of Aristotle’s *De Ideis*. However, Segalerba agrees on all points with Leszl’s interpretation of *De Ideis* (except Leszl’s view that *De Ideis* correctly represents Plato’s ideas). For this reason, Segalerba’s treatment of *De Ideis* cannot be taken to surpass Leszl’s or Fine’s work on the subject.

There are some particularities and ambiguities that need to be pointed out. First, given that he wants to produce a reading of the notion of substance as it is found through the works of Aristotle, it is not clear why Segalerba does not start by studying the earliest and seminal work *De Ideis*. Second, Segalerba does not make fully clear at the start of the book what exactly he means by notions of substance ‘running parallel’ (*parallel laufen*) in the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*. Halfway through the book the reader gets the impression that ‘running parallel’ is not meant to imply that the notion of substance is exactly the same in the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*, but rather that ‘a core view’ first found in the *Categories* is expanded in the *Metaphysics* and other works in order to accommodate the analysis of first substance into matter and form. This need not be viewed as ‘running parallel’, but can be viewed as development, expansion, reworking, or adaptation. Yet, later on the reader has the impression that the actual case of ‘running parallel’ between the *Categories* and the *Metaphysic* lies in the notion of second substance, which according to Segalerba has in both works exactly the same ontological status, i.e. it is a real extralinguistic and extramental entity. In this case, ‘running parallel’ is meant as ‘persistence of the same view’. Third, some readers might get the impression that Segalerba is keen to show the similarities between the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*, but sweeps the differences between these and other texts under the carpet. Quite clearly, the discussion of substance in the *Categories*, *De Anima*, and the *Metaphysics*, is in each case motivated by different philosophical and scientific concerns that are not taken on account by Segalerba. This is in fact a point from which one may expect Segalerba’s view to be challenged. Finally, it should be pointed out that in the first and second sections of the book the engagement with secondary literature is less systematic and intensive than in the third section. The first and second sections have at times the expository character of a lecture, and on occasion the author does not fully show why other interpretations cannot be the case or are less plausible than his own interpretation. To give an example, Segalerba clearly wants to show in these sections that Aristotle was a realist through and through from the *Categories* to the *Metaphysics*. Yet, when he mentions Frede and Patzig (1988) (p. 280)—who champion the view that contrary to the *Categories*, the *Metaphysics* do not give the status of real entities to second substances or universals—, Segalerba does not systematically engage with their

reasons and arguments, nor does he examine different ways of reading the pertinent passage at *Metaphysics* VII 13, 1038<sup>b</sup>30-1039<sup>a</sup>3.

All in all, Segalerba's is an interesting book full of information, and information is indeed what is to be naturally expected from a 546 pages book on Aristotle that covers works as various as *De Ideis*, the *Categories*, the *Sophistic Refutations*, *De Interpretatione*, *De Anima*, and the *Metaphysics*.

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