

RETHINKING THE ETYMOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF METAPHYSICS

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ABSTRACT

Three traditions of interpretation of etymological meaning of metaphysics have, historically, contended for supremacy. The first is the tradition that ascribes the etymological meaning of metaphysics to the sequence of Andronicus of Rhodes' editorial undertaking. The second of the traditions interprets the etymological meaning of metaphysics as deriving from the transcendental nature of the subject matter of metaphysics. The third tradition derives the meaning from the ancient order of philosophical knowledge. Despite the existence of these variants of interpretations most scholarship on the etymological meaning of metaphysics has privileged the first and therefore present metaphysics as deriving its original meaning from the editorial sequence of Andronicus. This paper undertakes a re-examination of the three traditions of interpretation. It argues that a fourth interpretation is possible. The paper adopts the method of critical analysis in order to arrive at the fourth interpretation.

Keywords: metaphysics, knowledge, traditions of Metaphysics, tradition of meaning.

INTRODUCTION

Most contemporary traditions of Metaphysics attribute the coinage, "*Metaphysics*", to Andronicus of Rhodes, the eleventh of the successive heads of the Aristotelian school and the 1st Century AD editor of Aristotle's books. Centuries of philosophical undertakings have translated the Greek word, *Metaphysics*, to mean "one after the physics". However, the interpretation of the expression, "one after the physics" has remained contentious. This is more so as Andronicus' motif or explanation, if he ever gave one, is not known yet. The route of escapement toed by philosophers is to hypothesise and impute motifs on behalf of Andronicus. The most prominent of these motifs derives the meaning of metaphysics from the bibliographical order in which Aristotle's books were edited and published by Andronicus. According to this, *Metaphysics* simply means the book after the one on *Physics*. An example of

this usage is a recent work by Avanesian which promotes this meaning and dogmatically dismisses alternative arguments as mistaken.

A thorough discussion of all the prevailing arguments is undertaken by Ando in his quest to establish a definition for metaphysics. His motivation is that settling the meaning of metaphysics is fundamental to the progress of the discipline. His approach surveys postulated etymological meanings of metaphysics. Ando dismisses as unsatisfactory the notion that metaphysics as submitted by Andronicus entails the book edited and published after the book on *Physics*. He submits that a proper etymological definition of metaphysics can only be attained inductively from the history of the discipline. Thus, he argues that from the history of philosophy, a challenge among ancient philosophers was the order in which the then branches of philosophy, logic, physics and ethics, were to be taught and studied. Based on this, Ando posits that Andronicus' entitling of Aristotle's book "Metaphysics" was in continuation of the intellectual disputation on the order of learning whereby Andronicus only meant that the book should be read only after *Physics*. This is the position historically held by the two prominent Arabic scholars of Aristotle, Avicenna and Averoes (Ando 4).

In holding this view, Ando is dismissive of the meaning of the term as held by the church fathers according to which metaphysics derives its name from its subject matters. Consequently, the subject matters of Metaphysics relate to things that are beyond and therefore transcend the physical world as discussed in Aristotle's *Physics*. In *Physics*, the subject matters were things that appear in nature and as perceived by the senses. But in metaphysics as understood today the subjects of discussion are mostly transcendental and they extend beyond the senses.

I posit that all the reasons offered for the various interpretations of what Andronicus described as "Metaphysics" are insufficient. This paper, therefore, is a search for sufficient reasons to explain Andronicus' motif for titling Aristotle's work "Metaphysics." The adopted method of inquiry is critical analysis. By the method, keen interrogation of the Greek Language from where the word "Metaphysics" derived is expected to offer a better understanding of the meaning which the word had for Andronicus.

THE SHORTCOMING OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SCHOOL OF MEANING

Strabo, the 1st Century BCE author details the state of Aristotle's books before Andronicus. According to him, Aristotle handed over his library to his pupil Theophrastus, who later gave his own library and Aristotle's to Neleus who in turn passed them on to his heirs in Skepsis. Neleus' heirs, unfortunately, were ordinary men who cared little about writings and had them buried in a trench. At this point Strabo discusses the three sources of error and confusion in Aristotle's works. The first is through Apellikon who tried to make new copies of the book in order to restore what was lost through dampness, wear and tears

occasioned by the manner in which the books were buried by the heirs of Neleus'. His effort was a total failure as it ended up introducing many errors in the books. The second is the Roman invasion of Athens which resulted in the seizure of Apellikon's library by the invading Romans through whom the books ended in the hands of Tyrannion, the grammarian who loved Aristotle, and who with other Romans speculated on the probable content of the missing parts of the books. The third source of error were the booksellers who employed poor scribes who did not compare manuscripts but ended up producing differing and mistaken versions of the books (Geography 1.54).

Plutarch reports that the books reached Andronicus through Tyrannion (Sulla 26.1-2). This was in the 1st Century CE and he decided to rearrange and reorder them given that, since Apellikon, no one knew exactly the order in which Aristotle left the writings as they had suffered decay in the hands of Neleus' heirs. Among others, Andronicus is reputed to have ordered and arranged Aristotle's unpublished 14 Lecture notes in the manner in which we know them and gave them a collective name of *Ta Meta Ta Phusika* which has been rendered as Metaphysics in English. He equally offered strong arguments in support of the order in which he arranged and finally published the unpublished lecture notes. Aristotle had considered *First Philosophy*, *Theology*; *Wisdom*; and *First Science* as names for parts of the lecture notes that were finally put together as one book by Andronicus. The importance of Andronicus' effort is so huge that Kotwick (17) regards it as responsible for the renaissance of Aristotelianism in the 1st Century BC. He is generally reputed as a publisher, cataloguer, and organizer of the corpus (Griffin 30).

Of interest to this paper is Andronicus' motif for entitling the book that was the outcome of his editorial labor on Aristotle's works, *Metaphysics*. The prevalent practice among philosophers is to claim that it arose in the course of editing and reordering Aristotle's books whereby Andronicus simply named the book edited after Aristotle's *Phusika* (Physics), *Ta Meta Ta Phusika* (Metaphysics) signifying one after the one on Physics.

Ando regards as scandalous the fact that philosophers and historians have accepted this view about Andronicus' meaning for metaphysics without giving it any serious attention. He regards as arbitrary the claim that Andronicus ascribed a name to Aristotle's book derived mainly by chance from mere editorial sequence. Ando's objection also points out that the term Metaphysics preceded Andronicus as *Ta Meta Ta Phusika* was invented by Eudemus of Rhodes, a direct pupil of Aristotle who lived about three centuries before Andronicus and after whom one of Aristotle's books on Ethics was named. Ando traces the origin of this faulty attribution to Franciscus Patricius, a medieval era neo-platonist who, lacking proper knowledge of Greek interpretations, held that Andronicus chose the name due to his dissatisfaction with Aristotle's title of First Philosophy or Theology for the book. (Ando 3-6)

THE TRANSPHYSIKA TRADITION OF MEANING

Syrianus, the 5th Century AD Neoplatonist and head of Plato's Academy regards Aristotle's First Philosophy as treating divine and intelligible subjects that transcend the world (*Commentary on Metaphysics* 57,22ff). In like manner, the idea of *metaphysika* as transphysika, that is as something beyond the physical, took centre stage in scholastic philosophy and was championed by Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas (Ando, 6). The argument of the scholastics is that the subject of metaphysics transcends the physical world. Essentially, such terms as transcendence, mind, ideas, spirit, and God as describing entities above and beyond the physical world are considered the subjects of metaphysics and therefore the focal points of the transphysika tradition. The transphysika influence stretches far into the modern era and is seen in the metaphysics of Descartes who also divided the world into two consisting of material bodies and immaterial souls (Unger, chapter 10). It is also strong in Immanuel Kant who, while accepting its existence, denies that the human person has the appropriate capacity to grasp its content (Boer, 114-115). Kant's argument is that man's mode of being as a finite being determines the type of knowledge open to him. Thus, a finite being is incapable of possessing knowledge of the infinite.

The influence of Platonic philosophy in the formulation of Kantian meaning is huge and can be located in Plato's division of reality into two; the world of forms and the world of appearance. (Heidegger, 37). In Platonic philosophy, the world of forms as the incorporeal world represents the transcending of the physical which metaphysics as philosophical discipline and not necessarily as title of Aristotle's book studies. According to Plato, the world of forms equates the real world. It is unchanging and perfect as well as everlasting. The world of appearance, on the other hand, represents the physical world. It only mirrors the world of forms. Its ephemerality is contrasted with the permanence and perfection of the world of forms.

Scholars argue whether Aristotle was sold on the existence of the world of forms as expressed in his pursuit of the first causes in some parts of the *Metaphysics*. Syrianus' *Commentary on Metaphysics*, for example, details Platonic influence on books 3, 4, 13 & 14 of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Demonstrating this with Book 13 of the *Metaphysics*, Syrianus shows that despite Aristotle's disposition to attack the Platonic and Pythagorean concepts of first principles he was unsuccessful in demolishing them, rather he ended up upholding the truth of them (*Commentary on Metaphysics* 80, 16-30). As in Plato, Aristotle's search for first causes ultimately terminates in God as he renders the supreme being the ultimate cause of everything, or the final cause. There is no contest that the ubiquitous influence of his teacher earlier drove Aristotle to view the world as divided between the incorporeal world and the physical worlds, where the former is the cause of the latter.

It is also unarguable that Aristotle in other parts of *Metaphysics* adumbrated a total rejection of any assumption that a world different from the physical world which we know exists. Essentially, Aristotle's defining philosophical position rests on the claim that particular things that exist in the physical world are all that exists. (Adorno, p.26). Adorno explains that Aristotle's philosophical strategy was to attain knowledge of the real by starting out from everyday sensible things, and while reflecting directly on them arrive at knowledge of the true being. To make sense of the conflict noticed in Aristotle's conception of reality, it must be noted that the book which is today called the *Metaphysics* was not a single book but fragments of works written at different times treating different but related topics. Ando credits Eudemus, Aristotle's disciple, as being the first to compile the writings into a single unity after the death of his master. The part which mirrors the idea of the super sensible world constitutes Aristotle's earliest understanding of reality as influenced by his teacher, Plato. However, the empiricist undertone of the other parts of the *Metaphysics* reflects the independent and critical Aristotle, free from the influence of his teacher.

The foregoing discrepancy noticeable in Aristotle's *Metaphysics'* conception of reality problematizes any interpretation of metaphysics as meaning transphysics (beyond physics) as being derived directly from the content of Aristotle's book. He could not have had the intention of arranging the topics in one book, knowing the logical contradiction they entail. The easiest way out of this contradiction is to hold that part of the book known as *Metaphysics* today could even have been written by one of Aristotle's disciples. Eric Przywara, the 20th Century Catholic philosopher, who undertook analysis of Thomas Aquinas' philosophy introduces the concept of *analogia entis* which effectively describes the sense of the Scholastic understanding of metaphysics as transphysics (Nielsen, p.599). Przywara's emphasis is on the role of analogy in unifying varying philosophical ideas and motifs. His belief is that no single philosophical insight offers a comprehensive understanding of reality; this is because all historical philosophies are one-sided and inadequate in their particularities. Thus, *analogia entis* enables Aquinas to create a bridge between the realm of worldly existence as projected by Aristotle and the realm of Being in its fullness and purity as championed by Plato. This analogy resolves the tension that exists between existence and essence, between immanence and transcendence, and between two giants of ancient Greek philosophy, Plato and Aristotle. It also resolves the apparent contradiction noticed in Aristotle's book, *Metaphysics*, as known to us today.

The ultimate resolution above is in deciphering whether the existential givenness of being is all that constitutes being as projected by empirical metaphysics or whether we should look beyond it to establish the true reality of being. Plato and Aristotle disagree on this as demonstrated earlier. However,

the scholastic understanding of metaphysics as *transphysika* recognises the two realms of being, the physical and the transphysical, as real, reflecting different levels of being. This is the prevalent understanding of metaphysics and not one that privileges any realm. Also, it must be pointed out that the scholastic meaning of metaphysics as *transphysika* cannot be regarded as etymological in anyway. It is rather hermeneutical; a historical interpretation of unified classic philosophies. The pointer to this can be found in Ando's *oeuvre* according to which *Ta Meta ta physika* is said to have reached the Medieval age through the works of Boethius who mentioned it in his *De Interpretatione* establishing that the Medieval scholars first had knowledge of the term metaphysics without access to the book it refers. It is therefore probable that the scholastic found the term useful in naming an unnamed philosophical tendency that suited their theological interest at the time.

THE POSTPHYSIKA TRADITION OF MEANING

The third tendency is that which, like the *transphysika*, has its origin in the Medieval era. This is the idea that Metaphysics, as used by Andronicus, entails *postphysika* (meaning after Physics). Both Avicenna and Averroes were said to have favoured this understanding and Aquinas and other scholastics offered no objection to it (Ando, 6). 'After Physics', in this context, situates the meaning of metaphysics in the debate about the order of teaching and studying philosophy. Philosophy among the ancient Greek thinkers had three branches: Logic, Physics, and Ethics. Cicero attributed this division to Plato's Academy in the fourth Century BCE.

A threefold system of philosophising, then, was already received from Plato. One, on the subject of life and morals. A second, on nature and abstruse matters. The third, on discussion, and on what is true or false; what is right or wrong in a discourse; what is consistent or inconsistent in forming a decision. (Cicero, *Ac.* 1.5).

The credit for this division of Philosophy is given to Xenocrates, one of the pupils of Plato and later director of the Academy (Heidegger, 36). Aristotle's major writings on Logic, Physics and Ethics, were discussions on these known divisions. Correspondingly, there were equally debates among the ancient Neoplatonists and Aristotelian philosophers regarding the order in which the books were to be read. For instance, Andronicus and his pupil, Boethius of Sidon were said to have engaged in fierce argument on the topic. Boethius' privileging of physics as the first to be read was grounded in Aristotle's position that to understand philosophical principles one had to begin with what is known and then proceed to discovering what is knowable. Andronicus, on the other hand, favoured beginning with Logic since the Peripatetics viewed it as an *organon* or instrument of philosophical knowledge. Like in other crafts one therefore needs to master the tool to be well equipped to pursue philosophical knowledge (Griffin 33). Philosophers of the succeeding epochs took sides as

they deem fit: “Zeno and Chrysippus, for instance, had introduced philosophy with logic, Panaetius and Posidonius with physics” (Griffin 33).

The postphysics argument is that metaphysics, interpreted as after physics, means that the content of the book so named would be studied after studying the book on physics. This may seem in tandem with the claim of Boethius that knowledge should proceed from the realm of the known on to the realm of the knowable. Thus, physics is the realm of the known whereas metaphysics represents that of the knowable. If this were to be the case, Andronicus could be said to have inaugurated metaphysics as a distinct branch of philosophy. But Andronicus was not a system builder. His interest as the eleventh leader of the Peripatetic school was to promote and preserve the major teachings of the school. The fact that metaphysics did not become a branch of philosophy until it was rendered so by the scholastics meant that it was quite unlikely that Andronicus motif for entitling the book *Metaphysics* was because he meant the book to be studied after the one on physics. This is because the other books of Aristotle, namely his Logic, Ethics and Physics correspond to the then existing branches of philosophy and the major argument of the ancient was about the order in which the books would be read. And this argument about the order of reading also corresponds with the question of the order in which the branches of philosophy would be taught. Thus, Andronicus could not have recommended reading the book on metaphysics after the book on physics without first founding and establishing metaphysics as a branch of philosophy.

The rational thing would have been to situate it within the known disciplines of philosophy then. Heidegger (42) who correctly views cultivation of metaphysics as a distinct branch of philosophy as a medieval invention deployed by the Church fathers to systematize their Christian faith roundly rejects its consideration as a proper name for a branch of philosophy. There was no motivation for Andronicus of Rhodes to also regard it as a separate branch of philosophy. Also, the assumption that Andronicus could name Aristotle’s book based solely on editorial sequence beggars belief. It belittles Andronicus’ stature as a philosopher and cast him as thoughtless individual or as one who named a book whose content he could neither read nor understand. The argument is that the naming of Metaphysics was a well-thought-out process. It is therefore not surprising that generations after generations continually find the title suitable. On the other hand, metaphysics cannot be taken to mean *postphysika* entailing a book to be studied after the book on *Physics*. This is because, as shown above, the argument about the order in which Aristotle’s book is to be read strictly corresponds with another argument about the discipline of philosophy to be studied first. Andronicus’ proclaimed interest was the preservation of Aristotle’s works and not to overcome Aristotle.

METAPHYSICS AS *COPHYSIKA*

The question persists: what did metaphysics mean to Andronicus? In the foregoing it is established that none of the three competing conceptions and arguments offers the best possible explanation regarding the question. We may therefore pursue the lead provided by Heidegger following his rejection of the *postphysika* tradition. Heidegger identifies an important insight into this question. According to him: "It is evident that there is a certain relatedness between the questions that Aristotle treats in First Philosophy and those questions which philosophy of the schools discusses under philosophy." (Heidegger 38). Following this discovery of relatedness between the contents of metaphysics and physics, Heidegger immediately denies a possibility that occurs to him and which is that Andronicus could have intended the two works as treating the same subject matters: "there is therefore no possibility of simply classifying First Philosophy within Physics" (Heidegger 38).

Thus, it is worth repeating that Heidegger is so close to providing answer to the question but he becomes unfaithful to his own logic and surrenders the argument to bandwagonism. His is a flight from truth, the reason of which I will pursue in another study. Thus, it is surprising that Heidegger who successfully established that Aristotle treated the content of *Metaphysics* as part or topics in *Physics*, failed to see this as the reason why Andronicus named the book *metaphysics*. (Heidegger variously regards the book as Philosophy Proper, What is Essential in Philosophy, and First Philosophy).

Thus the question arose of where to put philosophy proper within the schema of the three disciplines which the school was not in a position to expand or alter. We must be quite clear about the situation: what is essential in philosophy could not be accommodated. The philosophy of the schools failed into an embarrassment in the face of philosophizing...There remains only one way out of this embarrassment. One tries to see whether philosophy proper does not have some connection to what is familiar in the schools. And indeed it does. In these treatises we find in part questions similar to those found in that lecture course which lays the foundation of physics. It is evident that there is a certain relatedness between the questions that Aristotle treats in the First Philosophy and those questions which the philosophy of the schools discusses under physics, although what Aristotle treats in First Philosophy is much broader and very much fundamental. There is therefore no possibility of simply classifying First Philosophy within Physics, but only the possibility of placing it alongside, behind physics, of classifying it after physics. (Heidegger, 38).

The long quote above is fraught with contradictions. Heidegger recognises that the Peripatetic school could not alter the branches of philosophy for reasons which he did not avail, but which we may guess relate to the fact that the division of the disciplines had its origin in a sister yet rival school, the Academy

of Plato. Despite noting this important point, how could Andronicus had gone ahead to alter the disciplines, making Physics stand side by side with Metaphysics? The outcome of the exercise can be likened to placing a whole and its part side by side. It is highly doubtful that Andronicus would fall into such an elementary error of Logic. The reason adduced by Heidegger on why First Philosophy or Aristotle's Metaphysics should not be classified within Physics is because it is much broader and very much fundamental. This is bizarre. Anyone who has ever written or read a book knows that books on the same subject are addressed to different audiences. While the book on simpler concepts and ideas of the subject could be assigned to beginners, the ones on more complex concepts and ideas of the subjects could be for advanced studies. In the light of the foregoing, the most rational thing for Andronicus would be to regard Metaphysics as an advanced textbook on Physics. Again, the claim that the content of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is broader and more fundamental is supported by neither history nor philosophical practice among the ancients. There is a story of the manner in which Aristotle's *Metaphysics* was studied in the Academy. Students in the Academy were made to study it as elementary text of the Theological Science (O'Meara, 1-2)ⁱ. The advanced text for the Theological Science, an aspect of Physics, are Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* where the Forms are discussed.

We must rely on analysis of language if any progress is to be made regarding the inquiry which we have set for ourselves. The Greek term, *Meta* which is affixed to another Greek term, *Physika*, is the battleground for the question of the meaning of metaphysics. It is in trying to translate the word *meta*, that crisis of etymology of metaphysics rears its head. The prevalent practice among philosophers is to hold that the Greek *Meta* is rendered in English as behind, coming after (Heidegger, 38-39). And it is this translation that is invoked when metaphysics is said to entail after physics. But that is not the only translation of *meta* that is known to us. There is *meta* that, in unity with *hodos*, constitutes the English term, method (Heidegger, 38). Thus "a method (gr. μέθοδος – methodos; μετά – meta = according to, ὁδός – hodos = a way) is a way that leads to a certain goal." (Darowski, 25).

In the light of the relatedness of contents of *Metaphysics* and *Physics*, it is more reasonable to view Andronicus's motif as entailing Metaphysics to mean "according to physics". "According to" in the English Language entails accord. It also entails agreement. Thus, rather than Andronicus viewing metaphysics as transphysics, it would be more reasonable for him to regard it as entailing "in agreement" or "in accord" with physics.

There is need to further probe the Greek Language and the word, *meta*. The questions are simple: What are the other meanings of *meta* as used in the Greek language? Can we find a meaning that entails being part of? A survey of *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* identifies two uses of the word, *μετά*, in Greek.

First, as a preposition used with a genitive and gives its meaning as follows: with, together with, on the same side or party with, in aid of, among, towards. Second, as a preposition used with an accusative and gives its meaning as follows: after, of place, behind (NAGL 3326). Other Greek-English Dictionaries mirror the meanings given above.

Centuries of etymological definition of metaphysics has privileged the accusative case in the rendition of the *meta* of metaphysics. This has been presented as the only meaning for the Greek word, *meta* of Metaphysics. But it is the genitive case that corresponds with the lead which Heidegger provided. The genitive case is possessive and is rendered in two ways in English Language with an apostrophe followed by an 's' or with an of followed by a noun. When *meta* is used genitively with the word physics it would be *Physics'* or *of physics* signifying possession. Thus, Andronicus might have seen the huge connection between topics of Aristotle's Physics and topics of the compilation which he made and was convinced that the noted similarities provided sufficient reasons to name the book Metaphysics. In doing so, his intention was to designate the book as part of Physics.

The error in regarding Metaphysics as entailing "after physics" or "beyond physics" could possibly be traced to a number of sources. The first could be the Arabic translators who translated and preserved the book in Arabic following their complete disappearance in the Dark ages in Europe. The translators were non-philosophers who lacked the required philosophical temperament to interrogate their choice of meaning in relation to the text. Indeed, the "beginnings of Arabic philosophy coincide with the production of the first extensive translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, within the circle of translators associated with the founder of Arabic philosophy, al-Kindī. The so-called "early" or "classical" phase of *falsafa* ends with the largest commentary on the *Metaphysics* available in Western philosophy, by Ibn Rushd (Averroes)." (D'Ancona, 2019). Also, none of Averroes, Avicenna, Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, the Medieval Aristotelians understood Greek. Again, their preoccupation with metaphysics was driven by non-philosophical reasons. The grand aim was to deploy metaphysics as tool for revealed theology. Thus, Thomas Aquinas' meaning of metaphysics as entailing a sort of knowledge beyond the natural world was teleological and is a bold deployment of metaphysics to the study of heaven and heavenly beings.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I questioned the extant etymological definitions of metaphysics. My argument is that the various explanations given of the meaning of metaphysics are not sufficient. Thus, neither the meaning of metaphysics as "after physics" nor "beyond physics" gave a satisfactory explanation of the term. I therefore interrogated the motif of Andronicus of Rhodes in order to discover the meaning which metaphysics had for him while entitling Aristotle's work. I also analysed the uses of the Greek word, *meta*, in

order to reinterrogate the meaning which the word, *metaphysics* had for Andronicus. My argument follows the same line as Heidegger's line of reasoning to establish a connection between topics in Aristotle's Physics and his Metaphysics. However, my point of departure from Heidegger was to move beyond the received etymological definition in search of a redefinition. This redefinition must be faithful to the established connection and similarity between the Physics and the Metaphysics of Aristotle. The Greek word, *meta*, held the key to this redefinition. Thus, I went in pursuit of discovering the manner in which the word modified Physics and in other possible manners in which it could also modify it. My finding was that the preposition, *meta*, when used as an accusative renders metaphysics as "after physics", a text after the text on physics. But when used as a genitive it renders it as "a text with physics", "a text among physics", and "a text that belongs to physics". The last rendition is very important in understanding the point of the paper because the genitive case in Greek declension plays possessive function. Thus, the genitive *meta* when conjoined with physics shows immediately that the book belongs in the same category with the book on Physics. Having established this, I pointed out that the confusion in etymological definition of the term stems from the manner in which the book on Metaphysics was received by the modern man and also the initial purpose to which medieval philosophers subjected it.

Endnotes

ⁱ Dominic O'Meara wrote the introduction to *Syrianus: On Aristotle's Metaphysics*. He is also a co-translator of the book

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