SPEUSIPPUS, THEOPHRASTUS, AND THE METAPHYSICS OF VALUE: THEOPHRASTUS' *METAPHYSICS* 11A18–26

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Abstract:

This paper re-examines Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* 11a18–26, an obscure testimony about Speusippus, the second head of the Platonic Academy. As opposed to the traditional interpretation, which takes this passage as Theophrastus' polemic against Speusippus' doctrine of value, I argue that he here makes dialectical use of, rather than launching an attack on, the Platonist. Based on this new reading, I further propose a revision and a reassessment of the 'gloomy metaphysics' of Speusippus which will shed new light on his ethics.

Keywords: teleology, Speusippus, Theophrastus, Aristotle, value

I. Introduction

Speusippus, Plato's nephew and the second scholarch of the Academy, is a shadowy figure in the intellectual history of Greek philosophy. Though he had a successful career, all of his works have been lost.[1] What we know about him mostly comes from indirect transmission, in particular from the doxography of the Peripatetics, a tradition in which he is often either critically treated or only implicitly addressed. The tradition thereby makes it difficult to extract what is authentic to Speusippus, and so to recognize his insights and the run of his argumentation, from what is transmitted by his reporters.

A typical example of this difficulty can be seen in a puzzling testimony preserved by Theophrastus, which is worth quoting here:

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[1] For two standard collections of Speusippus' testimonies and fragments, see Isnardi Parente (1980); Tarán (1981).

> Τὸ δ' ὅλον σπάνιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλήθει τὸ κακόν †οὐκ εἰ† ἀοριστία δὲ μόνον καὶ οἷον ὕλης εἴδη, καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀμαθεστάτου †ει καὶ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγοντες, ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον ποιεῖ τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν, τὰ δ' ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν. Τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν ὄντα … (*Met.* 11a18–26=F83 Tarán)[2]

This passage is located close to the end of Theophrastus' *On First Principles*, or his so-called *Metaphysics*,[3] a treatise in which he delivers a number of *aporiai*, especially those concerning various forms of teleology embraced by his predecessors. While struggling with the problems of whether and to what extent the operation of a system is determined and explained by an evaluative goal, in this passage Theophrastus seems to suspend his main concern, turning unexpectedly to Speusippus' metaphysics of value. It is not easy to figure out why Theophrastus feels obliged to address Plato's nephew at this point, in particular whether and to what extent Speusippus' view on the distribution of the good and the bad can affect the central question about the limits to the determination of final cause. This problem becomes more pressing when we take into account that Speusippus himself does not, insofar as the surviving texts reveal, seem to be much concerned with teleological issues. Thus, we cannot help but wonder whether and how this testimony fits together with what the other evidence says about his philosophy. Unfortunately, because of its 'telegraphic style' (Lennox (2001) 274) the text itself seems too obscure to provide a ready answer. Even worse, there are serious textual corruptions at 11a20 and 11a22 which exacerbate this unhappy situation. It is therefore understandable that Guthrie (1978) 463, in his *magnum opus* on Plato and the Academy, abandons hope of making sense of this opaque testimony. Gutas (2010), in his recent edition of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*, reiterates the unintelligibility of 11a20–26, which, he complains, further affects our ability to reach an adequate understanding of the immediately following passage, a new episode where Plato and the so-called Pythagoreans feature in Theophrastus' account (11a26–b27):

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[2] The text follows Gutas (2010), the most recent edition of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*. For a presentation of the testimony in its immediate context with an *apparatus criticus* see §II below.

[3] On the title of this treatise, see Gutas (2010) 9–32; Laks and Most (1993) ix–xviii offer a different view. For the sake of convenience, the title *Metaphysics* will be used here.

because of the corruption in the immediately preceding paragraph, it has not been possible to say precisely in what light Theophrastus cast the ideas of Speusippus, and hence we do not know with what kind of rhetorical momentum he is now introducing the ideas of Plato and the Pythagoreans on teleology.[4]

All of the difficulties, however, have not prevented scholars from 'decoding' this puzzling text, no doubt with critical ingenuity. Despite some differences in detail, these interpretations generally agree that Theophrastus' quotation of Speusippus is driven by a polemical spirit because the latter is committed to a 'gloomy picture of the world' (van Raalte (1993), 560) in which evil is radically dominant in quantity over good.[5] The text and translation of Ross and Fobes (1929) are representative of this tradition:[6]

> τὸ δ' ὅλον σπάνιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλῆθος εἶναι τὸ κακόν, οὐκ ἐν ἀοριστίᾳ δὲ μόνον καὶ οἷον ὕλης εἴδει, καθά περ τὰ τῆς φύσεως, ἀμαθεστάτου. εἰκῇ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγοντες ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον ποιεῖ τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν, τὰ δ' ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν. τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν ὄντα. (*Met*. 11a18–26)
>
> But to say that *in general* the good is something rare and found only in few things, while the evil is a great multitude, and does not consist solely in indeterminateness and exist by way of matter, as *is* the case with things of nature, is the act of a most ignorant person. For quite random is the talk of those who speak of the whole of reality as Speusippus does when he makes the valuable

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[4] Gutas (2010) 382.

[5] Happ (1971) 772 n.466: 'Die Polemik gegen Speusipp (11a18ff)'; Krämer (1973) 210: 'Theophrast … wendet sich aber zugleich gegen die Verkürzung des Werthaften im System Speusipps (11a18–26 = Fr. 41 Lang)'; Henrich (2000) 330: 'Speusipp genießt nicht gerade den Respekt seitens Theophrasts, der ihn als Beispiel einer nicht übersteigbaren Inkompetenz anführt'; Dillon (2003) 68: 'Theophrastus' polemical criticism of Speusippus (*Met*. 11a18–26 = Fr. 83 Tarán) for limiting the good to a little patch in the middle, with vast stretches of evil on either side of it' (*cf*. Burkert (1972) 62; Laks and Most (1993) 84–85; Dillon (2002) 185); Gourinat (2015) 174 n.81: 'Théophraste reproche à Speusippe, c'est d'avoir limité le bien en lui donnant une place centrale'. For a similar, yet more delicate view, see Tarán (1981) 449: 'Theophrastus is refuting his own inference from Speusippus' theory of good and evil'. Regenbogen (1940) col. 1392 limits the polemic against Speusippus to 11a22–26, whereas 11a18–22 is taken to be Theophrastus' own theory.

[6] This tradition is followed by Tarán (1981) F83, van Raalte (1993) (with slightly different punctuation), and Henrich (2000) (reading πλήθει τὸ κακόν at a19–20). Laks and Most (1993), followed by Damschen and Rudolph (2012), deviates from Ross and Fobes (1929) on two points (reading πλήθει τὸ κακόν at a19–20 and ἀμαθεστάτου ἐστι· καὶ γάρ at a21–22), yet their interpretations are basically in line with the same tradition.

element to be something scanty, namely, what is found in the region of the centre of the universe, the rest forming the extremes and being to each side of the centre. Rather, reality in fact is and always has been good [original italics].

Ross and Fobes explain the obscure text by relating its content to the Peripatetics' polemic against the Academics.[7] The corrupted passages are emended (†οὐκ εἰ† ἀοριστία at 11a20 to οὐκ ἐν ἀοριστίᾳ and ει καὶ at 11a22 to εἰκῇ) so as to provide a metaphysical grounding of Speusippus' unusual view about the distribution of value and to highlight Theophrastus' critical attitude. On this reading, Speusippus not only depreciates most things—in particular natural things—as bad, but also explains this asymmetric realization of value by means of his doctrine of principles that includes, and indeed goes beyond, partaking in the property of indeterminateness (ἀοριστία) due to having matter. This doctrine of value is immediately dismissed by Theophrastus as coming from 'a most ignorant person' (ἀμαθεστάτου) and, accordingly, Speusippus' picture about how good and bad is distributed in the world is dismissed as 'a random way of speaking' (εἰκῇ) for its pessimism and the implied depreciation of the natural world. In this light, the emendations fit well and advance a neat picture of the Peripatetic polemic towards Plato's nephew. Such pessimism appears also to find echo in Aristotle's accounts of the Academic debates over hedonism, in which modern commentators take it to be reported that Speusippus offers a series of arguments aiming at demonstrating a pessimistic thesis that pleasure, even if it is enjoyed by almost everyone as something positive, is not good at all or even is in itself bad.[8]

Despite all of the intuitive appeal of this line of interpretation, two interrelated problems remain: one concerns Speusippus' philosophy itself, the other concerns

[7] For the confrontation of Theophrastus with the Old Academy in this treatise, see Berti (2002); Dillon (2002) 175–87; Gutas (2010) 8–9.

[8] Speusippus' name is mentioned only once in Aristotle's accounts of pleasure in the *EN* (1153b4–5), but scholars are in agreement that he is his 'main philosophical rival' in the Academic debates over hedonism (Gosling and Taylor (1982) 226). It is very likely that many anti-hedonistic arguments in Aristotle's report, especially those that have Platonic colouring, go back to, or at least are supported by, Speusippus. It is often neglected, however, that although Speusippus is doubtless representative of the anti-hedonistic group and even of the radical tendencies in this debate, there are many different *radical* pleasure-hostile positions in Aristotle's reports. Some claim that no pleasure is good, either *per se* or *per aliud* (1152b8–9, 12–13), whilst others say that pleasure is *essentially* bad (1153b6–7) or *entirely* bad (1172a28). In view of the metaphysical nature of many anti-hedonistic arguments, it seems to me that Speusippus probably holds that pleasure is not good or even bad due to its intrinsic nature. Nevertheless, it is uncertain whether or to what extent other pleasure-hostile positions can be ascribed to him. I shall return to this subject in §VII below.

Theophrastus' motivation here. For it is not easy to reconcile the alleged 'gloomy' metaphysics of Speusippus with our knowledge of some central characters of his thought: his rehabilitation of the value of concrete things, his strong interest in natural research and in particular his denial of the link between first principles and value properties.[9] As a result, scholars who in principle endorse the traditional line of interpretation are forced to deploy various strategies to mitigate the tension. Merlan (1968), for instance, interprets a18–22 and a23–25 as two different views which Theophrastus rejects: whereas the former is a Zoroastrianizing Platonist who grasps evil as a positive principle, Theophrastus criticizes the latter, Speusippus, only for misplacing the good, not for his view regarding the bad (115).[10] Tarán (1981), who is more inclined to consider Speusippus in a positive light, qualifies the evidential value of Theophrastus' report by dismissing the pessimistic picture as a (biased) inference from Speusippus' doctrine of principles (449). But even if Speusippus, as some of his defenders believe, does not hold this gloomy view of the world, it is still opaque what motives Theophrastus, in the course of his critical engagement with *teleology*, to launch an attack Speusippus' doctrine of value, which does not seem to be directly related to teleological issues. Given the obscurity of its teleological relevance, it thus comes as no surprise that van Raalte, in her tremendous commentary, goes so far as to refer repeatedly to the Speusippus episode as an 'appendix',[11] a digression which is inserted between Theophrastus' criticism of teleology in general (11a1–18) and his criticism of Plato and the so-called Pythagoreans in particular (11a26–b12). The motivation problem is further complicated by a disagreement among the proponents of the traditional interpretation of the conjecture εἰκῇ at 11a22. Some critics, despite admitting its ingenuity from a palaeographical perspective, reject the emendation because they realize that, under closer scrutiny, its implication does not sit very well with the traditional narrative as it *prima facie* appears. For if Speusippus or his view has been criticized as 'most ignorant' (11a21–2), the immediate characterization of it as spoken εἰκῇ, at random, seems too mild for this polemic (see Laks and Most (1993) 84 n.48).[12]

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[9] For these features of Speusippus' philosophy, see Krämer (2004) 16–25. I shall elaborate on them in §§IV and VII below.

[10] More on this view and related issues, see §§III and VII below.

[11] Van Raalte (1993) 556, 563–64.

[12] The emended sentence is also syntactically incomplete. Gutas (2010) 392–93 argues that the reading of Ross and Forbes requires the following text: εἰκῇ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγουσιν ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος, σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον ποιῶν τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν. Laks and Most (1993)

The perplexing situation, I think, requires us to go beyond a sense of unease and reconsider carefully *Met*. 11a20–26 both in the context of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* and in connection with Speusippus' own philosophy. In what follows, I shall argue that a fundamental weakness of the traditional line of interpretation is that it fails to pay adequate attention to Theophrastus' strategic flexibility and the dialectical setting in which the testimony is embedded. Scholars are inclined to take it for granted that Theophrastus quotes Speusippus *merely* for a *polemical* purpose, as he already did at *Met*. 6b6. This starting point, however, gives rise to a series of questionable interpretative and theoretical consequences, so that both Theophrastus' motivation and Speusippus' insight are obfuscated. Moreover, traditional polemical narrative relies considerably on a handful of conjectures which, on reflection, are not as solid as scholars have assumed but which rather plunge them into new problems. As a remedy I shall propose an alternative interpretation which is intended to do more justice to *Met*. 11a20–26 in its immediate context and thus to open a window onto the complexity of Theophrastus' exchange with different Academics. I argue that Theophrastus, instead of launching an improvisational polemic, uses Speusippus dialectically here in the process of raising difficulties to various applications of a teleological principle, including a version advanced by Plato and the 'Pythagoreans'.[13] This reading enables us to connect the Speusippus episode with Theophrastus' general worry about teleology and his particular engagement with Plato and the 'Pythagoreans' in such a way that they illuminate each other. The result also leads to a reassessment of the alleged 'gloomy' metaphysics of Speusippus, which, in turn, prompts revising his popular image in the contemporary literature as a *radical* enemy of pleasure in the hedonistic debate among the Early Academy.

II. Text and context

suggest adding οὕτως ὑπολαμβάνουσιν or ποιοῦσιν here (84 n.48). Merlan (1968) rejects the conjecture because of his worry about whether the doctrine of evil in a20–22 can be reconciled with Speusippus' doctrine of principles (115, 140). For my discussion of the emendation εἰκῇ see §III below.

[13] I leave undecided the identity of the so-called Pythagoreans here (Horky (2013) suggests that Xenocrates is behind them; more on this identification in §VI). Two short comments are sufficient: First, in the Old Academy there was already a tendency to assimilate Plato to the Pythagoreans as his philosophical precursors. Theophrastus here seems to follow the Academic tradition, which does not aim at a historically accurate presentation of the Pythagorean system (Huffman (1993) 22–23). Second, in tune with this tendency, many Academics—not limited to Speusippus and his followers—are willing to Pythagorize Platonic doctrines, which reinforces the assimilation of the two traditions further (Dancy 2016). In any case, Theophrastus' main target here is surely the mainstream Academic doctrine of principles, though the Pythagoreans Archytas and Eurytus are mentioned in this treatise (6a19–20). To facilitate discussion, I maintain the label 'Pythagoreans' in this study.

Let me start by providing a working text, with the key testimony emphasized by boldface:

Text

11a1	Εἰ δὲ μή, τοῦθ' ἕνεκά του καὶ
	εἰς τὸ ἄριστον ληπτέον, τινὰς ὅρους καὶ οὐκ ἐπὶ
	πάντων ἁπλῶς θετέον, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ τοιάδε ἔχει
	τινὰ διστασμὸν καὶ ἁπλῶς λεγόμενα καὶ καθ' ἕκα-
a5	στον. Ἁπλῶς μὲν ὅτι τὴν φύσιν ἐν ἅπα-
	σιν ὀρέγεσθαι τοῦ ἀρίστου καὶ ἐφ' ὧν ἐνδέχεται
	μεταδιδόναι τοῦ ἀεὶ καὶ τοῦ τεταγμένου, ὡς δ'
	αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ζῴων ὁμοίως: ὅπου γὰρ οἷόν
	τε τὸ βέλτιον, ἐνταῦθα οὐδαμοῦ παραλείπει, οἷον
a10	τὸ ἔμπροσθεν τὴν φάρυγγα τοῦ οἰσοφάγου—τιμιώ-
	τερον γάρ—καὶ ἐν τῇ μέσῃ κοιλίᾳ τῆς καρδίας
	τὴν κρᾶσιν ἀρίστην—ὅτι τὸ μέσον τιμιώτατον—·
	ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ὅσα κόσμου χάριν. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ
	ἡ ὄρεξις οὕτως, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνό γ' ἐμφαίνει διότι πολὺ
a15	τὸ οὐχ ὑπακοῦον οὐδὲ δεχόμενον τὸ εὖ, μᾶλλον
	δὲ πολλῷ πλεῖον· ὀλίγον γάρ τι τὸ ἔμψυχον,
	ἄπειρον δὲ τὸ ἄψυχον· καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐμψύχων
	ἀκαριαῖον, κἂν βέλτιον, τὸ εἶναι. **Τὸ δ' ὅλον σπά-**
	νιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλή-
a20	**θει τὸ κακόν, †οὐκ εἰ† ἀοριστία δὲ μόνον καὶ**
	οἷον ὕλης εἴδη, καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀμαθεστά-
	του †ει καὶ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγον-
	τες, ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον
	ποιεῖ τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν, τὰ δ' ἄκρα
a25	**καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν. Τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν**
	ὄντα,
	Πλάτων δὲ καὶ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι μακρὰν τὴν
11b1	ἀπόστασιν, ἐπιμιμεῖσθαι τ' ἐθέλειν ἅπαντα·
	καίτοι καθάπερ ἀντίθεσίν τινα ποιοῦσιν τῆς ἀο-

	ρίστου δυάδος καὶ τοῦ ἑνός, ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον
	καὶ τὸ ἄτακτον καὶ πᾶσα ὡς εἰπεῖν ἀμορφία καθ'
11b5	αὐτήν, ὅλως δ' οὐχ οἷόν τε ἄνευ ταύτης τὴν τοῦ ὅλου
	φύσιν, ἀλλ' οἷον ἰσομοιρεῖν ἢ καὶ ὑπερέχειν τῆς
	ἑτέρας, ᾗ καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἐναντίας.

a5 post φύσιν add. εἰκὸς Use.[2] | 8 αὐτὸ Λ (*hoc*) : αὐτὰ J[2]CL [Ψ] : αὐτος P, αὕτως A Ross Laks et Most | 18 ἀκαριαῖον, κἂν βέλτιον, τὸ homo Italicus quidam : ἀκαριαῖον καὶ βέλτιον τὸ **ω** | 19–20 πλήθει corr. Laks et Most: πλῆθος· ἡ P, πλῆθος ᾗ Λ (*multitudo est*) J[2]CL A, πλῆθος εἶ D, πλῆθος εἶναι A[id] | 20 οὐκ' εἰ sic P, locus corruptus necdum sanatus | οὐκ **α** Λ : οὖ ut intell. Ar. : del. Use.[2] | ει P, εἰ CL A : ἡ J[2], ut intell. Ar. : δὲ ut interpr. Lat. : ἐν coni. Zeller | ἀοριστία **ω** CL A : ἀοριστίᾳ coni. Zeller | 20–21 καὶ οἷον ὕλης εἴδη om. Ar. | 21 εἴδη P A : εἴδει J[2]CL | 22 ει· καὶ γὰρ sic P A[2] Tiph., locus corruptus necdum sanatus : εἰ· καὶ γὰρ A : καὶ γὰρ J[2], ut intell. Ar : εἰκῇ γὰρ καὶ C, ut interpr. Lat.: καὶ L : εἰκῇ γὰρ coni. Sylburg. : ἐστί· καὶ γὰρ conj. Use.[1] (et iam Laks et Most) : <ἂν> εἴη· καὶ γὰρ conj. Merlan | 24 ποιεῖ **α** Λ : ποιοῦσι ut intel. Ar.| 11b1 ἐπιμιμεῖσθαι **ω** CL A : ἐπεὶ μιμεῖσθαι conj. Laks et Most (et iam Allan) | 5 ὅλως δ' **Ψ** Λ J[2]CL A : ὅλως P | 7 ᾗ corr. Ross : ἡ P : ἢ **Ψ** Λ J[2]

Translation

[11a1] But if this is not the case, then one should set certain limits to 'for the sake of something' and 'with a view to the best', and not posit [these two principles] for everything without qualification, for in fact such principles are somewhat ambiguous both when said without qualification and with reference to every concrete case. [11a5] Without qualification, when [it is said] that nature in all [things] strives after the best and, wherever possible, gives a share in the eternal and orderly; and [with reference to concrete cases] when something like this [is said] similarly about animals: for where the better is possible, there it is never lacking, [a10] like the windpipe being in front of the oesophagus—for it is nobler—and the mixture [of the blood] being the best in the central ventricle of the heart—because the centre is the noblest—and similarly with whatever [is said to be] for the sake of order. For even if it is true that desire [functions] in this manner, the following fact, nevertheless, clearly reveals that there is much [a15] that neither obeys nor receives the good or rather there is much more: for the

animate is something slight, while the inanimate is infinite; and the existence of the animate [things] themselves, though better, is momentary. **In general, the good is something rare and in few [things], [a20] whereas the bad is great in quantity; And, †not if† indeterminateness only and, as it were, the forms of matter, just like those of the nature of extreme ignorance. For †if indeed† they speak about the whole of existence, just as Speusippus makes what is honourable, which is in the region of the centre, something rare, and [makes] the rest extremes [a25] and on either side. The things that are happen to be in a good state**; [b1] Plato and the Pythagoreans [make] the distance a great one and [make] all [things] wish to imitate fully; and yet they make a certain opposition, as it were, between the Indefinite Dyad and the One, on which depend the infinite and the disordered, i.e. so to speak, all shapelessness in itself [b5] and it is altogether impossible that the nature of the whole should exist without [the Dyad], but rather, as it were, [the Dyad] balances or even predominates over the other [principle]; on which account, [they make] also the first principles contrary [to one another] (11a26–b7).[14]

To frame the interpretation of this long passage which I shall develop, it will help first to recall the general *skopos* of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*. It is commonly agreed that this treatise is mainly concerned with the foundation of natural science(s) in a broad sense, with an emphasis on the essence of first principles and their relation to each other as well as to the perceptible, changeable world.[15] Though resembling Aristotle's understanding of general metaphysics,[16] it is noteworthy that Theophrastus' approach is by and large aporetic.[17] He seems hesitant to advance theses of his own but is content with exhibiting a series of difficulties in the proposals made by other philosophers, including Academic theories of principles and the assumption of the Prime Mover and teleology, 'two of Aristotle's signature theories' as Gutas (2010) 4 puts it.[18] In view of

[14] The text and translation are based on Gutas, with slight modification. The critical apparatus is selectively derived from Laks and Most (1993), van Raalte (1993) and Gutas (2010). Several obscure parts—in particular 11a20–22 and 11a25–26—will be clarified and modified in detail below.

[15] See Theiler (1958) 102–05; Gutas (2010) 4; Ierodiakonou (2016).

[16] For a similar concern in Aristotle's metaphysical program see Judson (2018) 264.

[17] The aporetic feature of this treatise is highlighted by Ellis (1988).

[18] It is controversial whether Aristotle *tout court* or only a certain stage of Aristotle's development is under Theophrastus' attack here. But this question will not affect the present study. For different views see Reale (1964) 157–60; Theiler (1965) 102; Happ (1971) 772; Gaiser (1985) 56; Most (1988) 224–33; Vallance (1988); Repici (1990) 182–213; Botter (1999); Lennox (2001) 226–27, 259–79; Berti (2002) 339–41; Johnson (2005) 35–39. Accordingly, I shall not enter into the related question about the

the aporetic character of this text, it is difficult to tell what kind of positive story is behind Theophrastus' critical enterprise given the scarcity of evidence on his natural philosophy.[19] Despite all this uncertainty, it seems safe for our limited purposes to characterize one *Leitmotiv* of this treatise as to restrict various applications of teleological thinking, including the assumption of a prime mover and the notion that nature does nothing in vain. In Theophrastus' own words, it aims at setting the boundaries (ὅροι, 9b20, 11a2, 11b25) both in nature and in the universe. This project, according to Lennox (2001), is 'a call for an explicit account of the conditions under which teleological explanations are and are not appropriate' (261–62).[20] Without excluding limited, legitimate use of teleological explanation,[21] this critical engagement indicates that there is no overarching teleological principle for all levels of beings: some things do not need explanations in terms of *causa finalis*, whereas other things resist a *unified* explanation of this kind (*Met*. 9a25–b24; 10a22–28), so that there is a limitation of enquiry to be respected, in particular concerning the natural world, an area which seems to 'involve all kinds of changes' (μεταβολὰς ἔχουσα παντοίας, 4a5).[22] In this light, the approach of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* can reasonably be called de-teleological rather than anti-teleological[23] given the sporadic, limited use of a

value of this treatise for the relative chronology of Aristotle's works, especially his zoology and *Metaphysics Λ*. For more on this issue see Balme (1962) 91–104; Frede (1971) 65–79; Reale (1980) 378–82; van Raalte (1988) 198–203; (1993) 23–25; Devereux (1988) 167–88; Gutas (2010) 4–9.

[19] For an overview of different proposals see Gutas (2010) 37. I think Theophrastus is more congenially characterized as having an empiricist-friendly approach to natural phenomena (Steinmetz (1964) 149–51, 322–23; Gaiser (1985) 56; Vallance (1988) 25–27; Wehrli, Wöhrle and Zhmud (2004) 507, 514), though it is exaggerated to characterize him as 'first and foremost a man of science' (Ross and Fobes (1929) xxv). By contrast, it seems speculative to discern a sort of scepticism in Theophrastus' aporetic approach to teleology; see Weische (1961) 60–66; Krämer (1971) 12. I have also reservation about van Raalte (1988), who, in appealing to Pepper (1942), argues that Theophrastus launches his attack on teleology in order to pave the way for his organicist world view. This proposal can hardly stand, not only because of its lack of independent evidence (Ellis 1988) but also because it is theoretically dubious whether the organicist approach really contradicts a teleological one. In fact, Sharples (2017) has recently pointed out that the two approaches can be well combined, as the Stoic world view indicates (164–65).

[20] Since the ὅρος of a legitimate teleological explanation should respect and reflect the ὅρος of the things in the world, I do not think that Lennox (2001) 261 is incoherent in holding that the ὅρος in question is both the standard we apply and the objective principle based on how the world is (*pace* Gutas (2010) 36). Therefore, on my view, Lennox's interpretation of the ὅρος is compatible with the objectivist interpretation of Repici (2009). See also Lennox (2001) 227; Gourinat (2015).

[21] For instance, a limited use of teleological explanation—for the plant itself or for us—is found in his works on plants (see e.g. *HP* 1.2.2; *CP* 1.1; 1.16; for a collection of evidence see Wöhrle (1985) 84–94).

[22] Steinmetz (1964) speaks of Theophrastus' 'Warnung vor einer übertriebenen aitiologischen Untersuchung' (150). For this aspect of Theophrastus' thought see also *frr*. 142, 143, 158, 159 FHSG; *cf*. Botter (1999) 57.

[23] For similar, but different characterizations of Theophrastus' approach see 'dysteleology' Gutas (2010) 371; 'Distanzierung von unkritischer Teleologie' Happ (1971) 772; 'una delimitazione della causa finale' Botter (1999) 61; 'les limites du finalisme' Gourinat (2015) *passim*.

teleological principle found in his physics and biology. From this perspective, what his *Metaphysics* aims to achieve is more than 'a dialectical exercise that is intended precisely to promote and abet [the Aristotelian conception of first philosophy]' (Gutas (2010) 9) or 'an illustration of how exceptions to the rule exist' (Baltussen (2016) 109).[24]

The Speusippus testimony is found close to the end of the *Metaphysics*, which is chiefly devoted to the question about 'how far teleological explanation can be applied to all the details of the natural world' (Sharples 2017, 163). Theophrastus begins the enquiry by examining the application of a teleological principle respectively in the heavenly (10a27) and terrestrial (10a28–b7) domains, and then to the change and generation of animals (10b7–20), plants and minerals (l0b2l–28). The reflection on the boundaries of teleology, from 11a1 onwards, continues his diagnosis of its various applications in different areas, focusing in a more general way on the role of value and final causality operative in the natural world. For what is characteristic of teleological thinking is to judge the appropriateness of something on the criterion of whether it produces or maintains a goal that is supposed to be somehow good. Through combining the for-the-sake-of-x structure of a certain being with a corresponding normative implication, teleologists capture the mode of existence by considering the range and role of the goodness it targets or shares.[25] An optimistic version of this notion, which Theophrastus attacks in particular here, holds that *everything* or nature *in general* is geared towards the good because the world as an orderly whole depends on and is thus regulated by the goodness that derives ultimately from final principles. The distinguishing feature of this notion is well reflected by two quasi-gnomic expressions in the treatise: 'all things desire the best and, wherever possible, give a share in the eternal and orderly' (a5–6); 'where the better is possible, there it is never lacking' (a8–

[24] Theophrastus' attitude in his *Metaphysics* seems to be closely aligned with his research in other works, in which little interest in teleology is manifested. This distinction between him and Aristotle, of course, need not be explained simply by doctrinal shift, but it may also be influenced by shift of interest, as well as by the difference in subject matter (Vallance (1988) 28–30; Kullmann (1998) 80). Plants, after all, do not seem to enjoy a purposive life as much as animals or humans do (see Gotthelf (1988); Sharples (1994) 127; (2017) 166). But as regards cosmology, Theophrastus' departure from Aristotle's doctrine in *Metaphysics* Lambda becomes more obvious (*Met*. 5al4–6a5, 7b9–8a2), no matter whether it means that he rejects the very notion of the Prime Mover or merely wants to revise it (for discussion see Frede (1971); Longrigg (1975) 218; Devereux (1988); Sorabji (1988) 158, 223). At least for Theophrastus, the Prime Mover does not seem to be in charge of the motion of the heavens. Instead, the heavens are moved by the soul they possess, and there is no need to pursue further explanations for the motion of the soul (see *fr*. 159, 252 FHSG; *Met*. 5a28–b10, 6a5–15; Sharples (1998) 86–88, 96; Botter (1999) 41).

[25] For the for-the-sake-of-x as a teleological notion in Aristotelian tradition, see Johnson (2005) 64–80.

9).[26] The question as to how and to what extent we need such a value-bearing goal to explain various modes of existence, then, takes pride of place in Theophrastus' confrontation with teleological thinking here, the immediate context of the Speusippus episode.[27]

Since the teleologists, as mentioned, load existence itself with norm and value in order to assure the teleological structure of the world,[28] the range of goodness in the universe is extended correspondingly. And because Theophrastus aims to constrain the application of teleological thinking, what lies at the heart of his enterprise is to restrict the applicable range of goodness in reality, as he points out '*that* (διότι)[29] there is much that neither obeys nor receives good' (11a14–15) and such things even greatly predominate (a15–16).[30] This contention is then supported by appealing to the asymmetry between good and bad at different levels in two steps (*cf.* γάρ at 11a13): First, Theophrastus draws a sharp contrast between the animate, which is good but only a small part of the world, and the inanimate, which is infinite and bad (a16–17).[31] The contrast is clearly intended to show, as van Raalte summarizes correctly, that 'the great

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[26] Van Raalte (1993) 543: 'the good is an all-pervading objective value … which is achieved "where possible"'.

[27] The consistent use of words closely associated with good is striking in this section, e.g. 11a1–2: τοῦθ' ἕνεκά του καὶ εἰς τὸ ἄριστον (for parallels, see οὔτε γὰρ τὸ βέλτιον οὔτε τὸ τινὸς χάριν, 11b15; τοῦ ἕνεκά του καὶ τῆς εἰς τὸ βέλτιον ὁρμῆς, 11b26–27); 11a6: ὀρέγεσθαι τοῦ ἀρίστου; 11a9: τὸ βέλτιον; 11a12: ἀρίστην; 11a15: τὸ εὖ; 11a17–18: καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐμψύχων ἀκαριαῖον, κἂν βέλτιον, τὸ εἶναι; 11a19: τὸ ἀγαθόν; 11a23: τὸ τίμιον.

[28] 6a1–2: τὸ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτον καὶ θειότατον πάντα τὰ ἄριστα βουλόμενον; 6a3–4: ἀξιοῖ γὰρ ὁ τοῦτο λέγων ἅπανθ' ὅμοια καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εἶναι; similar statements are found in Pl. *Ti*. 30a2, 6–7; Arist. *Metaph*. 1075a11–19.

[29] Following van Raalte, Laks and Most and Gutas, I prefer 'that' to 'the reason why' in translating διότι at 11a14. As far as the syntactic function of διότι is concerned, it can be used to introduce both a causal and an objective statement. In the latter case, it serves as a weakened form of ὅτι, frequently found following the verbs in the field of *sentiendi*, *declarandi* and *dicendi* (Kühner and Gerth II.2.356, also see Schwyzer II, 661). This use is attested in Herodotus and the Attic orators, as well as often in non-classical authors (Kühner and Gerth II.2.355). It is found also in Aristotle, as Bonitz has noted (*Index* 200b39–52). Since it follows ἐμφαίνει in *Met*. 11a14, the occurrence of διότι may also be motivated to avoid hiatus (for such phenomena in Theophrastus see van Raalte (1991) 552; for those in Isocrates and Demosthenes see Smyth §2548; Kühner and Gerth II.2.356). As regards the content, Laks and Most (1993) 20 n.41 reasonably point out that there is no substantial difference between the causal and the factual translation here because γάρ at 11a16, in any case, indicates that what immediately follows is an explanation of 11a14–15. A subtle distinction may be that if one opts for 'why', the emphasis lies more in 14a16–22, the explanatory part, whereas if one prefers 'that', the emphasis is primarily put on the *fact* about the limited realization of goodness in the world, which is then followed by the explanation. Since I think it is very important for Theophrastus here to ensure the *fact* about the limited realization of good in the world, the translation 'that' seems to give a more natural presentation of his train of thought, a reasoning from revealing a fact to its explanation or justification. (I thank an anonymous referee for pushing me to reflect on this issue).

[30] 11b15: οὔτε γὰρ τὸ βέλτιον οὔτε τὸ τινὸς χάριν; 11b24–27: πειρατέον τινὰ λαμβάνειν ὅρον, καὶ ἐν τῇ φύσει καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ σύμπαντος οὐσίᾳ, καὶ τοῦ ἕνεκά του καὶ τῆς εἰς τὸ βέλτιον ὁρμῆς.

[31] For a similar comparison, see Arist. *GA* 731b28–30: βέλτιον δὲ ψυχὴ μὲν σώματος, τὸ δ' ἔμψυχον τοῦ ἀψύχου διὰ τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ εἶναι τοῦ μὴ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ζῆν τοῦ μὴ ζῆν.

majority of things simply *do not* have the allegedly omnipresent tendency'[32] towards good because the inanimate—of which there is an enormous quantity in the world—is incapable of desiring anything (see ἡ ὄρεξις at 11a14). This echoes the classical anti-teleological argument from intentionality, according to which teleology has no place among the inanimate because there is no desire and thus no representation there of a goal, which is traditionally taken to be a prerequisite for the function of a teleological principle. Interestingly, Theophrastus does not stop here. He goes on to argue that even if something intrinsically good is found in the existence of the animate, the positive value is realized only momentarily (ἀκαριαῖον, 11a17–18) in such cases. This argument, from a diachronical point of view, further advances his qualification of the range of goodness by constraining its realization in the animate although they or many of them, as opposed to the inanimate, are endowed with the ability to desire something good as their goal.[33]

In the subsequent lines (11a20–22), Theophrastus attempts to generalize his diagnosis of teleological explanation (*cf.* τὸ δ' ὅλον), foregrounding—in a more abstract way—the fundamental asymmetry between goodness and badness in reality, a contrast which had already been implied in his comparison between the animate and the inanimate.[34] This argumentative procedure follows the methodological clue mentioned a few lines earlier (11a4–5), namely the distinction between the applications of teleology *without qualification* (ἁπλῶς, 11a4) and *with reference to concrete cases* (καθ' ἕκαστον, 11a4–5).[35] Leaving the uncertain text aside,[36] at this point Speusippus is invoked, together with 'those who are concerned with the whole of being' (I shall call them 'metaphysicians'). The conjunction γάρ (11a22) suggests that here, in appealing to him and the metaphysicians, Theophrastus *carries forward* his treatment

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[32] Van Raalte (1993) 553, my emphasis.

[33] The reading of Gutas (2010) is similar to what I am suggesting, but he goes too far in claiming that the argument at 11a17–18 attacks Aristotle's opinion that the animate is better than the inanimate (390). For restricting the goodness of the animate does not amount to denying the superiority of the animate over the inanimate. On the contrary, the superiority of the animate is tacitly presupposed by the argument at 11a16–18. In fact, Theophrastus uses two arguments jointly to undermine teleological explanation rather than to refute the first argument by appealing to the second one. As an anonymous reader reminds me, Theophrastus explicitly points out that 'nothing is honourable without soul' (οὐδὲν γὰρ τίμιον ἄνευ ψυχῆς, *fr.* 159 FHSG= Procl. *in Tim.* 35a, p.122 Diehl; also see *in Tim.* 40bc, p.136.1–2 Diehl; *Theol.Plat.* 1.14).

[34] For a similar distinction, *cf.* καὶ ἐν τῇ φύσει καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ σύμπαντος οὐσίᾳ, *Met.* 11b25–26.

[35] The qualifier ἁπλῶς corresponds to the formulations τὴν φύσιν ἐν ἅπασιν (11a5–6), τὸ δ' ὅλον (11a18), and περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας (11a22; *cf.* ἡ ὅλη δ' οὐσία τοῦ παντός at 8a23), whereas the phrase 'with reference to concrete cases' seems here to refer to the teleological accounts of natural things, in particular among the animates (a10–15).

[36] I shall address them in §§III and IV below.

of the quantitative asymmetry between good and bad. It is thus not surprising that Speusippus' view—what is honourable (τὸ τίμιον)[37] is scanty and in the centre, whereas the rest is extreme and on both sides of it[38]—echoes, specifies, and provides a way of understanding what Theophrastus has uttered about the limitation of goodness in reality, regardless of how one conceive of the concrete picture behind this view.[39] Of course, Theophrastus, as an Aristotelian, cannot embrace all of the implications of Speusippus' theory (see §§V and VII below), but the limitation of the range of goodness itself, theoretically considered, seems advantageous for his de-teleological concern and gives a *prima facie* reason for the appearance of Speusippus. For the teleology with which Theophrastus is struggling tempts people to think that everything by nature tends to obtain or has taken part in good to different degrees, so that goodness, instead of badness, should somehow prevail in the whole of reality.

This preliminary result can also gain support from a parallel passage of the same treatise in which Theophrastus utilizes Euripides for a similar de-teleological purpose. In order to reveal the difficulty in assuming that all things are good or alike (*cf*. 8b1)—a position congenial to (or required for) those who endorse a globe teleology or its optimist version, Theophrastus asks:

> Why in the world it is that nature, and indeed the entire substance of the universe, consists of contraries, with the worse almost equalling the better, or rather there is even much more (σχεδὸν ἰσομοιρεῖ τὸ χεῖρον τῷ βελτίονι, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ πολλῷ πλέον ἐστίν)—so that Euripides would seem to be making a universal statement when he says, 'Good things cannot come to pass alone (οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο χωρὶς ἐσθλά).' (*Met*. 8a22–27, modified)

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[37] We are not sure whether τὸ τίμιον, which is obviously used as synonymous with the good here, is Speusippus' original term. Its cognates are attested elsewhere in Theophrastus' treatise (e.g. τιμιωτάτοις, 6b28; τιμιωτέραν, 7b14; τιμιωτέροις, 10b26) and even a few lines above (τιμιώτερον, 11a10–11; τιμιώτατον, 11a12). But it is more important to realise that the teleology in question, as Theophrastus' treatise manifests itself, relies on a *family* of value-centred notions including τὸ εὖ, τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ τίμιον and the like. For the use of τίμιον and its cognates in relation to the good in the Academic context, see Szlezák (1998).

[38] *Met*. 11a23–25: σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον ποιεῖ τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν, τὰ δ' ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν.

[39] *Cf*. 'there is much that neither obeys nor receives the good (τὸ εὖ) or rather there is much more' (11a14–16); 'In general, the good is something rare and in few [things], whereas the bad is much in number' (11a18–20).

In parallel to what we have seen in 11a14–20, the limitation on the range of good—bad is equal with good or even enjoys a superiority over good—has been invoked to question the application of the teleological principle according to which the reality is determined by a *telos*, something complete, perfect, and thus good. A statement from Euripides' lost play *Aeolus*— 'good things cannot come to pass alone' (which implies that non-good things must accompany them)—is then immediately adduced to corroborate this point. Although it can hardly be a reliable interpretation of the *Aeolus*,[40] it is important to note that Theophrastus' appeal to Speusippus in 11a22 shares a similar argumentative strategy with his usage of Euripides at 8a22–27—and for the same purpose, namely to restrict teleology by limiting the realization of goodness in the world.

III. *Metaphysics* 11a20–22: an argument *ad hominem*?

To facilitate discussion, I left 11a20–22 and a25–26 undiscussed above. These lines, however, present themselves as the main obstacles to the interpretation I have been advancing. Instead of reading 11a18–20 as a summary of Theophrastus' previous discussion, traditional critics believe that in 11a18–22 Theophrastus turns to attacking the quantitative asymmetry between goodness and badness espoused by Speusippus. This view is mocked as most ignorant because a competent investigator should not consider natural things as bad, let alone bad (not merely) due to their share of matter/indeterminateness (Laks and Most (1993) 86). Although this interpretation seems to fit snugly into the popular polemic story, it is suspect if we closely examine its immediate and broader context as well as the theoretical implications underlying this interpretation.

In the first place, it is very unlikely that Theophrastus takes Speusippus as an easy target of disdain. As is well known, he and Aristotle disagree with Speusippus in many respects, but they cannot and do not—as other polemical passages show—make such rude comments about him.[41] In fact, in their surviving works they never use ἀμαθ-words to characterize any of their rivals or competitive theories. The traditional interpretation seems to be prompted by the stereotypical image of the Peripatetics' hostility towards Speusippus rather than by any conclusive evidence based on the text.

[40] Theophrastus of course uses Euripides for his own purpose without considering the dramatic context of this statement. For the original sense of this quotation, see van Raalte (1993) 383–85; Gutas (2010) 347.

[41] Gutas (2010) 392: 'it is inconceivable that Theophrastus could have used an expression like "a most ignorant person" (ἀμαθεστάτου) to describe, however indirectly, Speusippus'.

Second, the way in which Theophrastus introduces Speusippus a few lines later (a22–23) does not suggest that this is a person who has just been mentioned. In fact, the sentence starts τὸ δ' ὅλον, which suggests that this sentence is going to give general (i.e. Theophrastus') claims. And, as noted above, since the thesis σπάνιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλήθει τὸ κακόν at 11a18–19 tallies with Theophrastus' de-teleological attitude, it should be better to take 11a18–22 as a further development of his attempt to set a limitation on the range of goodness among the animate and the inanimate.[42]

The polemical narrative, on reflection, cannot get much mileage by reading οὐκ ἐν ἀοριστίᾳ in the place of †οὐκ εἰ† ἀοριστία; it is even beset by the question of whether the conjecture saddles Speusippus with a thesis which sits poorly with what we know about his own philosophy. For if in his metaphysics Speusippus famously denies attributing the negative value to the second principle—what he calls Plurality (and what Aristotle names *hylē*, while other Academics may prefer Indefinite Dyad)[43] — it is hard to conceive that he not only involves the indefinite principle in accounting for the badness of natural things but also uses a concept coined by Aristotle, 'the form of *hylē*',[44] to elucidate ἀοριστία, a term that seems alien to Plato and the Academics.[45] It may be not an accident that although the story about Theophrastus' polemic against Speusippus is widely received, the interpretation of lines 11a18–22 seems to be an unsolvable mess. While Merlan (1968), as mentioned, assigns it to another Platonist (110), Regenbogen (1940) col.1392 takes 11a18–22 as Theophrastus' own theory. In a more complicated way, Happ (1971) tries to distinguish between two positions within this passage by arguing that Theophrastus attacks only its first half, the asymmetry between good and evil (11a18–20), whereas 11a20–21 is simply what he endorses,

[42] See Gutas's résumé of the argument in 11a14–20: 'The animate part of nature is little, the inanimate infinite. *Hence*, and in general, the good is something little, the evil much' ((2010) 381, my italics). A similar view is found in Regenbogen (1940) col.1392. I cannot follow those who read τὸ δ' ὅλον as a strong adversative: e.g., Most (1988) 226: 'But he concludes that, even if on the one hand there are limits to order and the desire for the better in the universe, on the other, those who think that the universe is for the most part disordered and evil are quite stupid 11a18–26'. Also see Tarán (1981) 448; van Raalte (1993) 555; Dillon (2002) 185; Gourinat (2015) 171–72.

[43] For Speusippus' metaphysics, see, for example, Happ (1971) 208–56; Tarán (1981) 13–52; Dancy (1991) 63–178; (2016); Dillon (2003) 40–64, 98–136; Krämer (2004) 16–25, 40–43.

[44] οἷον ὕλης εἴδει, 11a21; *cf*. Arist. *Metaph*. 983b7: ἐν ὕλης εἴδει; *Meteor*. 339a28–29: ὡς ἐν ὕλης εἴδει.

[45] ἀοριστία is a rarely attested word, not used by Plato, nor can it be found the surviving fragments of Xenocrates or Speusippus (apart from the testimony in question). More on this term, see nn.56–57 below.

namely the principle that *hylē* can produce evil *per accidens* (772–73, for more on this see §V below).

With regard to 11a22, another corrupt passage, Gutas (2010) tells us that 'καὶ γάρ is well attested in the oldest Greek manuscripts, while εἰ γὰρ καί and καί in C and L respectively would appear to be scribal emendations for the impossible ει καὶ γάρ in P and J' (392). This philological finding already casts preliminary doubt on Sylburg's well-received conjecture of εἰκῇ γάρ by fusing καὶ and εἰ to a single word εἰκῇ. More importantly, there are theoretical reasons to question Theophrastus' motivation in characterizing as 'random' (εἰκῇ) the view that the good is located in the centre while the rest forms the extremes on either side. Not only does the conception behind this alleged critical target sound commonplace among the Academics, a model which even the Peripatetic doctrine of the Mean somehow follows (*cf*. Arist. *EN* 1109a19–33),[46] but also, granted that the polemical interpretation is in principle correct, 'speaking εἰκῇ' can hardly be an appropriate term for the very mistake the upholder of this interpretation ascribed to Speusippus. For in the Aristotelian tradition a *logos* is deemed to be εἰκῇ[47] usually because it lacks argument (see *EE* 1215a2–3)[48] or a proper subject (*SE* 172b15–16), or because its content is extraneous and empty.[49] Speaking εἰκῇ, therefore, is a mistake of irrelevance or indiscipline rather than getting things seriously wrong. Aristotle himself admits that those who are accustomed to this way of speaking can get things right, even if only accidentally and even if they are more vulnerable to failure (*SE* 172b14–15).[50] Thus, unsurprisingly, he takes speaking εἰκῇ to be a commonplace fault, a mistake ordinary people are inclined to commit when speaking and talking (*EE*

[46] Tarán (1981) 442: 'Speusippus' doctrine of the good as the middle between two extreme evils is very close to Aristotle's own doctrine of virtue as a mean' (see also Botter (1999) 61). It is remarkable that Theophrastus is here speaking of οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγοντες, ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος, not of Speusippus alone. Even Theophrastus himself is also engaged with the whole of being (*cf*. ἡ ὅλη δ' οὐσία τοῦ παντός at 8a23). So is Aristotle (*cf*. τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας, *PA* 645a35). For various hypotheses of the origin of Aristotle' s doctrine of the Mean, in particular his indebtedness to Plato and the Academy, see Krämer (1959) and Tracy (1969).

[47] There is no direct evidence indicating how Theophrastus himself understands 'speaking εἰκῇ'. However, as an anonymous reader reminds me, Aristotle's usage can help us obtain an approximation of its meaning for the Peripatetics.

[48] The contrast between *logos* (here, in the sense of reason) and εἰκῇ is also attested in *Protrepticus* B23 (Düring): Πᾶσα φύσις <οὖν> ὥσπερ ἔχουσα λόγον οὐθὲν μὲν εἰκῇ ποιεῖ.

[49] See *EE* 1217a2–3: ἀλλοτρίους λόγους τῆς πραγματείας καὶ κενούς; *EE* 1217a8–10: τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι κρίνειν τούς τ' οἰκείους λόγους τοῦ πράγματος καὶ τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους.

[50] In the opening of the *Rhetoric*, he implies that people who speak εἰκῇ can succeed (ἐπιτυγχάνουσιν) in speaking, albeit in an accidental way (ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου; see *Rhet*. 1354a6–10). The term εἰκῇ refers to coincidental events in Aristotle: see *Poet*. 1452a9–10.

1214b34–1215a1, *Rhet*. 1354a6).[51] This is a crucial reason why he suggests that it is better for students of philosophy to skip over the view of those who speak εἰκῇ than to engage with them seriously.[52] Hence, if Speusippus or the 'metaphysicians' speak εἰκῇ, Theophrastus' interest in them seems mysterious or at least not properly motivated. This aspect, from another angle, justifies and sharpens the worry of Laks and Most about the fit between the conjecture εἰκῇ and the critical point Theophrastus is supposed to raise against Speusippus in the traditional narrative. For, on this proposal, Speusippus is criticized because his view is mistaken, not because it is irrelevant.[53]

But one may ask for what reason, then, the asymmetry between good and evil is introduced here if it is not a Speusippean dogma that Theophrastus aims to ridicule. To answer this question, a clue can be found in a passage of the *Metaphysics* where a teleological agenda is strikingly involved in Aristotle's criticism of the Academic doctrines of principles.

> οὐκ ὀρθῶς δ' ὑπολαμβάνει οὐδ' εἴ τις παρεικάζει τὰς τοῦ ὅλου ἀρχὰς τῇ τῶν ζῴων καὶ φυτῶν, ὅτι ἐξ ἀορίστων ἀτελῶν τε ἀεὶ τὰ τελειότερα, διὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πρώτων οὕτως ἔχειν φησίν. (*Metaph*. 1092a11–14 < F43 Tarán)
>
> Nor do we conceive the matter correctly if one compares the principles of the universe to that of animals and plants, on the ground that the more complete always comes from the indefinite and incomplete—which is what leads this thinker to say that this is also true of the first principles of reality.[54]

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[51] For instance, when talking of style, speaking εἰκῇ is criticized for not attaining the good (οὐκ ἔχει τὸ εὖ, 1406a17) yet regarded as better than the bad case (τὸ κακῶς, 1406a17), i.e. the excessive use of long, untimely or frequent epithets (ἐν τοῖς ἐπιθέτοις τὸ ἢ μακροῖς ἢ ἀκαίροις ἢ πυκνοῖς χρῆσθαι, 1406a10–11).

[52] *EE* 1216b40–1217a1; see πάσας μὲν οὖν τὰς δόξας ἐπισκοπεῖν … περίεργον, *EE* 1216b28–29. For the same reason, this is what a proper philosophical discussion should avoid; see *EE* 1217a1–2: 'it is the mark of the philosopher to speak on the basis of an argument (μετὰ λόγου) but never at random (τὸ μηθὲν εἰκῇ λέγειν)', trans. Inwood and Woolf. The contrast between a sober man (νήφων) and those who speak εἰκῇ in *Metaph*. 984b17–18, I think, points to the same notion.

[53] Among scholars, Gutas seems to be the only one who takes into consideration the possibility that Theophrastus might be sympathetic to Speusippus here. But he points out that, no matter whether Theophrastus' attitude towards Speusippus is positive or negative, the conjecture εἰκῇ cannot stand up to a closer scrutiny of the context. For 'Theophrastus cannot be accusing Speusippus of "arbitrary" speech if he thinks that the theory about the centre position of the noble is plain wrong (if this theory is interpreted cosmologically, i.e., as referring to the central position of the world-fire), or even less so, if he thinks that the theory about the centre position of the noble is right (if this theory is interpreted ethically and is similar to that of Aristotle' (Gutas (2010) 392). I shall return to this view in §VII below.

[54] Unless indicated otherwise, I quote the translations of Aristotle's works edited by Barnes 1984, with modifications where marked.

In parallel with his denial of the identification of the second principle with the bad, Speusippus[55] also attempts to exclude the good from being the first principle by means of a biological analogy (also see §V below). He uses the way of how a living being develops itself—from an indefinite and imperfect state (ἐξ ἀορίστων ἀτελῶν τε, 1092a13) to its mature state (τὰ τελειότερα, 1092a13–14; τὸ καλὸν καὶ τέλειον 1072b33–34)—to illustrate that goodness, as an accidental by-product of a natural process, occurs always in the *final* stage (*cf.* 1091a33: ὑστερογενῆ), that is, as an effect rather than as a starting point (ἀρχή). This argument criticizes the teleologists on the ground that they pose a backward causation, which turns the natural development upside down, confusing the *teleion* product with the *atelē* cause. If someone asks why he insists on the radical asymmetry of the distribution of values, he would reply that it is because many things either do not possess a goal in themselves or it is because good as an excellent state of their effect is difficult to realize. It is important to note that Speusippus never denies that living beings *can* move towards and eventually gain their excellence (as a result of their development), although a huge number of beings in fact fail to achieve this. But the point of his analogy is to show that that it is impossible for natural progress to have been regulated, much less determined, by presupposed value-laden principles.

This biological perspective opens up a new way of understanding *Met*.11a18–22, a seriously corrupt passage, especially if we take into account the textual variation transmitted by the Arabic tradition:

> wa bi-l-jumlat fa-inna al-jayyid yasīr wa fī ašyā' yasīrat wa-r-radī' kaṯīr al- 'adad wa-ḫurūj hāḏā (sc., ar-radī') 'an al-ḥadd faqaṭ huwa bi-manzilat mā yakūnu fī ṭabī'at ġāyat al-jahli. (*Met*. 11a18–22, Gutas)
>
> In general, the good is little and in few things, while the bad is great of number, the unlimitedness of which only is like what happens in the nature of extreme ignorance (modified).[56]

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[55] Speusippus is not named here, but the same argument is unambiguously ascribed to him and the Pythagoreans in *Metaph*. 1072b30–1073a3. It is reasonable to doubt that similar thoughts can be found in the Pythagorean tradition; see Tarán (1981) 335. Theophrastus, as we shall see, portrays the Pythagoreans in a different way.

[56] Gutas (2010) 218–21. Isḥāq, according to Gutas, seems to understand 11a20—its Greek must be οὗ ἡ ἀοριστία— 'as referring to the boundless instances of the bad itself' (*ibid*. and 392) and translates the phrase as 'the departure of this from the limit'. This reading is not impossible if Theophrastus also holds that there are boundless instances of the extreme ignorant nature. But I think that a qualitative understanding of ἀοριστία is more attractive given the content of our text and the ordinary way of

According to Gutas, Ψ, the Greek text on which the Arabic translation is based, 'represents a tradition of the text that has no immediate relation to that of J and P', the two major manuscripts of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*, and as an independent text, it 'carries the correct reading over J and P … in no less than 31 passages' ((2010) 52). In principle, therefore, it is not impossible that at 11a18–20 the Arabic translator Isḥāq has a better text rather than just arbitrarily struggling with the 'nonsense' of a heavily corrupt passage.[57] As the translation shows, he reads οὗ instead of οὐκ at 11a20 and refers ἀμαθεστάτου (in my opinion more naturally) to the immediate antecedent τῆς φύσεως rather than taking it to apply to the *whole* sentence.[58] According to this reading, what is at the heart of this passage is not a hostile characterization of a rival philosopher (the genitive of ὁ ἀμαθέστατος) so that no polemic against Speusippus is involved here, but a comparison between the state of the bad as unlimited and the

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understanding ἀοριστία and similar terms like ἄπειρον and ἀόριστος. For, in general, these words can be understood in either quantitative or qualitative ways. The latter aspect, however, is much more frequently attested in the context of the Academic debate over first principles. In the Plato/'Pythagorean' episode, a few lines later (11b3–4), the ἄπειρον, ἄτακτον and ἀμορφία obviously follow the qualitative use (more on this episode, *cf.* §VI). If we focus on ἀοριστία, it occurs only three times in the *corpus Aristotelicum*; all are concerned with quality. In *GA* 778a6, ἀοριστία seems to represent a key feature of matter (ὕλη), which is a major obstacle for Nature realizing its aim. In *Mete.* 361b34, ἀοριστία is used to characterize the change of the season, closely associated with the state depicted as uncertain (ἄκριτος, 361b30), severe (χαλεπός, b30), disordered (ταραχώδεις, b34). The same use of ἀοριστία is adapted by [*Prob.*] 941b32 and Thphr. *Vent.* 55, where the state of ἀοριστία looks like ἀοριστεῖ μάλιστα ([*Prob.*] 941b26; see μάλιστα … ἀοριστεῖν, in *Vent.* 55), ἀκατάστατα (b29); χαλεπός (b23), ταραχώδη (b32). (In view of the striking similarities among the three passages, *Mete.* 361b30–34 may be the source of the latter two.)

[57] The omission of the phrase καὶ οἷον ὕλης εἴδη in the Arabic translation is not an insurmountable obstacle to this assumption. Its absence need not be considered as the translator's failure to make sense of a 'bad' manuscript or as the unconscious neglect of a reckless reader. Rather, it is not impossible that the phrase in extant manuscripts be a gloss of the term ἀοριστία that is absent in the text the Arabic author has. For the juxtaposition of double comparisons (οἷον ὕλης εἴδη and καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως) makes the syntax of the sentence awkward. Moreover, ἀοριστία is a rarely attested word, occurring only three times in the *corpus Aristotelicum*, as mentioned above (n.56). Interestingly, the phrase 'ἡ τῆς ὕλης ἀοριστία' occurs in *GA* 778a6, which is a crucial factor for explaining why the Nature cannot always precisely achieve its aim in the process of generation (778a5–9). This indicates that, for Aristotle, the unlimitedness of the matter already impairs the realization of global teleology in the animal kingdom, which closely resembles the Arabic version of Theophrastus' *Met.* 11a20–21. Given the intimate association of 'matter' (ὕλη) and the property of being unlimited since Aristotle, it is conceivable that during the transmission process the obscure term ἀοριστία was subject to clarification by critics who are familiar with this tradition. It is worth noting, however, that the reading proposed here can stand regardless of the status of the phrase 'οἷον ὕλης εἴδη' (see below). For a different, yet also charitable interpretation of the Arabic tradition, see Gutas (2010) 221; *pace* Tarán (1981) 446–47.

[58] Laks and Most (1993) 84 n.47 already criticize the traditional translation advanced by Ross and read καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀμαθεστάτου together. But differently from the Arabic tradition, they interpret τὰ τῆς φύσεως as the *content* of someone's ignorance (*cf.* 'appartient à un homme pour ainsi dire complètement ignorant des choses de la nature'). On this reading, Speusippus is mocked not only as the most ignorant person, but also as the one who is completely ignorant of nature. This shows that they are principally in line with the traditional interpretation.

state of extreme ignorance (the genitive of τὸ ἀμαθέστατον).[59] So construed, the text on which the Arabic translation is based might be:

> Τὸ δ' ὅλον σπάνιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλήθει τὸ κακόν, οὗ ἡ ἀοριστία δὲ μόνον καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀμαθεστάτου ἐστί (11a18–22).
>
> In general, the good is something rare and in few [things], whereas the bad is great in quantity; the unlimitedness of the bad is simply like what happens in the nature of extreme ignorance.

What does this comparison mean in the context itself? Neither Isḥāq nor any editor or commentator of the Arabic text provides a ready answer. It is, however, noteworthy that ἀμαθ-words can be used not only to portray someone's behaviour or opinion as stupid/ignorant, but also, more generally, to refer to the state of lacking reason/ intelligence.[60] This state is closely tied up with what is called by Plato 'the bad' or 'vice',[61] an unhappy state for various kinds of beings, not limited to human individuals. In the *Timaeus*, he also characterizes such a state as ἀτελὴς καὶ ἀνόητος (*Ti*. 44c3) insofar as intelligence, which is an indicator of the perfection of a living being, fails to be present, developed or accomplished. At the very end of this dialogue, the degree of ἀμαθία (92b7) even functions as a criterion to determine the hierarchy of the status of various inferior animals in Timaeus' account of their degeneration from the male human type.[62] The aquatic animals, due to their least share of intelligence, are mocked as the μάλιστα ἀνοητότατοι and ἀμαθέστατοι (92b1–2). A similar notion can also be found in Aristotle, who uses terms like ἀμαθία,

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[59] This construal of the ἀμαθεστάτου is possible, because a substantivized neuter adjective need not always have the article, see Kühner and Gerth II.1.608; Smyth §1130. Such a use of neuter adjectives can also be found in Aristotle, see e.g., οἷον ὅτι ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ, καὶ λευκοῦ καὶ μέλανος, καὶ ψυχροῦ καὶ θερμοῦ, *Top*. 105b36–37; τὸ αἴτιον ἀγαθοῦ καθ' αὑτο, *Top*.116b1; περὶ ἀγαθοῦ ἢ κακοῦ, ἢ καλοῦ ἢ αἰσχροῦ, ἢ δικαίου ἢ ἀδίκου; *Metaph*. 1063a5–6; ἰδέαν μὴ μόνον ἀγαθοῦ, *EE* 1217b20–21; καὶ πῶς κάλλιστον καὶ πρεπωδέστατον, σκέψαιτ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ πόσου καὶ πῶς ἐλαχίστου, *EN* 1122b9–10; τὸ μόνον ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ καὶ δικαίου καὶ ἀδίκου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων αἴσθησιν ἔχειν·, *Pol*. 1353a16–18. (I thank Professor Cairns for pushing me to reflect on this aspect.)

[60] See the entries ἀμαθία and ἀμαθής in LSJ.

[61] For ἀμαθία as vice, see ἀμαθία καὶ κακία, *Tht*. 176c5; ἡ δὲ ἀμαθία κακόν, *Euthy*. 281e5; τῷ κακῷ καὶ ἀμαθεῖ, *Resp*. 350c5; ἀμαθής τε καὶ κακός, 350c11; κακίαν τε καὶ ἀμαθίαν, 350d5.

[62] In *Ti*. 90e–92c, women, birds, wild land- and aquatic animals are ranked according to the different degrees of ἀμαθία they share.

ἄνοια and ἀνόητος to mark such bad states.[63] In his zoology, different levels of ἄνοια, functioning equally as a criterion, serve to classify animals' ἦθος with respect to different levels of perfection (*HA* 610b20–22).[64] Sheep, for instance, are said to be εὔηθες καὶ ἀνόητον (610b23) and thus the worst (κάκιστον, b24) of all the quadrupeds.[65] In the *Physics*, ἀμαθέστατον (222b17) is even used to characterize time, because it causes change, in particular forgetfulness/ignorance (ἐπιλανθάνονται, b17) and passing-away (φθορᾶς, b18).[66]

The teleological context—including a hierarchy of beings (10a27– b28)—suggests that ἀμαθέστατου at Thphr. *Met*. 11a21–22 should be read in a similar way. If it signifies an unhappy state of lacking or failing to develop reason or intelligence, this gives more sense to Theophrastus' comparison with the badness to a deviation from the limit/goal in a biological context. Since Theophrastus has just mentioned the rarity and ephemerality of the good realized in the case of ἔμψυχον (11a16 and a17), his account of the bad in 11a21-22 somehow continues this narrative. As a parenthesis, this passage gives an additional reason for setting constraint on the range of the good by showing how its opposite, the bad, is realized and prevails in the natural world. So understood, 11a20–22 is well connected with the preceding text, in which Theophrastus is preoccupied with *natural* teleology, in particular with the asymmetric realization of value in the natural world. It may not come as surprise that this argumentative move resonates with Speusippus' strategy of employing the biological analogy to elucidate his metaphysical thesis that the goodness cannot be an intrinsic property of the principle.

IV. 11a25–26: an argument for the goodness of reality?

We are now in a position to unpack the last sentence of the Speusippus episode—τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν ὄντα (11a25–26), which was traditionally read as Theophrastus' attack on Speusippus immediately following the report of his view on

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[63] E.g., the contrast ἀγαθόν-ἕξις-φρόνησις and ἀγαθόν-ἕξις-ἀμαθία in Arist. *APr*. 26a35–36; τὰ δὲ θυμώδη καὶ ἐνστατικὰ καὶ ἀμαθῆ, *HA* 488b14.

[64] For the way in which Aristotle adopts Timaeus' account but filters its mystical feature in his zoology see Taylor (1928) 642–3.

[65] Of the cephalopods, octopus is also qualified as ἀνόητον (*HA* 622a3), contrasted with the most cunning cuttlefish (621b28) in the same species. Like ἀμαθ-words, ἀνόητος and its cognates in Aristotle frequently refer to a deficient *disposition* (e.g., *EE* 1231b10; *EN* 1119b9, 1173a2) and are never used to depict his opponents or their views.

[66] Although this characterization is attributed to a Pythagorean called Paron, Aristotle points out that this is also a view he himself finds congenial (222b16–19).

value.[67] This statement can be interpreted in this way because the expression ἔτυχεν ὄντα is taken to be an emphatic form of εἶναι, so that the passage refers to an *essential* predicate of the reality or the things Speusippus dismisses as evil. On this line of interpretation, Theophrastus attacks Speusippus' pessimist belief in the 'bad world' by underlining the *essential* goodness of beings.

As plausible as it may be within the polemical narrative, there are considerations which yield good reasons to cast doubt upon this interpretation. First, facing Speusippus' view on the quantitative imbalance between good and evil, he seems to simply voice his dissent without supplying any arguments. Why does he then immediately shift to the Academic doctrines of principles (11a26–b7) without managing to justify or explicate his countering claim, which appears quite abstract and even no less radical? The omission can be hardly explained unless one thinks that Speusippus' position is too ridiculous to be refuted in Theophrastus' eyes. But if Speusippus' view does not deserve serious consideration, this might give a sense of Theophrastus' 'dogmatism', yet it would come at a high price, as it would leave his confrontation with Speusippus, the *whole* episode 11a20–26, mysterious.

Second, and more importantly, even if in 11a25–26 Theophrastus simply wants to announce what he firmly believes, the view the traditional reading ascribes to him fits poorly with the immediate context and the de-teleological concern of his treatise. Roughly, we can distinguish between two interpretations in the same direction. Either 11a25–26 refers to a strong thesis, as Ross' translation suggests, that 'reality *in fact* is and *always* has been good' (Ross and Fobes (1929), my italics) or to a more moderate thesis that what Speusippus depreciates is *actually* good.[68] If the former is Theophrastus'

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[67] Gutas (2010) seems to be the only commentator who is somewhat sceptical of this interpretation; *cf.* his comments on 11a25: 'Since we do not know the precise sense of this corrupt passage' (393); 'If this brief sentence is indeed an expression of Theophrastus's own views' (*ibid.*). But he does not offer any alternative. It is also interesting to see that, according to Gutas, the Arabic translator apparently reads 11a24–26—τὰ δ' ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν ὄντα— 'as one sentence, and was forced to disregard the words τὰ μὲν οὖν' (221 n.198). I am sympathetic towards this reading insofar as the translator sensitively alludes to the possibility that 11a25–26 is not Theophrastus' criticism of Speusippus but carries forward his report on the view of the 'metaphysicians' and Speusippus in a22–24 (*cf.* the English translation provided by Gutas (2010) 221: 'As for the extremes and what is on either side of the centre, they, *in their opinion*, as they should be', italics added). Nevertheless, the interpretation I shall be defending will retain τὰ μὲν οὖν' and differs substantially from what the Arabic tradition indicates (see below).

[68] For different views, see e.g. Reale (1964) 204: 'Gli esseri, dunque, sono e sono stati sempre buoni'; Happ (1971) 772: 'das Sein [ist] *prinzipiell* gut' (original italics); van Raalte (1994) 563: 'both order and disorder, both animate and inanimate, both form and matter are integral parts of the cosmos, and therefore also good'; Botter (1999) 42: 'L'universo è nella sua completezza bene'. Some of them are intermediate theses, but they are vulnerable to the same problems I shall raise to the moderate one.

message, he seems to accept a thesis that is even more radical than the teleologists' optimistic belief which he is criticizing (sc. the predominance of good). If the latter, not only it is arbitrary to hold that *everything which* Speusippus depreciates is in fact good, but the thesis itself also defies and would undermine Theophrastus' entire undertaking, i.e. his effort to set limits to the penetration of goodness in the world.

Admittedly, τυγχάνειν/ἔτυχεν may be joined with the participle of εἰμί to function as an emphatic form of the copula. Nevertheless, this adverbial overtone does not entail that there must be an *essential* predication involved, as the traditional readings grant. Generally speaking, the key idea of τυγχάνειν plus the participle of a verb—A τυγχάνει [ὤν] F;[69] A τυγχάνει φing—is to express *coincidence*.[70] What precisely is highlighted or qualified by this coincidence, however, depends heavily on the communicative context in which the statement is uttered. Its spectrum, theoretically, ranges from an accidental or extrinsic connection ('A chances to be F or to φ')[71] to an emphatic form of the verb itself with a truth-revealing overtone (A is *precisely* F; A is *in fact/actually* φing / φing is *exactly* what he is doing).[72] In several in-between cases,

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[69] With respect to the form 'A τυγχάνει ὤν F', ὤν can be omitted (Smyth §2119; Kühner and Gerth II.2. 66–7), e.g. BrillDAG's examples: Soph. *Aj*. 9; *El*. 46, 312; Ar. *Eccl*. 1141; Pind. *Pyth*. 4.5; Eur. *Andr*. 1113; Plat. *Prot*. 313e; *Gorg*. 502b; Arist. *Pol*. 1318a31.

[70] This aspect is stressed by LSJ and BrillDAG (s.v. τυγχάνω).

[71] It suffices to select several references from LSJ and BrillDAG: Thuc. 6. 61.2: ἔτυχε κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον ('it happened that he came at the right time'); Ar. *Plut*.3: ἤν …λέξας τύχῃ ('if he happens to say'); Men. *Dysc*. 731, ἅ τ' ἔχων τυγχάνω ('what I happen to have'). With regard to the construction A τυγχάνει ὤν F, e.g. Hes. *fr*. 35.8: ξεῖνος ἐὼν ἐτύχησε παρ' ἱπποδάμοισι Γερηνοῖς (I happened to be a guest among the horse-mastering Gerenoi); Hdt. 8.65.1: τυχεῖν τότε ἐὼν ἅμα Δημαρήτῳ (that he happened to be in the company of Demaratos). The same use [what does this mean?] can be found in Aristotle. In talking about accidental perception (κατὰ συμβεβηκός, *DA* 424a15), he claims that when two qualities 'happen to meet in one sensible object (ἀμφοῖν ἔχοντες τυγχάνομεν αἴσθησιν), we are aware of both contemporaneously' (424a23–24). According to him, although we can see that a white thing is sweet, we should note that the whiteness of sugar is merely accidentally combined with its sweetness (*cf*. Shields (2016) 260–61). In a similar vein, in *Pol*. 1341b27–28, he distinguishes between musicians (μουσικῶν) in a *proper* sense and philosophers who happen to have received musical education (τῶν ἐκ φιλοσοφίας ὅσοι τυγχάνουσιν ἐμπείρως ἔχοντες τῆς περὶ τὴν μουσικὴν παιδείας). In *Cat*. 19–23 the same use is attested: 'as a quantity, like the height someone happens to have (οἷον ὃ τυγχάνει τις ἔχων μέγεθος): he is said to have a height of five feet or six feet'; also see *GC* 325a33; *HA* 513a23. Regarding the form 'A τυγχάνει ὤν F', a *PA* passage provides a good example of how it is used to express *accidental* coincidence: 'It is not possible in some such cases to say without qualification that something is, or is not, hot. For that is the case when the underlying subject happens not to be hot, but is hot when coupled with heat, as if someone were to give a name to hot water or hot iron (*PA* 649a13–16, trans. Lennox, modified, *cf*. τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς θερμόν at *PA* 649a11). *Cf*. *DA* 418a16–28: ὁρατὸν δ' ἐστὶ χρῶμά τε καὶ ὃ λόγῳ μὲν ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ἀνώνυμον δὲ τυγχάνει ὄν ('the visible is both colour and something which it is possible to describe in words but which happens to have no name' [sc. this may be now called *luminescence* or *phosphorescence*]).

[72] E.g. *Prot*. 313c4–5: ὁ σοφιστὴς τυγχάνει ὢν ἔμπορός ('is the sophist *in fact* a merchant?'); Hdt. 3.14: ἐτετεύχεε γὰρ καὶ οὗτος ἐπισπόμενος Καμβύσῃ ('his one had followed Kambyses *exactly*'). For similar uses in Aristotle, *cf*. *EN* 1143b15: περὶ τί ἑκατέρα τυγχάνει οὖσα ('what is *exactly* the field of each of the two [sc. *phronesis* and *sophia*]'); *Metaph*. 1025b18–19: ἡ φυσικὴ ἐπιστήμη

this construction is used to underline or highlight the coincidence as a *status quo*, sometimes with a nuance of constraining the scope of this relation (e.g. A is F/ϕing *under the current condition* or *at this moment*).[73]

In view of such a broad semantic spectrum, it is far from compelling to read 11a25–26 as Theophrastus' declaration of what reality *essentially* is. It seems better, in my view, to translate 11a25–26 as 'well then, things happen to be in a good state as they are',[74] which underwrites and qualifies the way things are said to be good: an evaluation under a *specific* qualification. If so, Theophrastus here invokes Aristotle's famous method—F can be said/considered in different ways—once again, after employing it several lines above (see the distinction between ἁπλῶς and καθ' ἕκαστον at *Met*. 11a4–5), and he also appeals to it in arranging the structure of his enquiry on plants.[75] On this reading, *Met*. 11a25–26 is Theophrastus' *concluding report* of Speusippus' view on value, which makes space for a qualified realization of goodness among things that exist, in contrast to his *opening report* of the other Academics (11a27–b1: 'Plato and the Pythagoreans [make] the distance a great one', see §VI below).[76] In this way,

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τυγχάνει οὖσα περὶ γένος τι τοῦ ὄντος ('the natural science is *merely* about a particular class of being'); *Metaph*. 1073b11, πόσαι δ' αὗται τυγχάνουσιν οὖσαι ('as to how many they [sc. the movements] *exactly* are'). *Pol*. 1329b11–13: ὅση τετύχηκεν ἐντὸς οὖσα τοῦ κόλπου τοῦ Σκυλλητικοῦ καὶ τοῦ Λαμητικοῦ· ('which precisely lies within the Scylletic and Lametic Gulfs').

[73] According to Kühner-Gerth 'τυγχάνω wird überall da gebraucht, wo eine Handlung oder ein Ergebnis nicht durch unsere Absicht, sondern durch das zufällige Zusammenwirken äusserer Umstände oder durch den natürlichen Gang der Dinge herbeigeführt worden ist' (II.2.63). LSJ offer several examples: *Od*.14.334: τύχησε γὰρ ἐρχομένη νηῦς ('a ship happened to be, i. e. *was just then*, starting'); Hdt. 1.88.2: τὰ νοέων τυγχάνω ('what I have *at this moment* in my mind'); Thuc.7.2: ἔτυχε κατὰ τοῦτο καιροῦ ἐλθών ('he came *just at this point of time*'). For this use in Aristotle, *cf*. e.g. *Met*. 344b33–34: ἔτυχε δὲ καὶ τότε κομήτης ἀστὴρ γενόμενος ἀφ' ἑσπέρας ('a comet had *just* appeared in the west [when the stone at Aegospotami fell out of the air', b31–32]); cognition 'is *just* like its current object (τοιοῦτον τυγχάνει ὂν, *MA* 701b21) *when* the cognitive capacity is being actualized and receives the form of the corresponding object'; *Mem*. 449b17: ὅτε θεωρῶν τυγχάνει καὶ νοῶν ('he is seeing and thinking *at this moment*').

[74] I take ἔτυχεν to be a gnomic aorist. The translation is similar to Laks and Most ('se trouve être') and Gutas ('The things that are happen to be good'), but the conception behind it is different from theirs. Laks and Most, by and large, insist on the traditional line of interpretation in understanding the Speusippus episode. Their translation does not seem to have significant philosophical consequence. By contrast, Gutas (2010) is more cautious (see his paraphrase: 'Though (?) the things that are happen to be good', 381). He alludes to the need to modify the traditional interpretation, but he does not provide a full-scale alternative. In commenting on this passage, he claims that 'the fortuitous element implicit in ἔτυχεν needs to be made explicit' (393) without exploring the philosophical implication of his decision. It strikes me as going too far to interpret the function of ἔτυχεν as introducing a purely fortuitous relation. In tune with the sematic scope of τυγχάνω, however, I think that the sense 'happen to be' should not be limited to a relation of accident in the strict sense but is meant to emphasize coincidence in a broad sense.

[75] *HP* 1 and 2.1–4 deal with plants ὡς ἁπλῶς; the other parts address plants καθ' ἕκαστον.

[76] If 11a25–26 is Theophrastus' *objection* to Speusippus, it seems strange that the structure of 11a25–b1 is signposted by the particles μέν at 11a25 and δέ at 11a27, because 11a27–b1 is unambiguously his *report* of the doctrines of Plato and the so-called Pythagoreans. On this interpretation, there is no

Speusippus somehow softens his emphasis on the radical asymmetry between good and bad by conceding the involvement of some positive value in reality as the teleologists insist. Moreover, this proviso helps him make clear that those things are not genuinely good, namely things that enjoy 'the place of centre' (*Met*. 11a24) or that are like living beings which have achieved their prime (F43 Tarán).[77] As Theophrastus has pointed out that the realization of the good can be merely momentary (11a17–18), to say that the goodness implied by existence is qualified indicates a similar way in which a global teleology is suspect. Speusippus, after all, does not want to deny that the statement about existence and the statement about good can be interwoven to some degree, but he insists that in principle they should not be confused with each other. In other words, although the occurrence of something can coincide with some good (e.g. in time or in respect), this is not sufficient to warrant the normative claim which the teleologists make about the intrinsic nature of concrete beings, much less about the overall construction of the world.

I think it is not an accident if Speusippus, like Theophrastus, manages to qualify the goodness of beings. In point of fact, this is a natural consequence of his metaphysics, in particular his idiosyncratic doctrine of principles. To better understand this aspect, we need to extend our gaze beyond Theophrastus' testimony by considering Speusippus' philosophy in a broader context.

V. Teleology and Speusippus' Doctrine of Principles

It is well-known that Speusippus is detached from mainstream Academics such as Plato and Xenocrates in his rejection of the doctrine of Forms and his dissociation of value from first principles. It is, however, less noticed that he is somehow heterodox among the Academics in keeping distance from the teleological implications of the Academic doctrines of principles.[78] This feature, from a more general perspective, accounts for

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parallel or contrast between 11a25–26 and 11a27–b1 since neither 11a27–b1 nor the ensuing passage explains why Theophrastus thinks so.

[77] I shall return to this in §VII below.

[78] Almost no study on Speusippus mentions teleology. But a few scholars, such as Menn, Tarán and Vallance, are sensitive to this aspect of his thought. Menn (Ig3, 10) highlights the absence of *causa finalis* in Speusippus' system, albeit without connecting this feature with the role Speusippus is supposed to play in Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*. Vallance (1988) reasonably notes that Speusippus' doctrine is a threat to teleology because 'his *timion* [has] no direct causal influence on nature' (31). But surprisingly, he interprets Theophrastus' treatment of teleology here, from *Met*. 10a21 to 11a26, as his endeavour to *defend* its Aristotelian version, in which Speusippus, *as his main target*, is criticized for 'damaging teleology' (*ibid*.). Although this interpretation incorporates Theophrastus' concern with Speusippus better into his concern with teleology, it misconceives the kernel of Theophrastus' interest in teleology. For on this interpretation the critical aspect of his undertaking is much underrated,

why, on my interpretation, Speusippus can be adduced by Theophrastus in a more constructive way in his de-teleological enterprise.

In the extant fragments and testimonies of Speusippus, there is no passage that explicitly engages with teleological problems. The tension between his metaphysics and teleology, however, can be indirectly seen from Aristotle's accounts of the Academic debates over the nature of first principles, in particular in *Metaphysics* N. Among all the controversial issues, a critical question is how value properties are related to the principles. Although Aristotle agrees with the mainstream of Academic Platonism in that the first principles must be value-laden (*cf. Metaph*. 1072b15–30; *Cael*. 279a18–22), he does not follow their further identification of the One with the good, which, together with the other principle called Indefinite Dyad or some other names, makes up the primary contraries.[79] For present purposes, we should pay attention to the way in which Aristotle challenges these Platonists while retaining their insights. Interestingly, he does not challenge them with direct refutation, but aligns himself with Speusippus—a heterodox trend within the Academy—by disclosing a series of problems that infect mainstream Platonism:[80]

> συμβαίνει γὰρ πολλὴ δυσχέρεια—ἢ ἔνιοι φεύγοντες ἀπειρήκασιν, οἱ τὸ ἓν μὲν ὁμολογοῦντες ἀρχὴν εἶναι πρώτην καὶ στοιχεῖον, τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ δὲ τοῦ

whereas the alleged polemic against Speusippus is improperly expanded. Tarán's remark is a bit ambiguous ((1981) 51). He first points out that 'teleology is not the determining factor among *all* the Speusippean substances, for there can be neither purpose nor goodness in numbers and in magnitudes'. Nevertheless, he seems to immediately withdraw or qualify this contention on the grounds that Speusippus 'did postulate the existence of a god whom he conceived as a living force and as a mind which governs the cosmos', so that he 'did offer a teleological explanation of the "physical" universe and of the whole of nature'. Even if the indirect evidence for Speusippus' postulation of the supremacy of god is reliable (F28, 13–14= [Iamb.] *Theol. Ar*., F56a–b=Cic. *Nat. D* 1.13,32, Min. Fel. *Oct*. 19,7, and F 58=Stob. *Ecl*. 1.1.29b), none of them, in my view, tells us *how* the cosmos is guided by the god. And, theoretically speaking, the postulation alone is far from being sufficient to assure a system as *teleological*. Both Socrates (in the *Phaedo* 97b–99c) and Aristotle complain (see *Metaph*. 985a18–20, 988b6–16) that Anaxagoras' *nous* fails to offer the teleological explanation of the world that they expect because his account does not articulate *how* the *nous*, as a cause *qua* good, organizes or guides everything. For a recent reassessment of this criticism, see Pinto (2017).

[79] To facilitate discussion, I shall not enter into the debate over Plato's unwritten doctrine, in particular the question of to what extent Aristotle's testimony on the doctrines of Plato and his followers is faithful.

[80] Annas (1976) in part realizes this feature of Aristotle's confrontation with the Academy: 'Aristotle has a tendency to treat Speusippus' views as merely attempted solutions to difficulties with Plato's views' (213). But she is inclined to downplay Speusippus' contribution to Aristotle's criticism of the Academy (see 214–16). On this point, I think Cherniss (1945) is more correct in asserting that 'Speusippus made a highly original departure from the doctrine of Plato and exercised an important influence on the thought of Aristotle' (43). For Aristotle's indebtedness to Speusippus in metaphysics see also Merlan (1968) 118–20.

μαθηματικοῦ—ἅπασαι γὰρ αἱ μονάδες γίγνονται ὅπερ ἀγαθόν τι, καὶ πολλή τις εὐπορία ἀγαθῶν. ἔτι εἰ τὰ εἴδη ἀριθμοί, τὰ εἴδη πάντα ὅπερ ἀγαθόν τι· ἀλλὰ μὴν ὅτου βούλεται τιθέτω τις εἶναι ἰδέας· εἰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἀγαθῶν μόνον, οὐκ ἔσονται οὐσίαι αἱ ἰδέαι, εἰ δὲ καὶ τῶν οὐσιῶν, πάντα τὰ ζῷα καὶ τὰ φυτὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ μετέχοντα. (*Metaph*. 1091b22–30 < F45 Tarán)

Powerful objections arise, to avoid which some have given up the theory [sc. the theory of identifying the One with the good as the first principle]—those who agree that the one is a first principle and element, but only of mathematical number. For all the units become just what is a sort of good, and there is a great profusion of goods. Again, if the Forms are numbers, all the Forms are just what is a sort of good. But let a man assume Ideas of anything he pleases. If these are Ideas only of goods, the Ideas will not be substances; but if the Ideas are also Ideas of substances, all animals and plants and all things that share in Ideas will be good (modified).

According to this passage, Speusippus—the person who goes out of his way to avoid the difficulties underlying the mainstream Platonic system—refuses to identify the One, the first principle, with the good, but limits the function of the One as a principle to mathematical numbers.[81] Speusippus cannot accept this identification, because it leads to an improper expansion of goodness in the spheres of beings: the mathematicals, the Forms (that are postulated by most Platonists) and all animals and plants would be accordingly regarded as good or as a kind of good.[82] This is taken to be an unhappy result.. For such an expansion of good either makes good a qualifier so broad as to be almost nonsensical or is incapable of explaining the existence of plentiful things that seem imperfect, either by nature or as they are in their current state.[83] The way in which Aristotle presents the 'powerful objections', at least part of which involve the issue of things not being value-laden, suggests that they were known to Speusippus and so were likely to have been at least one reason why he generated his heterodox view about the One. Although his criticism of the orthodox Platonism does not seem to be directly

[81] Aristotle makes no reference to Speusippus by name here, but this identification is widely acknowledged, see Ross (1958) 488; Tarán (1981) 342–45.

[82] Ross (1958) 480. There is no reason to follow Tarán (1981) 344, who believes that this argument is probably Aristotle's (mis-)interpretation of Speusippus.

[83] For a different interpretation, see Annas (1976) 214–16.

concerned with problems involving teleology, it has considerable de-teleological potential because, just as we have seen in Theophrastus, an essential aspect of setting boundaries to the application of teleological principle lies in constraining the range of goodness that is immoderately expanded by teleologists. Therefore, as Merlan (1968) 116 already correctly sums up, 'The schema "less than good - good – best" simply does not apply to Speusippus' universe'.

After raising the objection to the identification of the One with the good, Speusippus directs his fire at the Platonists' determination of the first principles as contraries.

> καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον στοιχεῖον, εἴτε πλῆθος ὂν εἴτε τὸ ἄνισον καὶ μέγα καὶ μικρόν, τὸ κακὸν αὐτό. διόπερ ὁ μὲν ἔφευγε τὸ ἀγαθὸν προσάπτειν τῷ ἑνὶ ὡς ἀναγκαῖον ὄν, ἐπειδὴ ἐξ ἐναντίων ἡ γένεσις, τὸ κακὸν τὴν τοῦ πλήθους φύσιν εἶναι· (*Metaph*. 1091b31–35 < F45a Tarán)
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> [The absurdity] also [follows that] the contrary element, whether it is plurality or the unequal, i.e. the great and small, is the bad itself. Hence one thinker avoided attaching the good to the one, because it would necessarily follow, since generation is from contraries, that badness is the fundamental nature of plurality.

According to this argument, the identification of the good as the first principle would yield another absurd conclusion that the second principle becomes the bad (also see 1075a35: ἅπαντα τοῦ φαύλου μεθέξει ἔξω τοῦ ἑνός), given that the Platonists often take the second principle to be a *contrary* of the first principle. As Aristotle reports, this deduction, from another angle, explains why Speusippus is eager to avoid connecting value properties to the principles. Accordingly, if Speusippus' first principles are value-free, then it is impossible for him that things are good or bad in terms of imitating or partaking in the principles.

Since Speusippus divorces all of the valuational properties from first principles and mathematicals, as well as setting different principles for different spheres of being,[84] Aristotle famously repudiates him for fragmenting reality by making the universe episodic,[85] namely making a world that is *not* regulated by an unifying final cause so

[84] Happ (1971) 231–34; Dancy (1991) 79–86; Metry (2002) 129–32; Krämer (2004) 26–27.
[85] *Metaph*. Λ.10, 1075b37–1076a4, N.3, 1090b19–20; *cf*. 1028b21–24. For discussion, see Kullmann (1978) 146–48. The episodic character of Speusippus' cosmos is also mentioned at Theophrastus *Met*. 4a9–13.

that the universe as a whole is short of an overarching order.[86] Whichever way one assesses this dissent, Aristotle is sensitive enough to detect that the disintegrative tendency in Speusippus' metaphysics is potentially a threat to the teleological notion that the order of the whole world is regulated by overarching principles that are laden with value and normativity. For his part, Aristotle wants to save teleological explanation, or a version of teleology, while avoiding Speusippus' criticism of the other Academics that seems to impress him in the intra-school controversy. This forms a crucial reason why he, following Speusippus, rejects the first principle as the One *qua* the Good itself and emphasizes that his second principle, Matter, is not a *contrary* of the first principle (ἡ γὰρ ὕλη ἡ μία οὐδενὶ ἐναντίον, *Metaph*. 1075a34). Interestingly, not only is the absence of contrariness in first principles contrasted by Aristotle with the contrary-involvement of ordinary things, but he also adduces ignorance (ἄγνοια) as his example of the latter group, a state that is said to have a tendency towards the contrary:

> οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἐναντίον τῷ πρώτῳ οὐδέν· πάντα γὰρ τὰ ἐναντία ὕλην ἔχει, καὶ δυνάμει ταῦτα ἔστιν· ἡ δὲ ἐναντία ἄγνοια εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον, τῷ δὲ πρώτῳ ἐναντίον οὐδέν. (*Metaph*. 1075b21–24)
>
> For there is nothing contrary to that which is primary (for all contraries have matter and are potentially); and the contrary state, ignorance, is directed towards the contrary; but to what is primary there is nothing contrary (modified).

It is striking that, in the process of discussing the nature of first principles, the state of ignorance is picked out to illustrate the problem about value and contrariety. This unusual combination, however, is reminiscent of Theophrastus' speaking of the

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[86] This does not mean that there is no order or link among the things in Speusippus' universe or among the different layers of being. Despite their different interpretations, scholars agree that Speusippus' beings are linked and ordered in terms of an analogy/similarity principle (εἴτε κατ' ἀναλογίαν εἴτε κατ' ἄλλην ὁμοίωσιν, Thphr. *Met*. 4b12–13; Stenzel (1929) col. 1648; Tarán (1981) 65–72; Wilson (1997)). He may be devoted to developing this notion in works such as Ἡ περὶ τὰ ὅμοια πραγματεία (for this title see Tarán (1981) 196; Krämer (2004) 14), Διαιρέσεις καὶ πρὸς τὰ ὅμοια ὑποθέσεις, and Περὶ γενῶν καὶ εἰδῶν παραδειγμάτων (Dorandi (2013) 299). Dillon (2003) 46 tries to trace in Speusippus' philosophy a real link among the different levels of being, one which goes beyond the principle of analogy. He is motivated by the belief 'that a truly episodic universe would be anathema to a Platonist.' Nonetheless, he concedes 'the lack of evidence for the mode of connection between levels' (*ibid*.). This speculative move, in my view, is otiose because this feature can actually be regarded as a merit of Speusippus' theory. For it avoids much metaphysical speculation about the way in which the ultimate principle constructs the world, and it even opens up an approach resembling what Aristotle divisively undertook but with a friendlier attitude to reality and experience.

ignorance in a similar context (*Met*. 11a20–22)[87] as discussed above. The cumulative effect of all these considerations lends further reinforcement to our interpretation of the way in which Theophrastus appeals to Speusippus, especially concerning the meaning of ἀμαθεστάτου at 11a21–22.

VI. Theophrastus on Plato and the Pythagoreans

Speusippus' criticism of the mainstream Platonists, as I have just shown, is first directed at the range of goodness as a whole ('too much good!') and then at their determination of the first principles as contraries ('the second principle would be the bad!'). The whole strategy is strikingly parallel to the way in which Theophrastus develops his criticism of teleology at the end of the *Metaphysics*: While his engagement with Speusippus is a part of his grappling with the problem of the range of goodness in reality (*Met*.11a1–26), his ensuing treatment of Plato and the 'Pythagoreans' is unambiguously concerned with the question of whether first principles are contraries (from 11a26 onwards). This connection, as I shall show, sheds new light on the latter episode, Theophrastus' dialogue with the mainstream of the Academics.

> Plato and the Pythagoreans [make] the distance[88] a great one and [make] all [things] wish to imitate fully (ἐπιμμεῖσθαι);[89] and yet they make a certain opposition, as it were, between the Indefinite Dyad and the One, on which depend the infinite and the disordered, i.e. so to speak, all shapelessness in itself, and it is altogether impossible that the nature of the whole should exist without [the Dyad], but rather, as it were, [the Dyad] balances or even predominates over the other [principle]; on which account, [they make] also the first principles contrary [to one another]. For this reason, those who ascribe the cause to god

[87] I owe this reference to an anonymous referee.

[88] That is the distance between the first principles and the other things. For different proposals see Regenbogen (1940) col. 1392: 'zwischen gut und schlecht'; Ross and Fobes (1929): 'between the real and the things of nature'; Hoffmann (1993) 22: 'first principles and the things of nature'; Burkert (1972) 62: 'between good and nature as a whole'; van Raalte (1993) 564–69: 'between the being endowed with a value and the being without it'; Gutas (2010) 281–82: 'between the first principles and the sensible world', *cf*. Horky (2013) 686–87.

[89] The text follows the *hapax legomenon* ἐπιμμεῖσθαι in MSS., accepted by Ross and Fobes, Gutas and Horky. Van Raalte and Laks and Most opt for emending to ἐπεὶ μμεῖσθαι. The latter option, I think, weakens what Theophrastus wants to highlight, namely the Platonic doctrine of imitation. More importantly, the relation of imitation should not be considered as a logical or temporal condition for their decision to make the distance between the first principles and the other things great (for further discussion see this section below). For other arguments in favour of the MSS-reading see Gutas (2010) 382–86.

> [claim] that not even god is able to lead all [things] toward the best (ἀνάγειν εἰς τὰς ἀρχάς), but, if [at all, only] so far as is possible; though perhaps he wouldn't even choose to, if indeed it would result in the destruction of all existence, given that it [is constituted] from contraries and consists of contraries (11a26–b12, modified).

Although the words δὲ καί at 11a27 in this passage, echoing τὰ μὲν οὖν in the preceding sentence at 11a25, allude to a close relation between the two episodes,[90] it is far from clear why Theophrastus switches from Speusippus to the other Academics and how the two scenarios are connected. Whereas van Raalte (1993) 564 takes this episode as Theophrastus' return to the cardinal line of his de-teleological engagement after a brief digression, Krämer (1973) 210 seems to do better justice to the connection of the two passages. He construes the Plato/'Pythagoreans' episode as a further development of the polemic underway against Speusippus, where Theophrastus was expressing his sympathy with Plato while differentiating his main rival Speusippus from the Academic tradition.[91] This line of interpretation is then adopted and developed by Laks and Most (1993), who argue that, in Theophrastus' eyes, Plato and the Pythagoreans hold a more refined position ('une position plus raffinée', 85 n.51) than Speusippus because they postulate that the principles which everything tries to 'imitate' are 'opposites', namely the good and the bad.[92] In view of this distinction, they further claim: 'Théophraste se

[90] Gutas (2010) 393 has pointed out that: 'It is certain ... that μὲν οὖν rounds out the discussion of the preceding paragraph and points forward to the δέ in the next sentence' (for this use of 'μὲν οὖν … δέ', see Denniston (1954) 472), so that he, diverging from Ross and Fobes, reads a comma after this sentence instead of a full stop. In this way, he connects *Met*.11a1–26 with 11a26–b7 by establishing a *contrast* between Theophrastus' account of Speusippus and that of Plato and the Pythagoreans (I thank a referee for bringing up this point). On his view, 'if Speusippus located the noble, rare as it is, about the centre of the universe, i.e., among us humans, Plato and the Pythagoreans by contrast put it at a great distance from us' ((2010) 385). There is much that I find congenial in his interpretation, in particular his emphasis on the *connection* between the two episodes. Nevertheless, as I shall argue, I do not agree with the precise way he grasps how the contrast works on the grounds that I do not think the moral of this contrast is about whether the good is located among or beyond us humans (also see §VI below).

[91] Reale (1980) 422 seems to hold a similar view but explicates Theophrastus' composition on the model of the Hegelian dialectic. On this interpretation, Plato and the Pythagoreans believe that the good and the bad are *equally* realized, which stands for an intermediary position, the synthesis between the thesis that the good is predominant (teleologists) and the antithesis that the evil functions as the guiding principle of the universe (Speusippus). My understanding of Theophrastus' reasoning is completely different; see the same section below.

[92] Laks and Most (1993) 86 n.54: 'Nous comprenons qu'aux yeux de Théophraste l'avantage de la position platonico-pythagoricienne est de combiner le désir d'imitation avec l'existence d'une opposition fondamentale.'

présente en héritier légitime d'un platonisme que Speusippe aurait trahi' ((1993) 86 n.52).

At first blush, however, it is puzzling why Theophrastus would want to establish himself here as a loyal heir of the Platonic and Pythagorean legacy. After all, he is usually taken to be 'even less of a Platonist than is Aristotle' (Sharples (2017) 165). Krämer's biographical speculation—this passage reflects either Theophrastus' later return to Platonism or an early stage of his development ((1971) 213)—is *ad hoc*, can hardly assuage our intuitive concerns and rather renders the interpretation itself more suspicious. After reflecting on the dialectical situation we find ourselves in, we cannot help but ask how exactly the long passage 11a26–b7[93] contributes to Theophrastus' preoccupation with teleology if it is meant to avoid Speusippus' radicalism and to associate Theophrastus with orthodox Platonism. Even if, as Botter and Gutas argue, Plato and his followers avoid endorsing the position that 'everything is for the best' by postulating the principles as the good *and* the bad, so that their standpoint seems congenial to Theophrastus' criticism of teleology,[94] it cannot be in *this* sense that their position is better than Speusippus'. For Speusippus insists that the principles neither are valuational nor govern the other layers of being. Hence, if he believes that badness quantitatively dominates reality, the reason, as mentioned, cannot be that the second principle functions as a paradigmatic bad in terms of which all bad things, of whatever degree of badness, qualify as bad.[95]

Theoretically considered, it is also unnatural for Theophrastus to try to gain support from Plato and the Academics—who are traditionally even believed to be the proto-teleologists—if he is initially intent upon *challenging* teleology. It is even odder, in a de-teleological treatise, to utilize the teleologists to attack Speusippus, whose stance, as we have seen, is comparatively more alien to teleological thinking. In fact, except for the popular assumption of the whole passage as a polemic against Speusippus, there is no compelling reason to grant an alleged agreement of Theophrastus with Plato. But, as far as the confrontation between the Lyceum and the Academy is concerned, scholars forget that the dialectical argument deployed by Theophrastus can operate in a different or even converse way; i.e. it is possible for him to use Speusippus to criticize

[93] This episode covers 11a26–b15 for Laks and Most (1993) 87 n.63.
[94] Botter (1999) 61–62 and Gutas (2010) 381, 385.
[95] For the same reason, we can hardly follow Laks and Most (1993) 86 n.53 either, according to whom Theophrastus prefers Plato and the Pythagoreans to Speusippus' extremism because for them 'la dyade n'est pas le mal, mais simple <absence de forme>'.

other Academics or to take advantage of their doctrinal *diaphorai* to undermine the Academic doctrines as a whole. This is just what we often see in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* MN. Stephen Menn even claims that a key to understanding the two Books is to notice that Aristotle is 'using the Speusippean term and developing the Speusippean style of criticism' in his struggle with the Academic doctrines of principles. To put it more precisely,

> in 'seeing the difficulty,' (sc. in the Platonic doctrine of principle) Speusippus was (among other things) seeing the lack of any real causal connection between sensible things and their alleged ἀρχαί the numbers, which Plato tries to cover over by talking about 'participation' (so A9, 992a24–9): Speusippus, more frankly than Plato, admits that there is no connection, and posits different (though 'like') ἀρχαί for the different kinds of things (Menn Ch. Ia4, 12)

This is also the way I suggest in which Theophrastus deliberately highlights the contrast between Speusippus—the 'Initiator der akademischen "Linken"', as Krämer (2004) 17 calls him—on the one side and Plato and his circle on the other side. In other words, Plato and those Academics are *not* invoked by Theophrastus as his allies; nor does the text suggest that their doctrines of principles enjoy superiority over Speusippus' metaphysics. Conversely, in accordance with the de-teleological concern, Theophrastus here rather aims to diagnose where the mainstream of Academic Platonism goes wrong. They are teleologists in the sense that they believe that everything seeks to imitate (μίμησις) or participate (μέθεξις) in first principles as far as possible; that is, they explain reality in terms of a for-the-sake-of-x framework in which x is respectively identified with one of their value-laden principles.[96] This reading, I think, also gives an

[96] Horky (2013) suggests that Xenocrates is the very person Theophrastus is targeting here. What comes under attack is actually Xenocrates' doctrine of 'upwards assimilation' (ἐξομοίωσις), a reductive process via *mimesis* to the partless Form-Line. Since Aporia 24 (*Met*. 11a26–b12, according to Gutas' numbering) is mainly concerned with the Academic doctrine of principles, it is not unlikely that Xenocrates is *included* here, especially given that the One and the Indefinite Dyad seem to be his favourite terms for first principles. More importantly, following Plato, he allows for the combination between principles and value, so that he represents a more orthodox trend of the Academy and often gets associated in a grouping with Plato in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* MN. But the fact that there is little peculiar to Xenocrates in this account throws the identification into serious doubt. Even the doctrine of two principles, at least in the form presented here, seems to be widely accepted by the Academics, with perhaps the only exception being those who follow Speusippus. A fundamental problem of Horky's interpretation, I think, is its failure to read *Met*. 11a26–b12 *in context*, namely in light of Theophrastus' critical engagement with teleological issues. It is a bit surprising that teleology is not even mentioned in his otherwise excellent study. Instead, he interprets Aporia 24 as Theophrastus' struggle with the

plausible account for the reason why Theophrastus feels the need to address the Academic doctrines of principles *twice* in the same treatise, here and at 6a23-b16. Whereas the focus of the latter is their systems of derivation, concerning the way in which the other kinds of being are derived from the principles they presuppose,[97] the former considers their *diaphorai* on principles from a teleological perspective.

In Theophrastus' eyes, the mainstream Academics deserve an independent discussion in a treatise about teleology because they represent a significant and idiosyncratic trend of teleological thinking. Against this background he introduces them by claiming that they 'make *the distance* of the things and the principles *great*' (11a26–11b1, my italic). On my interpretation, Theophrastus' focus now turns to Platonic teleology, a classical version of the so-called transcendent or external teleology, if in 11a5–20 he seems to be mainly concerned with what can be called *internal* teleology.[98] In contrast to the internal model which grasps the value at which the organism is directed as realized in the organism itself (Aristotle's teleology seems to be an example

problem of imitation, concerning the ontological relation between the intelligible and sensible things, an agenda which follows what Aristotle does in *Metaphysics* Alpha 6. This orientation leaves us perplexed about Theophrastus' motivation at 11a26–b12, in particular why he does not elaborate on the precise meaning of imitation (let alone the Xenocratean version) but instead comes to terms with the problems of value and the first principles as contraries. In fact, it is important to note that the Academic doctrines of principles concern various problems, and the ontological relation between principles and other things is only one of them. It comes as no surprise if in places Theophrastus addresses those doctrines with a different concern or emphasis. I think that is precisely what he does in this treatise, as it is reflected by his different treatments of the doctrines of principles in *Met*. 6a23–b16 and 11a26–b12 (see below in the same section). In the latter, Theophrastus is concerned with questioning the Academic explanation of how things share value by means of imitating or participating in their principles. Although the sharing of value *depends on* the ontological relationship posited in the Academic metaphysics, it is not *identical with* the relationship (*pace* Horky (2013) 687 n.5, I do not think τὸ ἄριστον ἄγειν at 11b9 amounts to 'reducing to the best'). Hence, even if Horky's account of the Xenocratean imitation is correct, it lacks an explanation of how this *particular* theory contributes to Theophrastus' grappling with teleology here.

[97] At *Met*. 6a23–b16 Theophrastus seems to use Plato and Xenocrates to criticize Speusippus on the grounds that the latter's system of derivation is less complete than the formers' systems. On my view, in both *Met*. 6a23–b16 and 11a22–b16 Theophrastus takes advantage of the *diaphorai* among the Academics, but the concrete ways in which he deploys the *diaphorai* are different. For detailed discussions of *Met*. 6a23–b16, see Tarán (1981) 379–82; Henrich (2000) 326–30; Dillon (2002) 175–87; Gutas (2010) 305–15.

[98] Most examples of teleological explanation in *Met*. 10b9–11a18 are from biology and zoology, and many (if not all) of them seem to be found in Aristotle as well; for detailed discussions see Lennox (2001) 259–79; Most (1988). The example of the windpipe at 11a10 is in parallel with *HA* 495a20–35 and *PA* 665a7–22. The explanations rely on the same principle, as Most (1988) 230 summarizes, that 'where possible, what is more honourable tends to be above, in front, and on the right' (*cf*. *PA* 665a22–26). It is controversial whether the case of the mixture of blood in the heart can be attested in Aristotle. Despite lacking verbal parallel, the characterization of the blood in the heart as purest (καθαρώτατον), moderate (μέσον), and calm in *PA* 667a3–6 seems more than descriptive (*pace* Most (1988) 230; *cf*. Lennox (2001) 270–71). Even Laks and Most, who refuse to attribute the case of blood in heart to Aristotle, also concede that this example might be a primitive version of an Aristotelian doctrine ((1993) 83 n.38). But regardless of whether Theophrastus' criticism applies to Aristotle or not, this would not affect what the article aims to defend (*cf*. n.18 above).

of this model), the Platonic teleologists, according to a general picture, hold that the principles as the goals are *external to* the things despite the participation relation between them. It is because of this internal/external divide that the distance between the first principles and the other things is highlighted as 'great' in their system.[99]

In Theophrastus' account, moreover, Plato and the Pythagoreans distinguish themselves from the teleologists addressed at 11a1–26 in that biology and zoology are not their primary concern. They avoid using psychological language (see ὄρεξις at Thphr. *Met*. 11a14; *cf*. 5b10), either in a literal or in a metaphorical sense,[100] in establishing for-the-sake-of-x statements in their teleological explanation. That is presumably because the literal sense seems too narrow to accommodate non-mental organisms or beings into a teleological system, whereas the metaphorical sense might be misleading due to its tendency to psychologize all kinds of beings. It is thus intelligible for Theophrastus to go on to emphasize that Plato and the orthodox Academics—who present a second type of teleologist on my interpretation—manage to capture the teleological structure of the world in a more abstract manner, namely in terms of the relationship of participation or imitation.[101]

Although Plato and his circle retain teleological notions such as goal and purpose without appealing to any kind of mental agent or psychological analogy, their metaphysical way of establishing the world as a goal-directed system, according to Theophrastus' diagnosis, is plagued by the problem of doctrinal incoherence: a conflict between their doctrines of metaphysical principles and their teleological conviction that is based on such a metaphysics. Whereas they grasp the first principles as contraries: the so-called One (= the Good) and the indefinite Dyad, what is fundamental for the teleologists is that sharing in good is somehow ubiquitous owing to their story about participation or imitation. Now, a pressing problem arises:[102] if one insists on the

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[99] For different interpretations, see van Raalte (1993) 566; Henrich (2000) 155; Gutas (2010) 384–86; Horky (2013) 687. But none of them connects this claim to Theophrastus' concern with teleology.

[100] See Arist. *Metaph*. 12.7, 1072a26–b3, esp. b3: κινεῖ δὴ ὡς ἐρώμενον; *DM* 6, 700b35–701a2. For the argument of the prime mover as πρῶτον ὀρεκτόν, see Ross (1958) 375.

[101] A distinction between the literal and metaphorical senses of desire/impulsion has been implied in *Met*. 5b1–10, where Theophrastus criticizes the assumption of the prime mover by arguing that the soul, rather than the prime mover, should be the primary cause of the best motion of the animate; see Gutas (2010) 285–86. Laks and Most's claim— 'l'existence même du *désir d'imitation* est prise comme un signe de la distance qui sépare le monde naturel de l'Un-bien' ((1993) 86 n.53, my italics) seems to me speculative, and they fail to notice the subtle contrast between the two kinds of teleology. Van Raalte (1993) 185 sensitively draws attention to the functional similarity between the Aristotelian ὄρεξις and the Platonic μίμησις, yet she does not inquire into their divergent roles for the two philosophers.

[102] Gutas (2010) 385.

dualism of the principles, then what beings imitate is not only the good but also *the bad*, so that the normative structure of reality, which is supposed to be guaranteed by the normative commitment of teleology, collapses. But if one holds on to the teleology, then the principles everything seeks to imitate have to be somehow *good*, so that it is impossible that two principles are contraries because two goods cannot be contrary to each other.[103] This strategy seems to follow closely what Aristotle already did in *Metaphysics* N. As we have seen, it is even a strategy that is modelled on Speusippus, who raised similar difficulties with reference to the Academic doctrine of principles, as mentioned above. Regardless of whether the characterization of the second principle as bad is a conclusion drawn by Aristotle/Speusippus or a tenet some Platonists indeed espouse, it is important to see that, for Theophrastus, this is not a merit of their doctrine but a *symptom* of their system. In Theophrastus' eyes it is due to this internal problem that Plato and the Pythagoreans are trapped in an *aporia*: they have either to give up their dualism of principles or modify (if not abandon) their teleology.

VII. Teleology, value and pleasure

If my interpretation is correct, how, then, should we assess the lines (11a23-25) about the quantitative distinction between good and bad in connection to Speusippus' own philosophy? It has been disputed whether the testimony in question should be cosmologically, metaphysically or metaphorically understood.[104] The cosmological reading has a long tradition, initiated by 19th-century scholars such as Ravaison, Usener and Zeller, followed by Ross, Tricot and, more recently, by Gutas and Horky in different ways.[105] According to this line of interpretation, 'the place of the centre' (τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν) literally refers to the centre of the spatial universe, which is identified as something like the Pythagorean central fire,[106] the Platonic world-soul[107] or our human world.[108] The metaphysical reading was first proposed by Merlan (1968) 100 and later backed up by Reale and Dillon.[109] Gaining support from Iamblichus' *De communi mathematica scientia* (16. 10–14; 18. 9–12 Festa), they argue that 'the place

[103] This is a common place for the Academics, *cf*. Hambruch (1904).
[104] My division is indebted to van Raalte (1993) 560 and Henrich (2000) 327.
[105] For an overview of the older scholarship see Tarán (1981) 445. For recent research in this direction see Gutas (2010) 385 and Horky (2013) 687.
[106] Frank (1923) 207.
[107] Zeller (1920) 1000–01.
[108] Gutas (2010) 385.
[109] Dillon (2003) 53, 68, *cf*. Dillon (1984) 327–28; (2002) 18. Dillon's reading actually seems to be a mixture of the metaphysical and the cosmological interpretation; see also Tarrant (1974) 130–45.

of the centre' denotes the intermediate layer in the spheres of being, namely the psychicals.[110] As opposed to these two proposals, Tarán, following Cherniss,[111] offers a metaphorical reading, followed by Laks and Most (1993) 85. What Theophrastus has in mind, on this reading, can be reflected by Speusippus' doctrine of virtue as the intermediate between two extremes. Accordingly, he is metaphorically depicting virtue as something that is in the most proper place. This is also echoed by his appeal to the opposition among the trio— 'the greater-the equal-the less'—in the Academic debate over the evaluation of pleasure (*EN* 1153b5–6; *cf*. 1173a6–8).[112]

Again, I think it is useful first to explore the testimony in its original context, in particular the way in which Theophrastus deals with this text. First of all, it is not easy to figure out how the identification of the location of good *literally* as the centre of the spatial universe or the intermediate layer of various beings affects, negatively or positively, Theophrastus' de-teleological enterprise. No central fire or world-soul is mentioned or can be easily incorporated in the immediate context. The example from a few lines above—the mixture of the blood is best in the central ventricle (ἐν τῇ μέσῃ κοιλίᾳ) of the heart (11a10–11)—cannot be incorporated into the cosmological or metaphysical reading, although it seems likely to have been introduced as an illustration of the basic notion that the central is most honourable (τὸ μέσον τιμιώτατον, 11a12), anyway. Moreover, the principles (the One and the Plurality for Speusippus) and the mathematicals (numbers and geometricals), topographically considered, are on one side of the intermediate layer, but they can hardly be labelled as τὰ ἄκρα, a term with negative connotation in the Academic tradition.[113] Even if we identify the centre of the

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[110] Speusippus distinguishes among five kinds of entities from top to bottom: numbers, geometricals, psychical essences, animate bodies and inanimate bodies. (With respect to the last two levels, I follow Merlan (1968) 114; for a different proposal see Tarrant (1974) 144, who proposes limited and unlimited bodies.) It might not be a coincidence that Theophrastus also addresses the animate and inanimate before introducing Speusippus' view. For Speusippus' *Ebenenmetaphysik*, also see Happ (1971) 208–41; Tarán (1981) 13–52; Metry (2002) 127–28; Krämer (2004) 16–25.

[111] Cherniss (1935) 394; (1944) 559.

[112] This reading is also preferred by Henrich (2000) 329–30.

[113] To countenance his interpretation, Merlan (1968) translates 11a24–25 as follows: 'all the rest are the principles and [what surrounds the middle χώρα] on both sides' (110). On his view, 'the ἄκρα are the neutral principles; they, together with the last sphere of being surround the centre, thus forming the pattern: neutral – good – evil' (*ibid*.). Krämer (1973) 210 has pointed out that it is unlikely that Speusippus would use τὰ ἄκρα to name the first principles. Evidence from Plato strongly suggests that the term ἄκρα is closely associated with bad things: e.g. *Phd*. 98a8–9: τὰ μὲν ἄκρα τῶν ἐσχάτων σπάνια καὶ ὀλίγα, τὰ δὲ μεταξὺ ἄφθονα καὶ πολλά; *Phdr*. 264c4–5: μέσα τε ἔχειν καὶ ἄκρα; *Rep*. 478e4–5: τοῖς μὲν ἄκροις τὰ ἄκρα, τοῖς δὲ μεταξὺ τὰ μεταξὺ ἀποδιδόντες. Tarán (1981) 446 criticizes Merlan also on the grounds that 'καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν cannot by itself refer both to the principles and to a thing (or things) different from the ἄκρα; nor can it refer to something different from the ἄκρα'.

universe as our (human) world (following Gutas), which is spatially identical with the natural world or the animal kingdom, the proposal still appears to be in tension with Speusippus' other doctrinal commitments, although it fits better into the teleological context of the testimony. For if Speusippus endorses the dominance of the badness or non-goodness in reality, it is inconsistent to deem the *whole* natural world to be the good. In fact, it is unlikely that a single value can be used to characterize the centre of the universe or the centre sphere of being as such. Speusippus admits that *both* the good and the bad can be realized by humans or living beings, though to different degrees (see F77–81 Tarán). Also, more fundamentally, the realization or expansion of a value in one place does not mean that the place as a whole should be characterized by this value.[114]

By contrast, the metaphorical reading seems to me elastic enough to cover the variety of examples mentioned in Theophrastus' treatise.[115] It also fits better the context of this treatise because whether pleasure has a *goal-like* feature[116] is one of the most critical points in the Academic debate over hedonism.[117] It is not a coincidence that just by appealing to the triangular opposition among the equal and the two extremes (*EN* 1153b5–6; also see Tarán F28, 45–46; F43), Speusippus seeks to rebuke Eudoxus' pro-hedonistic argument, an argument based on the teleological consideration of animals' attitude to pleasure and pain, in Aristotle's account.[118] What is implied in Speusippus'

[114] Due to limitations of space, I cannot set out a full-scale criticism of the cosmological and ontological reading. For other arguments against them see Tarán (1981) 445–46 and Henrich (2000) 327.

[115] Note that although I am sympathetic with this line of interpretation, the story that I shall develop is completely different from theirs.

[116] *EN* 1152b14: συγγενὴς τοῖς τέλεσιν; 1153a10: ἐνέργειαι καὶ τέλος; 1153b16, 1173a29, 1174b6: τέλειος; 1174a15, 20, 25, 28, b4, 16: τελεία; 1174a18: τελειωθήσεται; 1174b7: τῶν ὅλων τι καὶ τελείων ἡ ἡδονή; 1174b20, 22: τελειοτάτη. For this feature in Aristotle's understanding of pleasure see Hadreas (2004); Heinaman (2011); Strohl (2011).

[117] See e.g. *EN* 1152b12–15; 1152b33–1153a15; 1153b13–17; 1173a28–b20; 1174a12–1175a3. I cannot follow Cherniss (1944) 559 and Tarán (1981) 447–49 in characterizing the metaphorical reading of Thphr. *Met*. 11a22–26 as an *ethical* reading. For one thing, ethics does not seem to feature in this treatise; for another, the intra-Academic debate, to which they appeal, cannot be adequately (let alone exclusively) regarded as ethical. In Aristotle's account, as we can see, the evaluation of pleasure as good or bad is not only determined by ethical criteria but also and more crucially by different perspectives on biological or metaphysical considerations: whether pleasure is classified under the category of *kinēsis*/*genesis* or *energeia* (*EN* 1152b12–15; 1152b27–53a17; 1173a30–b20, 1174a20–b14), whether pleasure is deprived of any intrinsic goal (τέλος) in nature (*EN* 1173a15–17) or whether pleasure is a quality (1173a12–15). It is also remarkable that Aristotle uses the experiences of both god and animals as examples in his accounts of pleasure. Yet the pleasure enjoyed by the prime mover in contemplation (*Metaph*. 1072b13–30; *EN* 1154b25–28, 1177a23–24), as the paradigm for all pleasures, must be beyond ethical virtues and vices for Aristotle (see *EN* 1145a25–27). Obviously, the pleasure of animals, too, cannot be measured by ethical standards (*EN* 1153a30–31, b25–32, 1173a1–5, 1176a5–9).

[118] According to Aristotle, Eudoxus himself takes the argument from contraries (*EN* 1172b18–20) as a companion argument to the argument from animal's motion (1172b9–18). The former begins with the

objection seems to be nothing but that the good is an intermediate between two extremes (Gell. 9.5.4=Tarán F84; Clem. *Strom*. II, 133.4=Tarán F77).[119] In line of this thought, the ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν, a spatial metaphor, is used to symbolize bad things in the same way that τὸ περὶ τοῦ μέσου χώραν is used to refer to what is good.

According to the biological analogy invoked by Speusippus, things that fail to develop themselves to the end remain imperfect or even bad (*Metaph*. 1192a11–15= Tarán F43). In a similar vein, as Aristotle's account of the hedonistic debate suggests, things that do not have the end in themselves are dismissed by some Platonists as non-good or even bad *simpliciter* in terms of the Academic theory of double predication (*EN* 1153b13–15; 1153b6–7). This notion leads to a limitation of the use of normative teleology in the whole universe, not only because the first principles and the mathematicals do not possess value properties but also because the other layers of being—no matter whether a member has eventually realized its excellence or not—are not regulated by the normative principles that need to be imitated or shared. From this perspective, instead of first looking for an overarching first principle a biologist on Speusippus' side would attach more weight to the different levels of perfection or imperfection of different kinds of living beings, then, on this basis, try to discover the similarities among the data and, finally, link and integrate them into a coherent picture. Unlike the Platonists who are concerned to reveal how the natural world imitates or partakes in the model determined by principles, Speusippus conversely draws attention to the *natural* development of living beings and believes that the observation of this, as a parallel case, can even uncover what we should think about the nature of the principles. This approach, historically considered, forms a crucial step towards the formation of the Peripatetic biology.[120] Krämer (2004) 20 sums it up pertinently:

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premise that all animals naturally avoid pain, whereas the starting point of the latter is that all animals naturally pursue pleasure.

[119] For recent discussions of this debate see Rapp (2009) 209–14; Warren (2009) 249–81; Cheng (forthcoming).

[120] Theophrastus' emphasis on the 'connection' (*sunaphē*) and 'partnership' (*koinōnia*) between things on different levels (*Met*. 4a9–10, *cf*. 8a3–8) stands in an intermediary position between Speusippus' predilection for analogy/ similarity and the Platonic doctrine of participation/imitation; see van Raalte (1993) 283; Ierodiakonou (2016). Aristotle also thinks that Speusippus goes too far in this regard, criticizing his relapse to Presocratic naturalism for postulating ἀτελῆ seed or seedlike principles prior to the later generated and well-ordered universe (*Metaph*. 1072b35–1073a3). I share Menn's sensible observation about Aristotle's attempt to assimilate Speusippus to Presocratic naturalists such as Anaxagoras, but I cannot agree with the further claim that 'this allows Aristotle to position himself as a defender of Platonic teleology and the perfection of the ἀρχαί' (Menn, Ch. I γ 3, 23). I think the teleology which Aristotle wants to defend is different from the Platonic version. For recent discussion of Aristotle's teleology, see e.g. Johnson (2005); Leunissen (2010); Gotthelf (2012); Henry (2013). Gotthelf (2012) 71–74 provides a good overview of the scholarship on this subject.

> Speusipps System der *Homoia* hat in der Diskussion um den Wissenschaftsbegriff der Älteren Akademie eine entscheidende Rolle gespielt. Wenn irgendwo, so müsste sich hier – über die unbestrittenen mathematischen Wissenschaften hinaus – der einzelwissenschaftliche Anspruch der Akademie konkretisieren und die Kontinuität zur Forschung des Peripatos – zumal zur Biologie – herstellen lassen ... Trotz der Verschiedenheit der Zielsetzung hat jedoch die Systematik Speusipps gleichsam beiläufig eine positive Tier- und Pflanzenkunde entwickelt, die auf die peripatetische Biologie einen nicht zu unterschätzenden kategorialen Einfluss geübt und auch manche Grundeinteilungen vorweggenommen hat.

The asymmetry between good and bad in Speusippus, therefore, does not point towards a gloomy metaphysics. It is better to characterize his world, from the perspective of teleological debate, as 'realistic' rather than 'pessimistic'. In this de-teleological world image, he holds a narrow concept of the good: X can be regarded as being in the state of well-being (εὐδαιμονία) only if it is in 'the final (τελεία) state[121] in the area of what accords with nature (κατὰ φύσιν)'.[122] The highest good of human being seems to be exclusively limited to the state called 'freedom from disturbance'(ἀοχλησία), which is preserved for good people (τοὺς ἀγαθούς, *ibid*.), perhaps those who have and can freely use *phronēsis*.[123] For this reason, Speusippus sets constraints on the realization of the good much more strictly than Aristotle, who, by contrast, permits a wide degree within the category of good and strives to recognize something good or divine even in the lower beings (see *Cael*. 292b5–10; *DA* 415a29; *PA* 644b22–645a25; *EN* 1153b31–32; 1173a4–5). In this respect what Theophrastus manages to show in the *Metaphysics* much resembles Speusippus' approach insofar as he too suggests using the observation of nature to replace the pursuit of optimal designs built on *causa finalis* (9b8–13, 11b26). In *Met*. 9a10–b1, he also argues that since knowing occurs in many ways and since each area of being has a unique knowledge and method appropriate to it, we should shift our attention away from looking for any overarching explanation of some particular area.

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[121] In order to highlight the teleological agenda and its possible connection with Speusippus' biological analogy (*Metaph*. 1092a11–15, *cf*. §III above), τελεία is here translated as *final*. For the close link between the τελεία state and finality in Plato and Aristotle, see Cooper (2004) 270–308.

[122] Clem. *Strom*. II, 133, 4 = Tarán F77 = Isnardi Parente F110.

[123] The anti-hedonistic argument—the wise person pursues what is painless (ὁ φρόνιμος τὸ ἄλυπον διώκει, *EN* 1152b15–16, see 1153a27–8, 31–32)—in Aristotle's account is often ascribed to Speusippus.

The metaphysical picture that underlies this epistemic requirement is not far from the notorious 'episodic' universe of Speusippus criticized by Aristotle.[124] Regardless of how one assesses these features of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*, they fit well with and (in part) account for his unease about generalizations and, in particular, account for his sustained interest in unusual phenomena and multiple explanations (as his own scientific practices show).[125]

This divergence over teleology enables us to view in a fresh light Speusippus' alleged extremism in the Academic debate on hedonism. In his eyes, pleasure belongs to things that are *intrinsically* bad, not because such an experience is ethically repulsive but because there is no goal in its nature, given the Platonic understanding of pleasure as a restorative process towards a goal.[126] It is noteworthy that Speusippus' theory does not preclude there being things that are bad or even essentially bad but good in some other ways. If we notice the *Spielraum* for Speusippus within the hedonistic debate, he seems to be allowed to develop an interesting position which Aristotle did not address with respect to evaluating pleasure, namely that pleasure is essentially bad but some pleasures can be good in qualified ways.[127] A pleasure is essentially bad, as mentioned, because *by nature* it cannot realize a goal in itself. Some pleasures can just be good presumably because their existence makes the one experiencing them feel good under certain circumstances or because they can instrumentally lead to a condition of equilibrium, the neutral state beyond hedonic disturbance. Although we do not know whether or not Speusippus did develop views along this line, it is compatible with what we know about his philosophy and is philosophically more promising than the radical view—criticized by Aristotle in *EN* VII—that no pleasure is good, either essentially or

[124] Vallance (1988) thus has reason to claim that, for Theophrastus, 'the location of the boundary between different areas of study is one of the first tasks facing the natural scientist' (27).

[125] See Steinmetz (1964) 322–24; Vallance (1988) 32–36, Kidd (1992) 295; Sharples (1994) 38.

[126] If Speusippus adopts the Platonic understanding of pleasure (and it seems that he does), we could also say that the goal of the process on which pleasure hinges is the balanced natural state which is a destruction of the pleasure. It is noteworthy that, according to this model, pleasure is bad not because it imitates or partakes in the second principle *qua* bad. Here I leave open the controversial question of whether and to what extent Plato himself thinks that *all* kinds of pleasure can be unified in the restorative model.

[127] Historically considered, the distinction of the *per se* and *per accidens* predication had obtained a significant status in the ongoing discussions and theoretical constructions among the Academics since Plato's later period (*cf*. Krämer (1958) 258–79; Annas (1976) 266; Thiel (2008) 346–47, 365–72; Kahn (2013) 24–34). Remarkably, several lines before the Speusippus episode, Theophrastus also resorts to this legacy in his own way by claiming that teleological principles cannot be applied to reality either *without qualification* (ἁπλώς) or *in reference to concrete cases* (11a3–5).

coincidentally.[128] At least, this use of double predication theory can create room for mitigating the counter-intuitive impression aroused by regarding pleasure as essentially bad, surely a Speusippean position.[129] This move would further enable him to come up with a more powerful reply, or an attractive alternative, to Aristotle's famous proposal which divides pleasure into a group of the essentially good and a group of the accidentally good.[130]

The result, it transpires, deepens our understanding of Speusippus' criticism of Eudoxus in the Academic controversy. In addition to the motivational hedonism Eudoxus seeks to justify, what is at the heart of this debate includes a *teleological* agenda implied in his argumentative strategy: pleasure is the best because it is the intrinsic and ultimate *goal* at which all animals are aiming (*EN* 1172b9–14). Speusippus attacks this argument, not only because of its pro-hedonistic consequence but because, more significantly, he does not share the for-the-sake-of-good structure underlying Eudoxus' image of the natural world. Of course, Speusippus would not deny the phenomenon—pleasure is pursued by animals—stressed by Eudoxus;[131] but, as Aristotle's account implies, he insists that the observational fact cannot guarantee the very goodness that Eudoxus wants to establish (*EN* 1173a1–6). Rather, the inclination of non-rational animals actually points in the opposite direction (*EN* 1152b15–18; 1153a27–35). Aristotle seems to agree with this by introducing accidental pleasure to alleviate Speusippus' worry, but he criticizes Speusippus for failing to take the pursuit of *rational* animals seriously enough (*EN* 1173a3–4). Yet, since Speusippus is sceptical about the range of teleological order, he can dispel Aristotle's criticism by questioning the teleological framework which the accounts of Aristotle and Eudoxus somehow

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[128] *EN* 1152b8–9. No name is attributed to this position in Aristotle's report. It is worth noting that the thesis that no pleasure is good, either in itself or accidentally, is not equivalent to the thesis that pleasure is essentially bad. We believe that Speusippus holds the latter view based on Aristotle's criticism of him in 1153b6–7—οὐ γὰρ ἂν φαίη ὅπερ κακόν τι εἶναι τὴν ἡδονήν and some other evidence (F80d and F84 Tarán, also *cf*. Tarán (1981) 440–41). This is the only place in Aristotle's accounts of pleasure where Speusippus is explicitly mentioned (*EN* 1153b5). Therefore, we should leave open how he would evaluate pleasure from other perspectives. This suggestion is compatible with the Academic understanding of pleasure essentially as becoming or motion. For some Academics, pleasure is essentially bad due to its ontological feature (the absence of an internal goal). On the other hand, an Academic has good reason to allow pleasure, or at least some pleasures, to be good in some other ways, not only because it renders their position intuitively more appealing but also because it seems to square better with their understanding of pleasure in terms of restorative process, a tendency towards a good that is external to the process (*EN* 1152b12).

[129] Aristotle takes pains to show why pleasure cannot be essentially bad. He seems not to worry about the view that pleasure can also be bad in a qualified sense, which is either philosophically uninteresting or is regarded as compatible with his view that pleasure can be a qualified good.

[130] *EN* 1152b8–9, 1152b27–31, 1153b2, 1153a29–30,1154b15–20. Also see *EE* 1228b18–22.

[131] He seems to reject the universality of Eudoxus' description.

presuppose. If the natural world or the animal kingdom is not guided by a comprehensive for-the-sake-of-good structure, the teleological justification of pleasure (either Eudoxus' or Aristotle's version) cannot get off the ground. In this sense, the debate over pleasure is not only a debate concerning hedonism but also a debate concerning the legitimate use of teleology.

VIII. Conclusion

To conclude, let me provide my 'final' text and translation of the Speusippus testimony and then summarize the findings made in this article:

> Τὸ δ' ὅλον σπάνιόν τι καὶ ἐν ὀλίγοις τὸ ἀγαθόν, πολὺ δὲ πλήθει τὸ κακόν (οὗ ἡ ἀοριστία δὲ μόνον καθάπερ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀμαθεστάτου ἐστί).[132] καὶ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας λέγοντες ὥσπερ Σπεύσιππος, σπάνιόν τι τὸ τίμιον ποιοῦσι τὸ περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέσου χώραν, τὰ δ' ἄκρα καὶ ἑκατέρωθεν. Τὰ μὲν οὖν ὄντα καλῶς ἔτυχεν ὄντα … (*Met*. 11a18–26)
>
> In general, the good is something rare and in few [things], whereas the bad is great in quantity (the unlimitedness of the bad is simply like what happens in the nature of extreme ignorance). For those who speak about the whole of existence, such as Speusippus, make what is honourable, which is in the region of the centre, something rare, and [make] the rest extremes and on either side. Well then, things happen to be in a good state as they are …

I have argued that the Speusippus episode should be read in a friendly light rather than in traditional, polemical ways. This reading better fits Theophrastus' general worry about the scope of teleology as well as the de-teleological potential of Speusippus' thought. Conceived along these lines, the episode avoids being isolated as an 'appendix' and instead functions as an intended part of Theophrastus' engagement, occupying a determinate place in the overall argument of his *Metaphysics*. On this basis, I also advance a new interpretation of the immediately following text (*Met*. 11a26–b12), the episode of Theophrastus' confrontation with Plato and the 'Pythagoreans', whom I regard as constituting the mainstream or the orthodox group of the Academics. In

[132] The brackets are used to mark my interpretation of 11a20–22 as an explanatory parenthesis in which the meaning of the bad is clarified (see §III above). Accordingly, what follows the γάρ in 11a22 tends to further explain the asymmetry between the good and the bad rather than the nature of the bad in question (see §VII).

contrast to the traditional interpretation, according to which Theophrastus uses the Academics to strengthen his criticism of Speusippus' pessimist metaphysics, I have tried to re-integrate this episode to Theophrastus' overarching concern with teleology, arguing that his struggle with the Platonic doctrines of principles is actually a criticism of another type of teleological thinking: its transcendent and non-intentional version. If this is correct, Theophrastus' de-teleological strategy seems to be in striking parallel with Speusippus' attack on the mainstream of the Academics in Aristotle's account, according to which the Platonists unreasonably extend the range of good and are also mistaken in identifying two principles as contraries. In light of this link, my interpretation of the Speusippus episode (11a22–26) and that of Plato and the Pythagoreans (11a26–b7) are mutually supportive. As a whole, they echo what Aristotle often did in *Metaphysics* MN, showing how Theophrastus utilizes a diversity of *diaphorai* within the Academy to his own advantage in different contexts. Finally, I demonstrate how my new reading of the Speusippus episode in Theophrastus enables us to reappraise the allegedly 'gloomy' world-view of Speusippus in a broader context, a reappraisal which also throws new light on his position and strategy in the famous intra-Academic debate over pleasure. It turns out that Speusippus' anti-hedonism is not as radical or as counterintuitive as it initially appears in Aristotle's account. The confrontation between Speusippus and Eudoxus in this debate is not merely initiated by their disagreement on ethics but more fundamentally involves their different attitudes to teleology.

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