

ARISTOTLE, FIRST BOOK OF NATURAL HEARING (PHYSICS), READING 13

If there are causes and beginnings of the things which are by nature, from which they first are and come to be, not by happening, but by what each is said to be according to its substance, it is manifest then that everything comes to be from the underlying subject and the form. For musical man is put together from man and musical in some way. For you break apart the definition into these thoughts. It is clear then that the things which become, come to be from these.

The underlying subject is one in number, but two in sort. For the man and the gold and generally the matter, can be numbered. The one is more a this something and what becomes does not come to be from it by happening. but the form is one. As the order or the musical art or any one of the other things said in this way.

Whence it is on the one hand that the beginnings ought to be said to be two while on the other hand there are three. And it is that in one way they are contraries, as if one were to say the musical and the unmusical or the hot and the cold or the harmonious and the inharmonious; and in another way it is not - for it is impossible for contraries to be acted upon by each other. But this is untied due to the underlying subject being other - for this is not contrary. Thus the beginnings are neither more than the contraries in a way, but two so as to speak in number, nor again entirely two because to be other belongs to these. For to be a man and to be unmusical are other, and to be unformed and to be bronze are other.

It has been said then how many are the beginnings in the becoming of natural things and in what way how many. And it is clear that something ought to underlie the contraries And that the contraries are two. In a way, the other is not necessary. For it will be enough that one of the contraries make the change by its presence and absence.

The underlying nature is knowable by proportion. For as bronze is toward statue or wood towards bed or the matter and the unformed towards any of the things having form before it receives the form, thus the same has itself toward substance and this something and what is. This then is one beginning, not thus being one or existing as the this something; one of which there is the

definition; further the lack, the contrary to this. In what way these are two and in what way more has been said in the above.

First then it has been said that only contraries are the beginnings. Later that it is necessary that something underlie and there be three. From the present it is clear what is the difference of the contraries and how the beginnings are to each other, and what is the underlying subject. Whether the form or the underlying subject is substance is not yet clear. But that the beginnings are three and how three and what the way of these is clear. How many then and which are the beginnings can be considered from these things.