

# Introduction

## Stating the Puzzles

For those who wish to get clear of the puzzles it is advantageous to state the puzzles well; for the subsequent free play of thought is attained by solving the puzzles raised in advance, and it is not possible to untie a knot which one does not know.

—*Metaphysics* A 1.995a27–36

(trans., mine, following Ross and Reeve)

No definitions of truth and falsehood are more well-known or more important to Western thought than those offered by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* book Γ 7 at 1011b26–27:

δῆλον δὲ πρῶτον μὲν ὀρισσαμένοις τί τὸ ἀληθὲς καὶ ψεῦδος.  
τὸ μὲν γὰρ λέγειν τὸ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἢ τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι ψεῦδος, τὸ  
δὲ τὸ ὄν εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἀληθές.

This will be clear if we first define what truth is and what falsehood is. For to say of what is that it is not, or of what is not that it is, is false, whereas to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true. (trans., Reeve)

In this book, I argue that Aristotle presents these canonical definitions as part of a sustained and comprehensive account of the essence of truth in the *Metaphysics*. I take it this is not a humdrum assertion. No other commentator seems to agree with it—neither Aquinas nor Brentano do, both of whom think the being of truth is an important topic in the

*Metaphysics*; neither Crivelli nor Long do, whose books are the most comprehensive studies yet of Aristotle's theory of truth; nor do any of the leading contemporary commentators who attempt to assess the treatise taken as a unified whole—neither Aubenque, Halper, Jaeger, Mansion, Menn, Owens, Reale, Reeve, Ross, nor Wedin.

Aristotle not only explains carefully the nature of truth in the *Metaphysics*, he does so in a rigorously methodical fashion. Or so I think. When I say that Aristotle *methodically* develops his account of the essence of truth and falsehood in the *Metaphysics* I mean that the different parts of his account track the different phases of inquiry he thinks are involved in establishing the definition of an essence of a given object of study. Aristotle explains these phases of inquiry in *Posterior Analytics* B 10, in terms of what Charles has called “the three-stage view” of inquiry:<sup>1</sup>

[Stage 1] Knowing an account of what a term *t* signifies.

[Stage 2] Knowing that what *t* signifies exists.

[Stage 3] Knowing the essence of the kind signified by *t*.

I argue that in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle establishes what the term “truth” signifies, demonstrates that what it signifies exists, and explicates the essence of the kind signified by “truth.”

It goes without saying that for Aristotle truth (ἀλήθεια) is important—fundamentally so.<sup>2</sup> Acquiring and retaining truth are the natural functions of the various modes of human cognition; truth is the final end of all human cognitive activity, practical and theoretical; it is the recognized lodestone for Aristotle's logical, natural scientific, mathematical, rhetorical, and poetic methods. Aristotle's understanding of truth drives his epistemology and informs his ethical theory both with regard to practical wisdom (which he thinks is essential for the virtues of character) and with regard to philosophical wisdom (which he thinks is essential for human flourishing). Perhaps these are commonplaces, but they imply that Aristotle's account of the nature of truth is crucial for comprehending his philosophical system.

Yet no one thinks that Aristotle systematically explained the nature of truth in any of the surviving works. Even Crivelli—who attributes to Aristotle a complex Neo-Fregean theory of truth—thinks all of Aristotle's claims about truth and falsehood in all of the treatises are no more than “asides”:

Aristotle speaks about truth and falsehood in passages from several works [. . .] Truth and falsehood are not the main topic of these works: their discussions of truth and falsehood are asides. Reconstructing an Aristotelian theory of truth and falsehood on the basis of such asides poses complicated problems of various sorts.<sup>3</sup> (Crivelli 2004, 1)

Modrak, who has offered a careful reconstruction of Aristotle's account of truth, agrees with Crivelli. She views the various claims Aristotle makes about truth and falsehood as an "array of remarks," and goes so far as to say that Aristotle leaves the notion of truth undefined in the treatises:

In short, Aristotle has many things to say about truth but leaves the notion of truth undefined. Faced with this array of remarks, an interpreter might despair of finding a core conception of truth here at all. This would be a mistake, I believe, for Aristotle's various remarks on the topic of truth give expression to a coherent and interesting, underlying conception of truth. (Modrak 2001, 55)

Crivelli and Modrak represent the received view: Aristotle nowhere explains his account of truth in a methodical fashion.

As the quotes from Crivelli and Modrak also indicate, however, commentators nevertheless believe Aristotle said enough about truth and falsehood in the various treatises to give us reasonable grounds for thinking we can reconstruct his theory. As proof of this, in the last twenty years a number of commentators have developed sophisticated reconstructions of Aristotle's theory of truth and falsehood.<sup>4</sup> Crivelli's *Aristotle on Truth* (2004) is surely the most impressive and extensive of these efforts. Crivelli offers a comprehensive reconstruction of Aristotle's theory of truth and falsehood using the methods and concepts of analytic philosophy, methods and concepts rooted ultimately in the semantic theories developed by Frege and Russell. Long's *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth* (2011) is similarly comprehensive in its scope. Long adopts what I can only describe as a rhapsodic approach to Aristotle's account of truth, using a heterogeneous mix of concepts and methods derived from both the phenomenological tradition (grounded in the works of Husserl and Heidegger) and the pragmatist tradition in America (emphasizing the ideas of John Dewey, John Herman Randall, George Santayana, and

Frederick Woodbridge). In her *Aristotle's Theory of Meaning and Language* (2001), Modrak develops her interpretation of Aristotle's theory of truth in the light of his account of language, his general semantic theory, and his general ontology. In her earlier book, *The Power of Perception* (1987), she had established the groundwork for the cognitive dimension of her interpretation of Aristotle's semantic theory. Charles, in *Aristotle on Meaning and Essence* (2000), attributes to Aristotle a theory of meaning that has obvious bearing on his account of truth. Recently, Charles and Peramatzis, in "Aristotle on Truth Bearers" (2016), have offered a careful reading of most of the crucial passages concerning truth in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, defending *contra* Crivelli an interpretation of Aristotle's account of truth bearers. Hestir has produced a series of excellent articles on Plato's and Aristotle's conceptions of truth. His recent book on Plato's theory of meaning, *Plato on the Metaphysical Foundations of Meaning and Truth* (2016), offers a chapter on Aristotle's account of truth. In various articles, Pritzl has drawn on Aquinas's account of truth in order to make sense of Aristotle's conception, at the same time remaining alert to both analytic and phenomenological concerns.<sup>5</sup> In his two-volume work, *Aristotle: Semantics and Ontology* (2002), De Rijk includes some discussion of Aristotle's claims about truth and falsehood. All of these recent perspectives offer valuable insights, and I have benefitted enormously from the careful work done by these colleagues.

### The Knots

In making my case I need to untie some tight knots. The first is the tangle created by the different kinds of truth and falsehood Aristotle recognizes in the *Metaphysics*. Aristotle works with more than one conception of truth in the treatise. None of these notions are straightforward, nor is it clear how they are related. The second knot is the skein binding Aristotle's account of truth to the main lines of thought in the *Metaphysics*. Aristotle's defense of philosophical wisdom, his vindication of the logical axioms, and his theory of being are among the major achievements of the treatise. It is not evident how, or even *that*, his account of truth is related to these accomplishments. The third knot is the twist of problems that arise when we attempt to relate Aristotle's conceptions of truth to the various ways in which we now conceive of truth. My aim in this work is to untie the first knot, to loosen the second, and to suggest how to approach the third.

What, then, are the different kinds of truth in the *Metaphysics*? How are they related? How do the different kinds of truth inform the main lines of thought in the *Metaphysics*? What, in the end, is Aristotle's considered account of truth? And is his account still relevant?

The answers I offer to these questions differ from existing proposals in various ways. Contrary to the received view, I argue that Aristotle presents and systematically explicates his *definition* of the essence of the truth in the *Metaphysics*. He states the nominal definitions of the terms "truth" and "falseness" in *Metaphysics* book Γ as part of his elenctic arguments in defense of the logical axioms. These nominal definitions express conceptions of truth and falseness his philosophical opponents would have recognized and accepted in the context of dialectical argument. On the basis of these nominal definitions, in *Metaphysics* books E–I Aristotle develops his definitions of the essences of truth and falseness—his real definitions of truth and falseness—and in so doing he relies upon the various philosophical distinctions he makes in books E–I. Aristotle's methodical exposition of his essential definitions of truth and falseness in the *Metaphysics* serve as a well-developed example of how his philosophical inquiry starts with nominal definitions and ends with real definitions.

Recognizing that Aristotle explicitly acknowledges different kinds of truth and falseness in the *Metaphysics*, I argue that in each case the different kinds are so-called "homonyms"—i.e., the kinds that share the same name, but not the same essence. Moreover, the different kinds of truth are "core-dependent" homonyms (adopting Shields's way of putting it in Shields 1999): the different kinds of truth share the same name because there is one kind, the "core" kind of truth, on which all the others depend. Likewise with the different kinds of falseness. *Pace* Crivelli, I argue that for Aristotle the sort of truth and falseness that belongs to linguistic and mental assertions is the core kind of truth and falseness. Although Aristotle acknowledges a sort of truth and falseness that properly belongs to beings in the world—a kind of objectual truth—he does not think this sort of truth and falseness is fundamental.

Having identified Aristotle's core kind of truth, I argue that he *defines* the most fundamental kind of truth in terms of accurate measurement. So far as I know, this is a novel interpretive claim. Aristotle's metrical conception of truth serves as the theoretical basis for specifying the truth conditions of various assertions (the primary sort of truth bearers), for identifying the sorts of beings implicated in these truth conditions (the various sorts of truth-makers), and for explaining the nature of approximate

truth and falsehood. Thus, *pace* Long, it turns out that the chief value of truth, for Aristotle, is theoretical and not practical.

Owens warned us that “to approach Aristotle with a thesis is a sure way of courting disaster.” (Owens 1978, 11) When I began this project I did not think the *Metaphysics* contained Aristotle’s methodical explanation of the essence of truth. I was mainly interested in understanding his account of linguistic truth, mining passages in the *Metaphysics* to this end. I assumed that, once I understood Aristotle’s account of linguistic truth, it would be fairly straightforward to explain his account of doxastic truth in terms of it, and easier still to make sense of (and explain away) his talk of objectual truth. This was the thesis with which I initially approached Aristotle’s treatise. I placed weight on the canonical definitions of truth and falsehood presented by Aristotle in *Metaphysics*  $\Gamma$  7, 1011b26–27, but I thought these were presented in passing as part of his defense of the logical axioms and *not* as an integral part of a methodical discussion of the nature of truth that stretched through the treatise. I also discounted the relationship among the other passages in the *Metaphysics* having to do with truth— $\Delta$  7,  $\Delta$  29, E 4, and  $\Theta$  10—all of which initially appeared to me to be mere amplifications of Aristotle’s theory of linguistic and doxastic truth. I ignored altogether what Aristotle had to say about oneness and measurement in the treatise. Having courted disaster, I have abandoned my initial approach.

If we consider synoptically Aristotle’s claims about truth in the *Metaphysics*, we can discern the following outline. In books A,  $\alpha$ , B,  $\Gamma$  1–3 (and the corresponding chapters in book K), he explains why truth is fundamental to his inquiry in the *Metaphysics*. Then, in  $\Gamma$  3–8 and the corresponding chapters in K, he presents (so-called “nominal”) definitions of what the terms “truth” and “falsehood” signify, arguing that truth and falsehood so understood exist, and using these nominal definitions to demolish arguments that might be brought against the logical axioms that serve as the starting points for all rational inquiry. Next, in book  $\Delta$ , chapters 7 and 29, Aristotle differentiates among a number of different kinds of truth and falsehood. He demonstrates that the terms “truth” and “falsehood” denoting these different kinds are *pros hen* equivocal, or alternatively, that the terms are related in virtue of sharing a focal meaning, or—as I will prefer to say, following Shields 1999 and Ward 2008—that the different kinds of truth and falsehood themselves constitute a core-dependent field of homonyms. Lastly, Aristotle explicates his account of the essence of the core kind of truth, the kind of truth that

belongs to acts of assertion.<sup>6</sup> In books E, Z, H, and Θ, he relates the being of true assertion to the other kinds of being, articulating the relationship between his account of the essence of truth and his account of οὐσία, and he explicates his full account of the essence of truth in terms of his accounts of substance, potentiality, and actuality. In so doing, he presents his “real” definition of the essence of truth, using it to distinguish among various kinds of truth and explaining how these different kinds of truth are related to each other. In books I, M, and N, he completes his account of the essence of truth by explaining the relationship between acts of assertion and acts of measurement.

In chapter 1, I examine the relationship between Aristotle’s understanding of philosophical wisdom and his account of truth. I argue that in *Metaphysics* book A he defines philosophical wisdom and the purpose of philosophical inquiry in terms of true assertions about the most important principles and causes. Then I explain how, in books α, B, and Γ 1–3, he summarizes the main problems concerning truth that must be solved in order to acquire philosophical wisdom.

In chapters 2 and 3, I argue that the definitions of the terms “truth” and “falsehood” presented in Γ 7.1011b26–27 are nominal definitions (not “real” definitions). Everyone agrees that Aristotle defines the notion of truth at *Metaphysics* Γ 7.1011b26–27. This much at least, but perhaps at most, is uncontroversial. What is controversial is the status of the definition. Does Aristotle present it as his considered account of the essence of truth—his real definition of truth? Or does he offer it as an account of the meaning of the term “truth”—a nominal definition of the term—an account his philosophical opponents might be willing to grant in the context of dialectical debate?

In the subsequent chapters, I argue that Aristotle methodically presents his definition of the essence of truth as an important part of his theory of being. I begin with *Metaphysics* book Δ, chapter 7, where Aristotle distinguishes among various kinds of being, and I argue that he identifies truth as a kind of being, one he compares with coincidental being, categorial being, and the being of potentiality and actuality. I turn next to book Δ, chapter 29, where Aristotle differentiates among various kinds of truth and falsehood, and I argue that these homonymous kinds of truth depend upon one another and that the kind of truth that belongs to assertions, the kind identified in Δ 7, is the most fundamental or core kind of truth.

My assessment of Δ 7 and Δ 29 leads naturally to Aristotle’s discussion of truth in *Metaphysics* book E, chapter 4, where, I argue, he identifies the

genus of his core conception of truth, explaining the potential for truth in terms of the capacity for psychological acts of affirmation and denial. He also differentiates the being of truth from coincidental being and shows that the being of truth depends upon, and is posterior to, categorial being.

Having identified the genus of his core conception of truth, Aristotle carefully articulates its differential characteristics in *Metaphysics* books Z, H, and Θ, establishing along the way the importance of truth for his theory of substance. Although it is well known that in books Z and H Aristotle solves various problems for his account of the definitions of essences, I argue that these semantic problems are best understood in terms of the requirements imposed by his understanding of truth. I go on to defend a reading of book Θ according to which Aristotle is concerned to use the concepts of power and activity in order to explain the nature of rational activity and, hence, truth. In book Θ, chapter 10, Aristotle completes his definition of the essence of truth and provides the basis for his subsequent claim in book Λ that the complete activity of truth is the most fundamental and important activity there is.

Lastly, on the basis of the distinctions Aristotle has made in books Γ–Θ, I argue that in *Metaphysics* book I Aristotle completes the exposition of his real definition of truth in terms of oneness and accurate measurement. This discussion of truth and measurement removes the veil of ignorance that shrouds our understanding of how he conceived of the intrinsic relation between acts of assertion and the beings in the world in virtue of which such assertions are true or false. The discussion of truth in book I also informs a proper reading of *Metaphysics* books M and N, where Aristotle extends his accounts of being, truth, and measurement to the question of mathematical substances.

### My Approach to the *Metaphysics*

I will defend the view that Aristotle's account of the essence of truth is one of the philosophical ligaments that binds his thought in the *Metaphysics*. I approach each part of the *Metaphysics* as an autonomous whole first. Then I compare each part with those already considered. In the end, I assess the coherence of all the parts taken together. I do not assume that Aristotle himself or any of the editors of the treatise *intended* the various parts of the treatise to be read together. Rather, I look to see whether or not they can be read together profitably, and I argue that they can be—at least with regard to his theory of truth.

It might be thought that there are no “main projects” in the *Metaphysics*. This could mean there is no single project that unifies all of the different books of the *Metaphysics*, or that there is no project that unifies many, some, or even one of the books of the *Metaphysics*. I am not moved by any of these hypotheses. Alternatively, one might think that there is at least one project (maybe more) that unifies all or some of the different parts of the *Metaphysics*. I follow a number of recent commentators—and the majority of commentators in the ancient and medieval periods—who think that we ought to read the *Metaphysics* as a unified philosophical work. But even if the *Metaphysics* is best understood as a unified philosophical work, it may be that Aristotle’s account of the essence of truth is not a part (or is not an important part) of the project. The majority of commentators maintain some version of this hypothesis, and I reject it.

Some readers may think my approach to the *Metaphysics* is naïve; others may think it hopeless. It might be judged naïve because it presupposes an illegitimate hermeneutic, namely, reading the *Metaphysics* as a unified whole. It might be considered hopeless because of the (seeming) conspicuous lack of evidence for one of my main contentions: Is it not as clear as day that truth is at best a minor topic in the *Metaphysics*? Let me address both charges, beginning with the allegation that it is jejune to read the *Metaphysics* as a unified philosophical work.

Although my reading does assume that the *Metaphysics* can be read as a unified whole, I do not presuppose that Aristotle intended it to be read as such, or that the editor(s) of the treatise—if other than Aristotle—intended this. The books that constitute the *Metaphysics* are a set of manuscripts the authenticity, unity, and title of which have been challenged.<sup>7</sup> If we assume that all of the parts of the *Metaphysics* were written by or at least edited by Aristotle himself, and I do, then it is likely that he wrote the different parts at times between 368/7 BCE (when he is thought to have entered Plato’s Academy) and 323 BCE (when he died in Chalcis). This puts roughly two thousand three hundred years between us and the time when Aristotle may have written the various parts of the *Metaphysics*. I doubt we will ever know the ultimate origins of the various parts of the *Metaphysics*, or who authored them and with what intentions, or how and why they were organized as they are in the extant manuscripts. No one thinks Aristotle fashioned the title.<sup>8</sup> As noted above, some challenge the philosophical unity of the treatise.<sup>9</sup> To explain the putative lack of unity, some have challenged the authenticity of various parts of the treatise, while others have argued that different parts of the treatise—while properly attributed to Aristotle—represent different and

conflicting phases of his philosophical development.<sup>10</sup> These are important worries, but we shouldn't let these mysteries impede our efforts to make sense of the ideas and arguments in the treatise as we have received it.

At least since Jaeger's 1912 *Entstehungsgeschichte der Metaphysik des Aristoteles*, scholars have been far less likely to approach the treatise as a unified work.<sup>11</sup> According to Jaeger:

It is totally inadmissible to treat the elements combined in the *corpus metaphysicum* as if they were a unity, and to set up, for purposes of comparison, the average result of these entirely heterogeneous materials. As I have shown in another place [*Entstehungsgeschichte der Metaphysik des Aristoteles*], internal analysis leads to the view that various periods are represented, and this is confirmed by the tradition that the collection known as the *Metaphysics* was not put together until after its author's death. (Jaeger 1934, 168)

Jaeger's admonition had considerable force on the philosophical community, but enthusiasm for his approach had begun to wane already by the middle of the last century. Nevertheless, many contemporary commentators still interpret the different parts of the treatise as independent contributions to Aristotle's philosophy, often dismissing or ignoring either the relationship between the various parts of the treatise or the relationship between these parts and the whole.<sup>12</sup>

Following Reale, we can distinguish between the literary unity of the treatise and its philosophical unity. I am interested here only in the latter. I do not attempt to show that the different sections of the treatise, as they are now arranged, constitute a unified literary work.<sup>13</sup> Although cognizant of the textual difficulties Jaeger and others have identified, I follow Ross in thinking that *Metaphysics* books A, B, Γ, E, Z, H, Θ, I, M, and N constitute a more or less continuous work, and accept his reasoning with respect to the "outlying" books α, Δ, K, and Λ. To be clear, however, I take very seriously Jaeger's point that:

On no account must we, by assuming that it [the *Metaphysics*] is philosophically homogeneous, cover up the problems which its content as well as its form presents at every step. We must reject all attempts to make a literary whole out of the remaining materials by rearranging or removing some of the

books, and we must condemn the assumption which overhastily postulates their philosophical unity at the expense of their individual peculiarities. (Jaeger 1934, 170)

The arguments I present aim to advance our understanding of how Aristotle's investigation of truth in the *Metaphysics* informs the various sections of the treatise taken separately, taken in relation to each other, and taken as parts of a unified whole. My chief concern is to show that the various parts of the treatise concerned with truth constitute a carefully executed and systematic account of the nature of truth. I don't claim that my proposed reading is the only way to read the treatise. The treatise has been read profitably with an eye to Aristotle's theory of being (Owens), his theory of substance (Wedin), of first philosophy (Reale), of first principles (Menn), of the one and the many (Halper), et cetera. I do think, however, that my proposed reading is viable. Even Jaeger would condone the effort I undertake here. My goals are consonant with his proviso about the strength of his own conclusions:

I have shown in my *Ent Metaph Artst* (pp. 15.ff) that Aristotle's treatises arose by the combination of isolated and self-contained monographs . . . This does not mean that there is never an idea uniting a large group of such monographs, or that their relationship is one of loose juxtaposition in thought as well as in expression. It is simply an aid to the understanding of the way in which Aristotle's 'works' were composed and it enables us to explain their incoherences and apparent irrelevancies by recalling the philosopher's manner of working and teaching. (Jaeger 1934, n3)

I turn now to the charge that my approach to the treatise is hopeless because there is no evidence that truth is an important topic in the *Metaphysics*. I have already outlined above my main reasons for rejecting this accusation, but let me offer some additional reasons to diminish despair.

First, some explanation of the nature of truth is essential to Aristotle's main purpose in the *Metaphysics*. One of the goals of his investigation in the *Metaphysics* is to specify fully, and to secure, philosophical wisdom. Philosophical wisdom, as he conceives of it in the *Metaphysics* and elsewhere, is a special sort of knowledge. He defines it in terms of

truth: philosophical wisdom is the comprehension of *true* first principles combined with the capacity to demonstrate *true* conclusions from these first principles. Aristotle explicitly makes this point about philosophical wisdom. It is also entailed by what he says about comprehension and demonstrative understanding.<sup>14</sup> He defines all these forms of cognition in terms of truth. As a consequence, he must tell us what truth is if he is to have a reasonable hope of persuading us that he has specified fully, and has secured, philosophical wisdom. But when we look to what Aristotle says about truth in treatises other than the *Metaphysics* it becomes clear that, while he does provide us with important insights into the nature of truth in some of these, he has not undertaken to explain the nature of truth in any treatise other than the *Metaphysics*. Therefore, unless we wish to conclude that we simply do not have his account of the essence of truth, we should expect to find it in the *Metaphysics*. I think we do.

A second reason why we should expect Aristotle to explain the nature of truth in the *Metaphysics* is that his defense of the logical axioms in book Γ (and again in book K) crucially depends upon the definitions of truth and falsehood presented in Γ 7. I will make the case for the latter claim in part II. Given that Aristotle has not explained the nature of truth outside of the *Metaphysics*, he needs to explain it in the *Metaphysics* if he hopes to adequately vindicate the logical axioms.<sup>15</sup>

A third reason to expect that Aristotle will explain the nature of truth in the *Metaphysics* is that truth is among the basic kinds of being he takes seriously in the treatise.<sup>16</sup> His theory of being is one of the major achievements of the *Metaphysics*. The central claims of this theory explain the being in-itself of the categorial schemata, the nature of coincidental being, the being of potentiality and actuality, and the being of truth. The most widely discussed part of the theory of being is Aristotle's account of substance [οὐσία]—and the related concepts of essence [τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι], definition [ὁρίσμιος], and the formula of the essence [λόγος τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι]. Yet, in order to provide a complete account of being, he needs to explain the nature of the other kinds of being, the being of truth included. He does. I make the case for this in part III.

A fourth and final reason why we should expect Aristotle to explain the nature of truth in the *Metaphysics* is that his unmovable first mover—his God [ὁ θεός]—always actualizes, by virtue of its very nature, truth. This point may not be obvious. It is *prima facie* plausible that in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle considers his God to be the most important first principle and substance, and that his God is thus the proper object of

philosophical wisdom. He is quite emphatic about these points in *Metaphysics* A 2. Subsequently, in book Λ, Aristotle defines the essence of his God as the perfect actuality of thought thinking thought. While this idea is hardly transparent, no one doubts that Aristotle's God is the perfect realization of contemplative activity [θεωρία] or that this contemplative activity essentially involves truth. Given this way of understanding God's nature, and assuming that Aristotle has not explained the nature of truth in any treatise other than the *Metaphysics*, he needs to explain the nature of truth in the treatise in order to satisfactorily account for the proper *object* of philosophical wisdom. He does not disappoint us on this score, or so I will maintain.

Taken together these reasons constitute good evidence for thinking that Aristotle will explain the nature of truth in the *Metaphysics*. Of course, the *Metaphysics* is not devoted exclusively to the topic of truth—other major topics include Aristotle's criticisms of his predecessor's views on causality, his conception of the science of being, his defense of the logical axioms, his exploration of the homonymous nature of being, his theory of substance, his theology, and the status of mathematical objects. But this should not obscure the fact that truth is an important topic in the treatise. If my reading accurately tracks Aristotle's reasoning about truth in the *Metaphysics*, then to that extent the various parts of the treatise present a well-integrated set of arguments concerning truth. My reading also entails that truth is among the more important topics in the *Metaphysics*.