Contents

List of Figures *page* x
Acknowledgements xi
List of Abbreviations xiv

Introduction 1
0.1 Artefacts in the Contemporary Debate 2
0.2 Artefacts in Aristotle: Some Preliminary Observations 8
0.3 Aristotelian Scholarship: The *Status Quaestionis* 15
0.4 A Piecemeal Approach 20
0.5 Aristotle's Ontology of Artefacts 27

1 The Platonic Heritage 31
1.1 Plato's Metaphysics of Artefacts 32
1.1.1 Plato's Ideas of Artefacts in the *Cratylus* and *Republic* X 32
1.1.2 The Doubts of the Young Socrates in the *Parmenides* 36
1.1.3 Divine Craftsmanship in the *Timaeus* 39
1.2 Building on Plato's Theoretical Shortcomings 41
1.2.1 Final Causation 41
1.2.2 Models, Likenesses and the Notion of Imitation 42
1.3 Platonic Intuitions as the Source of Aristotle's Account of Artefacts 46
1.3.1 Ideas and Forms 46
1.3.2 Axiology and Metaphysics 48
1.3.3 Carving Nature at the Joints 52
1.3.4 Parts and Whole 55

2 Using Artefacts against Plato 58
2.1 The Arguments 58
2.1.1 Against the Arguments from the Sciences 58
2.1.2 The Threat of *Aporia* 61
2.1.3 The Logical or Semantic Argument 66
2.1.4 Aristotle's Argument from Evidence 67
2.2 The Notion of Separation 70
2.3 Aristotle's Dialectical Use of Artefacts 71

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 02:06:29, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009340557

3 Aristotle's Building Blocks in the *Physics* 75
3.1 The Theory of the Four Causes and the Art Analogy 76
3.2 The Salient Difference between Artefacts and Natural Beings 81
3.2.1 The Definition of Nature in *Phys.* 2.1 83
3.2.2 Daedalus' Statues, Machines, the Olive Tree and the Swallow's Nest 87
3.3 Artefacts Will *Typically* Come-to-Be by Art 88
3.3.1 Art as Principle 89
3.3.2 Other Dependent Objects 92
3.4 *Some* Artefacts Will *Only* Come-to-Be by Art and *Some* Natural Beings Will *Also* Come-to-Be by Art 100
3.4.1 Inadvertently Made Objects 100
3.4.2 The Case of Artificial Mixtures 103

4 Artefacts as Hylomorphic Compounds 109
4.1 Artefacts Undergo Unqualified Coming-to-Be 110
4.1.1 Intrinsic Change in the Matter 110
4.1.2 Per Se Unities 121
4.1.3 Nature-Facts and Found-Objects: The Paperweight and the Strigil 123
4.2 It's Not Bronze, It's a Brazen Statue 125
4.2.1 The *Eikeininon* Rule 125
4.2.2 Actuality-Inducing Action as the Relevant Change in Matter 129
4.3 Synonymy Principle 136
4.3.1 The Synonymy Principle Applied to Artefacts 138
4.3.2 The Form in the Mind of the Artisan as the Form of the Object in Thought and as in Actuality 141
4.3.3 The Form in the Object in Potentiality: The Artisans' Tools 143
4.4 Neither Just Matter nor Accidental Beings 147

5 Forms of Artefacts as Inert and Intermittent 150
5.1 Art as the Form in the Mind of the Artisan 151
5.1.1 Art as Efficient Cause of Qualified Coming-to-Be 151
5.1.2 Art as Efficient Cause of Unqualified Coming-to-Be 157
5.2 Against Transmission Theory: How the Form in the Object Is Not an Efficient Cause Explained through Biology 161
5.2.1 On the Difference between the Semen and the Tools 161
5.2.2 Heartless Artefacts 165
5.3 Autonomy, Life and Substantiality 168
5.4 Eternity and Substantiality 174

6 The Relation between Matter and Form in Artefacts 181
6.1 Artefact-Kinds as Functions 181
6.2 Diachronic and Synchronic Matter 187
6.2.1 Remote and Proximate Matter 192

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 02:06:29, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009340557

6.2.2 The Proximate Matter of Artefacts: The Many-to-Many Relationship 194
6.2.3 The Sources of Hindrances in the Remote Matter of Artefacts 202
6.3 The Synchronic Matter of Artefacts: Functional Matter and the Homonymy Principle 207
6.4 What Then? Persisting Matter 214
6.5 The Unity of Matter and Form and Substantiality 215

7 The Relation Between Parts and Whole in Artefacts 219
7.1 How to Explain What a Thing Is: The *Differentiae* in H 2 221
7.2 The Static Picture 227
7.2.1 Unity by Contact 227
7.2.2 Unity by Continuity 229
7.2.3 Unity by Wholeness 230
7.3 Unity and the Substantiality of Artefacts 232
7.3.1 Having a Form, but with Parts in Actuality 232
7.3.2 Failing *Met.* Z 13's Substantiality Criterion 237
7.3.3 Hylomorphism and Substantiality Diverge 241
7.3.4 Unqualified Coming-to-Be Reconsidered: Production and Destruction 243

8 The Physics and Metaphysics of Artefacts 251
8.1 The Dynamic Picture: Maintenance and Performance 251
8.2 Back to the *Physics*? 261
8.3 Artefacts as Objects of Inquiry 264
8.3.1 The Physicist, the Artisan and the User 265
8.3.2 The Metaphysician 268
8.3.3 The Cheap Coppersmith and the Spit-and-Lampstand 271

Conclusions 276

Bibliography 281
Index Locorum 294
Subject Index 297

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 02:06:29, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009340557