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**ON THE QUESTION OF THE PLACE OF ARISTOTLE’S DOCTRINE OF MATTER AND FORM IN THE HISTORY OF MATERIALISM**

**Summary.** Aristotle's doctrine of matter and form was the result of the development of preceding philosophical thought, which rose from the search of the substrate beginning of things to the search of the causes of motion and to understanding substance (being) as a dialectical unity. Further philosophy used that dialectical and materialist doctrine as the basis of the common philosophical understanding of existence, while often idealistically distorting it.

**Key words*:*** Aristotle, matter, form, substance, motion, existence, cause.

According to Aristotle, matter is not yet existence which inalienable property is topicality and availability. It is one of the components of existence, which is as a substance (as it is) is a unity of matter and form, of possibility and reality. Existence is formed (or the one which is being formed) matter. It cannot be separated from actually existing (carried out) things, i.e. it is not a concept or an idea of the essence as such, but the actual diversity of real things.

Into the subject of philosophy – *the essence as such –* Aristotle includes *beginnings and the causes* of everything:  “What we are looking for is beginnings and reasons for existing, though, of course, it exists” [1, 1025 b 3-4]. Aristotle does not doubt, not only in the reality of the external world [see: 4, 327], but also in the motion of this real world, so that's why he is interested not only in substrate beginning, but also in the reason of the motion of the world: “It is also true that philosophy is called the knowledge of the truth... But we do not know the truth, not knowing the cause” [1, 993 b 20, 23].

Explaining the world with the help of two beginnings: matter (=substrate, possibility) and form (=essence, target, entelechy), Aristotle doesn't separate this beginnings one from another. “Last matter and form, - he writes, - is the same thing, but one in the possibility and the other in reality; so that's why to look for the reason of the unity of a thing, or the reason of the unity between matter and form is very similar, as per each thing is a unity itself, so in the same way something existing in possibility and something existing in reality in a certain sense is one and the same, so there is no other reason for the unity, except what caused the motion from the state of possibility in the state of reality.” [1, 1045 b 18-24]. Aristotle strongly emphasized the difference between forms he had input and Platonic “ideas”: form defines the qualitative feature of things and doesn't exist by itself but in their matter: “In fact form is some kind of qualitativeness of the thing and it is not any definite thing as such” [1, 1033 b 22]. To separate matter and form is possible only in abstraction (and this is the subject of the first philosophy), but not in reality. But how matter and form are are related, what is the principle of self-realization, self-unfolding of existence? Aristotle provides the answer to this question by his doctrine of motion, which was understood as a formation and transition from possible to real: “I understand the motion as a real implementation of what is possible... And the motion occurs when this implementation takes place, and neither before nor after” [1, 1065 b 16, 21-22].

Aristotle was aware of the controversial nature of motion, to reflect which only opposite definitions can be used: something that is in motion *exists*, as it creates, and *does not exist*, as it hasn't been created yet (for example, the house which is being built). Motion is the real existence of a non-existent. “The movement, however, is some kind of reality, but in this case – incomplete one: because incomplete means possible for realization in that motion. So that is why it is difficult to comprehend what the motion is: it is necessary to see in it some privation, or the possibility or the immediate reality” [1, 1066 а 20-24].

As emergence, motion is the mode of existence of particular things. And at the same time it is also realization and actualization of matter as the infinite possibility. Movement is the actual link between matter and form, the immediate reality of existence as the unity of possibility and reality.

Consideration of the motion from the perspective of categories of matter and form, potency and entelechy allowed Aristotle to understand the motion, not only as the motion of particular, finite things, but at the same time as the motion of existence - in other words, to reveal the nature of motion which is substantialistically required. It is not truth that only finite things move, and the existence is still. The existence is realized and in this mean moves in the motion of essence: “The motion is the entelechy of what exists in potency”[2, 201 а 12].

But something existing potentially does not necessarily exist as a particular essence. This means that motion does not start from the level of essences, it has not only status of phenomena that are transient - it is the need which lies in the self-contradictory nature of existence - an inseparable unity of matter and form.

On the other hand, entelechy is a principle of certainty, finality and effectuation, and in this meaning it is a principle of existence of finite things. This means that “there is no motion except things” [2, 200 b 32]. For the last two thousand years, before so called “crisis in physics” Aristotle thought possible to ignore the issue about *what moves,* and separate motion from the material substrate: “I mean that something moving is necessary” [2, 227 b 24], “there is no motion apart from things” [1, 1065 b 7].

In this way, Aristotle avoids the antithesis, which Eleatics chose: either existence or the world of changeable essences. He finds the synthesis of existence and essences in conception that the existence is a infinite process of matter formation (substantialistic, or we would rather say now materialistic – the monism of the Aristotelian doctrine of matter and form was the most precisely described by V.Zenkovskim [5*,* 15–16]). In this way Aristotle links the existence motion and the essence motion. But he doesn't equate one with the other. As well as his prominent predecessors he distinguishes motion on the existence level and the motion on the level of finite things. “Any change by its nature, – he writes, – creates from itself” [2, 222 b 16]. But it's only finite things that change this way. Motion in the sphere of things is composed of changes, and all of them are finite: none of that changes is infinite, because every change comes from something to something, as a change by controversy, or by opposition. Thus, the limits for changes by controversy are affirmation and negation, for example, creation for existence, and destruction for non-existence, for changes by the opposition – oppositions themselves” [2, 241 а 27-32]. Here follows the important conclusion that the infinity of motion cannot be defined, being limited by consideration of particular things, which start and finish their motion along with start and finish of its existence. Therefore, the issue of motion infinity is a point where the need to move from the level of analysis of essences to the level of analysis of existence (matter) can be found.

It should be noted that K. Marx used the term “matter” according to the Aristotelian tradition. In Lenin's "Materialism and Empiriocriticism" matter stands in less standard meaning, in the meaning of substance; only in "Philosophical Notebooks" Lenin started to form the approach to the category of substance, consisting of both the matter and the reason (“form”, according to Aristotle). In Marx's works matter stands in the old classical sense, as the one that doesn't have power itself – same as Aristotle's. Marx in “Capital” shows the structure of “real time (ie, of the essence), which itself is distinguished as a matter (the raw material and instrument) and form (labor)” [6, 254]; here we can meet an apt expression “dead matter” [6, 253]. But, "the nature - as Aristotle claimed - is twofold - it is form and matter at the same time" [2, 194 а 14], Engels, having noted the Haeckel's remark that first matter arose, and then the substance, creating the power, motion, and so on, notices with astonishment: “Where he has found his materialism?” [7, 523]. Even for the most astute pre-Socratics, it was clear that the recognition of quality-less abstract substance leads to the rejection of the category of substance, to the interpretation of it as a game of pure imagination and, consequently, to the abolition of the subject of philosophy, that the substance may only be an objective reality, when it is a subject of all its changes. After all, general exists only insofar as there is *particular*; and particular things must always arise and move from non-existence into existence, and this is the motion. So that's why Engels opposes the concept of Dühring because “Herr Dühring's actually begins with such an existence, which is devoid of any internal differences, of all motion and change and, therefore, it is actually just an analogue of mental naught, that is, it is really naught. Only from this existence-naugh the present differentiated, changeable state of the world is developing, being the development, becoming” [8, 43]. On this issue, Engels refers to the Hegel's “Philosophy of Nature,”: “Just as there is no motion without matter, so there is no matter without motion”[7, 560]. Engels points out that “Matter without motion is as inconceivable as motion without matter. The movement therefore is also uncreated and indestructible as matter itself”[8, 59]. Like Marx, Engels divides the “material moment” on the matter and form, stating: “A thing is a moving matter” [7, 563].

This structure was understood by Aristotle, with whom, in fact, a truly philosophical thinking starts and who long before us divided “material moment” on the matter (raw materials) and form (labour): “For example, the causes of the statue [will be] the art of sculpture and copper - and it's not in relation to something different, but since it is a statue, only [these reasons] differ: one as a matter, the other as “where the movement originates”” [2, 195 а 6-9].

But, so far *existence* (matter, substance, essence itself, “material moment”) includes not only the *matter* (substrate, substance, beginning, length), but also the form (“idea”, motion, reason “sequencing wisdom” , “mind”), the monistic principle (which is identical to the recognition of the existence of the philosophy) requires to combine these two elements into a single fundamental principle and source of the universe. “The original matter and form cannot be a reason for the of each other's existence, there is some reason determining the existence of both of them together," [9, 723], - says Farabi, choosing Engels', not Haeckel's view point on this fundamental question. In the Aristotelian philosophical tradition form stands as a principle of individualization: “It's not a form that is determined by matter, but rather the matter is determined by form; it is in the form where the reason why the matter is such should be sought, and not vice versa [10, 851]. This objectively leads philosophy to an idealist conclusions. As John Ital noted, a man called the man by his form, for because of it, and not the material filling (length, physicality) he differs from a horse or a bull [look.: 11, 628]; and here the transition to the concept of eternal form, or prime mover (as it will already be seen from the example of Aristotle) - after all, before Spinoza, with his notion of causa sui philosophers, it was clear that “the cause-effect series of possible things cannot last endlessly, nor be a cycle ; it should arise from something necessary, namely, the first essence.” [9, 719].

Farabi and Aquinas originated from Aristotle. But one line placed the emphasis on substance as the basis of itself (and its displays respectively), another – on substance as the cause of itself (and its changes respectively). The first line comprised matter (without form), without creating a dialectic materialism; the second comprised active principle, form (without matter), creating a dialectic without materialism.

Where the union of dispersed after Aristotle lines occurs - the lines of the substrate (material) world unity and lines of organizational (formal) world unity - especially as the latter leads to the spiritual unity of the world, to the idealism? This union occurs in the Spinoza concept, in which the substance is and the foundation itself, the of cause itself - the basis of the changing modes, and the subject of all their changes, i.e., acts as a causa sui in relation to both their attributes: the “length” (matter), and “thinking” (“idea”, “form”).

In the same way, although at a substantial basis, the philosophical monism in Hegel's system is stated, and not by chance, recapitulating Hegel's “Lectures on the History of Philosophy”, Lenin pointed out that the natural philosophy of objective idealism is often equal to materialism, defending Aristotle's concept of prime mover (form of forms) from accusation of idealism [4, 255]. Let's say parenthetically that if in natural philosophy, according to Lenin, objective idealism is more often equal to materialism, so relatively to objective idealism epistemology it would not be superfluous to recall Engels evaluation Hegel's attitude to the “thing in itself”: “This way, Hegel here much more drastic materialist than modern naturalists”[7, 556].

In Aristotle's doctrine, it is the indestructibility of the material substrate and form as individualizing beginning provides infinite motion as growing of more and more new essences. Matter and form, which is closely related to it, are eternal, that means they cannot be created or transformed into one another or into anything alse, and this is an absolute condition of all existence: “Everything comes from subject and form”[2, 190 b 20]; for example, when the air emerges from the water, the same matter, Aristotle claims, becomes another body not by the way of joining anything, but simply – what was potential becomes actual. Matter, therefore, is something extremely poor (pure potentiality, “dead materiality”) and abstract: “After all, if you take away from the bodies all their qualities, relations, statuses, modes, motions, changes, and everything else, the matter will still remain [12, 627] - Michael Psellus points - although Aristotle laments, that some believe this formless substance to be the real essence of existence of things: “Some people suppose that the nature and essence of natural objects is the first thing that comprises it, and it is formless itself, such as the nature of bed - wood, of statue - copper” [2, 193 а 10-12]. Aristotle solves the problem dialectically: on the one hand, the definition of thing is its form, not substance, on the other hand, in so far as the matter of thing (and, therefore, in reality in general) certainly stands as formed one, it is at the level of essences (though it is no more a philosophical level) can be considered as a specific.

So Aristotle raises the question of matter: “Isn't it a component of the definition? After all, about copper circles we can speak in two ways: about the matter - saying that they are copper, and about the form - saying about some figure (and figure is the first genus to which a circle belongs). So copper circle has a matter in it's definition also” [1, 1033 а 1-5]. The Aristotelian tradition subtly caught the dialectic of universal and particular, the unity of which it would be really impossible if not for intermediate link: individual, which allowed the existence of universal unitary, the unitary of existence: “Thus, it is clear that the existence of every thing, designated as primary and existing itself, and this thing is identical and form a whole” [1, 1032 а 4-6].

Warning against the idealistic identification of universal (matter) with the concept, Aquinas long before Feuerbach wrote: “As there is no "human in general" without "the human", so there is no "matter in general" without "the matter". However, any self-existing thing, composed of matter and form, is made up of individual form and individual matter” [10, 862]. After all, “matter as such and motion as such no one has ever seen or experienced in some other sense, people are only concerned with a variety of actually existing substances and forms of motion”[7, 550].

According to Aristotle, to stop on the dualism of matter and form would mean not to go beyond the individual sciences. In the same way, knowledge of matter and form not as such, but as different, individual - is still (or already) not a philosophical level of thinking. “Moreover, the matter belongs to the [category of] relationship, as the different form [requires] different matter. To which extent a physicist should know the shape and nature of [things]? Isn't it, as a doctor [knows] tendons, and a blacksmith - copper, that is, to a certain extent, namely what for every thing is, and, moreover, [only] about those that are separable in form, but inseparable in matter. After all, man engenders a man, but the Sun [also]. But what is the situation with separation [from the matter] and what it is - it must determined first philosophy” [2, 194 b 8-15], – Aristotle points out in "Physics", thus indicating the boundaries of knowledge of existing in physics.

From above said it is clear what Aristotle meant by form:

“I name the essence of existence of thing the form”[1, 1035 b 31-32];

“The gist of existence is the essence” [1, 1038 b 17];

“What has no effect of the substrate is called essence” [1, 1038 b 15];

“Meanwhile, all suppose, and it was said a long time ago that definition was created or only for the entity, either mainly for it” [1, 1039 a 18–20];

“Because the essence of thing, expressed in the definition, it is its form” [3, 403 b 2-3].

So, having walked the circle of categories, we are again back to the category of form, the reason is a common denominator for this, in fact, list of synonyms and explanations:

“Therefore, it is clear, that the reason is what looked for. And the reason is, if we start from the definition - the essence of existence of thing, for some things a reason is its purpose, as, we'd say, for house or for bedside, while for others - the first movement: this is also a reason after all” [1, 1041 а 28-32] (We see from this quotation that, according to Aristotle, the essence of thing is concentrated if the reason and manner of its emergence; and here we recall the classical example from Marx “Capital”: the essence of can be understood money, once understood their origin!);

“That's why the reason for matter is what sought after, it is a form, according to which, matter is something determined; and that reason is the essence”[1, 1041 b 8-9].

So Aristotle understood that “the matter cannot explain not only thinking and cognition, but also the very phenomena of the external world: motion, genesis, qualitative change of things cannot be explained; qualities, sensory features of things and specific relations of phenomena cannot be explained; the organization of nature, both in its whole and in structure of genera and species of living beings cannot be explained. The concept of things, or, more precisely, what corresponds to this concept, is unexplicably according to matter, i.e. forms of things in which we know them, in which they exist and appear to us. This form, determined in our definitions, makes things what they are, or, if you want, it is the essence of things”[13, 34].

Estimating the late development of "Democritus line" and "Plato's line", it should be admitted that, according to class point of view, it's quite natural, that “active side”, as Marx said, developed not according to materialism, but idealism, for only in proletarian materialism the principle of practice could be referred not to the human (in varying degrees, depersonalized) spirit, but to the transformation of reality, and dialectics could become a genuine “algebra of revolution”.

The deepest Aristotle's learning of form as substance's attribute, embodying its activity, very often falsified in an idealistic spirit that respectively provokes unfounded attacks of materialists on Aristotle. A similar situation, by the way, occurred in connection with the doctrine of Spinoza's about the thinking as an attribute of substance; but examples from Aristotle and Spinoza are not limited to cases where the materialists throw around their reliable and reputable allies, giving generously of their idealism, instead of using them to fight against idealism. So it is no wonder that the materialists, after they (to some extent) had given to the idealists almost all pre-Marxist philosophical classics, had to dig out tertiary and long-forgotten by philosophical tradition sages (the so-called " thinkers of the past") and to seek for pearls of materialism in their theories (which fit - along with biographies and bibliographies - a pocket-sized brochures), in order not to be left entirely without allies, and not to find themselves with their materialism, as Lenin would say, aside from the mainstream of world civilization.

The key element of Aristotle's doctrine about matter and form is, undoubtedly, the concept of form of forms, divine prime mover, but this concept deserves a special consideration.

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**Елєз А.Й. До питання про місце аристотельовського вчення про матерію та форму в історії матеріалізму. – Стаття.**

Вчення Аристотеля про матерію та форму стало підсумком розвитку попередньої філософської думки, що піднявся від пошуків субстратного початку речей до пошуків причини руху і до розуміння субстанції (буття) як діалектичної єдності. Наступна філософія використала це діалектичне та матеріалістичне вчення як фундамент філософського розуміння буття, при цьому найчастіше перекручуючи його в ідеалістичному дусі.

**Ключові слова:** Аристотель, матерія, форма, субстанція, рух, буття, причина.

**Элез А.Й. К вопросу о месте аристотелевского учения о материи и форме в истории материализма. – Статья.**

**Аннотация.** Учение Аристотеля о материи и форме стало итогом развития предшествующей философской мысли, которая поднялась от поисков субстратного начала вещей к поискам причины движения и к пониманию субстанции как диалектического единства. Последующая философия использовала это диалектическое и материалистическое учение как фундамент философского понимания бытия, при этом чаще всего искажая его в идеалистическом духе.

**Ключевые слова:** Аристотель, материя, форма, субстанция, движение, бытие, причина.