

## A Reconstruction of Z.13, 1038<sup>b</sup>11-15

(Following Code, *Paideia* [1978])

### Text

“... what is called universal is what naturally belongs to more than one thing. Then which thing’s substance will the universal be? For it must be the substance either of all or of none of them. It cannot be the substance of all; but if it is the substance of one of them, then the others will be this one too, since things that have one substance, i.e., one essence, are themselves one.”

### Reconstruction

#### The Main Argument:

1. A universal is predicated of many things (its instances).
2. A universal is the substance either (a) of all of its instances or (b) of none of its instances.
3. But it cannot be the substance of all.
4. Therefore, it is the substance of none [of the things with respect to which it is universal].

#### A subordinate argument for (3):

- a. [Let  $P$  be a universal, and suppose that  $P$  is the substance (i.e., essence) of all of its instances.]
- b. Things whose substance, i.e., essence, is one are themselves one.

I.e., no two things have the same essence:  $E(x) = E(y) \rightarrow x = y$

- c. [It follows from (a) and (b) that any] one [of the instances of  $P$ ] will be [identical to all of] the other [instances of  $P$ . I.e., it follows that  $P$  has only one instance.]
- d. [Therefore  $P$  is not a universal.]

This follows from (1): a universal has many instances and (c):  $P$  has only one instance.

- e. Therefore, no universal is the substance of all of its instances. = (3)]