One of the perennial questions in Aristotle's metaphysics concerns the transition from the ontology of the earlier, logical works (the *Organon*), where the individual is primary substance, to the central books of the *Metaphysics*, where pride of place, and the term 'primary substance' now belong to form. The difference between the two viewpoints is centered around the different treatment each gives to the individual. In Aristotle's early theory in the *Categories*, the criteria for determining what is most of all substance are all tied to two canonical forms of predication, relating a subject to its kinds (including, where the subject is a substance, to its substantial kinds), or in the case of a substance, to its accidents. But this analysis offers no technique for inquiring after the inner structure, if any, of the subjects it identifies as basic: individual substances such as the individual man or the individual horse (*Categories* 2, 1b4–5). In the *Metaphysics*, the individual substance is treated very differently. An individual substance is an organized, structured entity of a certain sort, and is analyzed accordingly as a compound of matter and form. And of the three, matter, form, and compound, form is now primary substance. So a primary substance may *have* a subject or substratum, but it is not itself a compound of form and substratum: no primary substance is "spoken of by way of one thing's being in another, i.e. in something which is its subject as matter" (*Z11*, 1037b1–4).

Accounts of the progression from the metaphysics of the *Organon* to that of the later works frequently focus on the entry of matter. Important as matter is, however, the mature notion of form which accompanies it is no less novel or complex. The word *eido* is one of the more overworked in Aristotle's metaphysics. Aristotle can use it for Platonic forms, and for one kind of secondary substance (the species) in the *Categories*, or even, in the biological works, when no distinction is being made between *eido* and *γενό*, for any of the kinds under which an individual falls. In the *Metaphysics*, he uses the same word for *form*. Form is, in some sense, a *constituent in* the individual substance, which is thus a *compound of* matter and form. This view of individual substance as a compound dominates *Z8*, for example, where Aristotle argues that everything that comes to be must be a compound of form and matter. The craftsman, for example, who makes the bronze round
makes neither the bronze nor the round, but something else, viz. this form in something else (1033a32–34, cf. b8–10, 18–19). Again,

what generates is sufficient for the making, and cause of the form's being in the matter. But once we have the whole, such-and-such a form in these flesh and bones, this is Callias or Socrates; and they are different on account of their matter (for that is different), but the same in form (for the form is indivisible). (Z8, 1034a4–8, cf. Mansion, 1971. My translation borrows a phrase from an unpublished version by Montgomery Furth.)

In the same vein, Aristotle uses the phrases τὸ σύνολον, “the composite”, or ἡ σύνολη οὐσία, “the composite substance”, to denote the compound of matter and form. The concrete substance can also be described as what is “out of” matter and form, τὸ ἕκ τοῦτον, or as a “this-in-this”, τὸ δὲ ἐν τῷ ὑδέ, this form in this matter. Hence too the frequent comparisons between natural substances and Aristotle’s favourite example, snub nose. But how are we to understand the notion of compound that is involved in this language? Sometimes, Aristotle speaks of form as straightforwardly an ingredient or “element” (στροχείον) in the compound substance (L4, 1070b10ff). Elsewhere, however, he protests against this view, and calls form a “principle” (ἄρχη), as distinct from an element (Z17, 1041b11ff, H3, 1043b4ff [Ross’ text]). In this same spirit, he calls matter a part of the compound substance (Z10, 1035a3ff, cf. D25, 1023b19–22), but is not apparently willing to talk of form as such as a part. So the precise way in which the concrete substance is a compound of form and matter remains mysterious.

The mystery, though deep, is not perhaps unique to Aristotle. As Lukasiewicz suggested some time ago (Lukasiewicz, 1953, pp. 80–82), Aristotelian form can be regarded as in some respects like a function from matter to a compound, and in the favoured cases, to a compound which is also a substance. If we interpret functions in a Fregean style, similarities open up between Aristotle’s views and those of Frege. For Aristotle, matter is itself a material object, but one that lacks the right kind of unity to count as a substance (Z16, 1040b8–10, Z17, 1041b11ff, H3, 1044a2–9, cf. H6). Form, meanwhile, is not (or at least, on most accounts is not) itself a material object, just as for Frege a function is non-material. But in much the way that for Frege a function is “unsaturated”, so for Aristotle form is of such a nature as to combine with one material object, namely matter, to make up a second object, which under the right circumstances will be a substance. Now Frege holds that there are functions whose value for an appropriate material object as argument is itself a material object (for example, the function, the capital of x). So the structure of a composite substance, which