

Hence in Met VII, where Aristotle debates with masterly penetration how to meet the claim of substance to be at once universal, intelligible, and definable, and at the same time unique and individual, the singular is at length superseded on the throne of substance by the infima species.¹ That is to say the genus is taken to be fully actualised in its infimae species, and its further differentiation into singulars is treated as irrelevant.

- 1 Or "materiate form," as Aristotle also calls it because it attains existence in a material embodiment and cannot be defined without reference to matter, though matter is itself indefinable. The discussion is interspersed with criticism of the forms. Aristotle attacks the theory as a purely arbitrary individualisation of universals, and the detail of the polemic, as well as the context, suggest that he is attacking Plato not for divorcing infimae species from singulars, but for separating and reifying genera taken apart from species. [...]