

**Book II, Endnote 40. On Holding the Elements Together (15 B 28)
(Line by Line Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima Eugene T.
Gendlin, © 2012 PDF Page 267.**

Aristotle rejects the theory of the atomists according to which the atoms of the elements are actually present in a mixture. Aristotle argues that the elements change completely when they join in a "mixture" such as bronze, flesh, or bone. "Mixture" is his concept of the material side of **a further organization** beyond the elements. He argues that even the smallest particle of a mixture is mixture, so that the elements are **not actually present**. To get an element back, one has either to heat or to cool the mixture, and either to liquify or to dry it. Bronze, wood, or a living body **does not consist of actual** fire, air, water, and earth. Each mixture is a new kind of matter. Living matter does not consist of inanimate particles. The living nutritive function determines the making of the matter. Aristotle rejects how Empedocles defines compounds so that the particles retain their identity "like stones in a wall" (De Gen III-7, 334a26)

Aristotle defines bodies by how they move, so that if particles of earth and fire were present in a living body, they would move in opposite directions and it would come apart. But, while a mixture is **a proportion** of the elements going into the mixture, the mixture itself is a unique form of matter in which the elements change utterly and are only potentially (not actually) present.

For Aristotle any natural **body** that has dimensions and limits (for example, a stone) is held together by the continually ongoing activity of its internal heat. A natural body has an internal "nature" which is something **"aside from"** the elements (Meta VIII-3). SEE ALSO ENDNOTE 2 ON SUBSTANCE

Living bodies are generated and maintained not just by heat, but by a soul, i.e., a more complex organization with different powers.

As a modern example, ethologists conclude from studies of every kind of animal that certain fixed behavior patterns are "built into" the

body, (i.e., they are inherited, not learned), but there are no concepts with which to think how physiological structures generate behavior. It has been found that evolutionarily more evolved species have more complex behaviors. But in our current science there are no bridge-concepts with which to study this linkage. We can see the outlines of such bridge concepts exhibited as Aristotle builds inherent connections from internally arising activities to functions, powers, organs, the direction of motions, mixtures and the elements, all involved in the body's organization.

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* Reading Group: Line-by-Line Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima Eugene T. Gendlin, Ph.D. ©2012 https://thinkinginmovement.ca/focusing_principles/gendlin-on-aristotles-de-anima/

* Reading Group: Mike McCullough "Self Organizing of Growing and Perceiving" Gendlin-Aristotle in relation to S. Kauffman and R.D. Ellis <https://thinkinginmovement.ca/mike-mccullough-self-organizing-of-growing-and-perceiving-2022/>

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