Humanities 116: Philosophical Perspectives on the Humanities

1 Readings from medieval Aristotelians on substance and accident

1.1 AVICENNA (ibn Sīna)[1]

After going through his own version of the distinction between substance and accident, Avicenna proceeds to rule out, in no uncertain terms, Porphyry's theory of "substantial qualities." Every kind of being, he says, is either always and completely a substance, or always and completely an accident.

(A) *On the characterization of substance and its divisions, speaking generally.* We say: ... the primary division of essential beings is substance.[2] And that is because there are two divisions of beings: [1] one of them, that which **[a] exists in another thing—another thing which has attained existence and species in itself—[b] by a being not like the being of a part of it, [c] such that its separation from that thing is not permissible**: that is being in a subject;[3] and [2] the second, being which is not in any thing at all in this way: that is substance.

And if that which was signified in the first division [division (1) in the previous paragraph] was *being in a subject*, then that subject, too, cannot but be in one of these two ways.[4] If the subject is a substance, then the accident subsists in the substance. If it is not a substance, then it, too, is in a subject, and the investigation goes back to the beginning.[5] And it is impossible that this series continue to infinity, as we will make clear [in another place] about matters of this type in particular. So the last [member] of [the series of accidents] cannot but be in that which is *not* in a

[1] Lived 980–1037, in Persia. Wrote mostly in Arabic, some in Persian (the original of these selections is Arabic). Read Aristotle in Arabic translation.

[2] For our purposes the qualification "essential" here (in "essential beings") can be ignored: Avicenna is saying just what Aristotle does, that the primary kind of being is substance. (Avicenna's phrase "essential beings" [*maujūdāt bil-dhāt*] apparently translates Aristotle's "beings per se" in reading (O).)

[3] So the stuff in boldface is Avicenna's definition of "in a subject," i.e. of being as an *accident*. Compare Aristotle's version of the definition, which I also put in boldface, in reading (B). Notice that Avicenna has added something to part (a): something only counts as a "subject," according to him, if it "has attained existence and species in itself." Why put this in? (Hint: a sensible substance = a specific (substantial) form in matter. Is the substantial form "in a subject"? Why not?)

[4] That is: every accident (everything in division (1)) is in something else, a subject. But then this subject in turn must either belong to division (1) (in-a-subject = accident) or to division (2) (not-in-a-subject = substance).

[5] If the subject which the first accident is in is also an accident, then that second accident must also be in a subject. But then we ask again: is *that* subject (the subject of the second accident) itself an accident (in-a-subject), or is it a substance (not-in-a-subject)?

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subject, and so be in a substance. So substance constitutes accident as being, and is not constituted by accident. So substance is primary in being.

As to whether an accident can be in an[other] accident, that is not objectionable.[6] For speed is in motion, and straightness in line, and plane figure in surface, and, too, accidents are related to one and many [that is, you can count them]; but these, as we will make clear to you, are all accidents. But though an accident is in an[other] accident, both collected together are in a subject, and the true subject is that which constitutes them both collectively, and that is that which exists per se [i.e., the substance].

Now, many of those who have claimed to be knowledgeable have allowed there to be some thing or other which is substance and accident simultaneously, in relation to two things, and say [for example] that heat is an accident in bodies other than fire, but in fire, in general, it is not an accident. For [heat] has being in [fire] as a part, and, also, it is not possible to remove it from fire, such that the fire remains.[7] So, [according to them,] the being of [heat] in fire is not the being of an accident in [fire], and if its being in it is not the being of an accident, then its being in it is the being of a substance. But this is a great error, and we have spoken about it sufficiently in the first [books] on logic, although that was not its place, since they err in it only there [i.e., since "they"—the ancient Neoplatonist commentators—discuss this in their commentaries to the *Categories*, as we have seen in the case of Porphyry]. . . . (*Shifā' al-Ilāhiyyāt* [=*Metaphysics*], 2.1)

Here is part of the long explanation which Avicenna just alluded to, in his (Avicenna's) "first books on logic," i.e., in the part of his encyclopedic work, the *Shifā'*, which corresponds to Aristotle's *Categories*. Note how he explains why Aristotle says that the differentiae of substances are "qualities." He relies on the idea of equivocal names (the move suggested by reading (V) from Aristotle), but he has to do more fancy stuff to make that work, for reasons we discussed before.

(B) *On the refutation of the saying of one who says that one thing can be both accident and substance in two [different] respects.* There have arisen astonishing doctrines on the issue of accident and substance, to which [philosophers] were led by the ambiguity that falls in the distinction between accident and form. . . .

And due to the fact that the name "quality" is an equivocal name (as will be made known in its detailed treatment in [the part of this book on] first philosophy [i.e., metaphysics]), they [those who follow Porphyry's theory] then heard that the differentiae of substances are substances, and they [also] heard that the differentiae

[6] Others disagree with Avicenna about this—including, as we will see, Thomas Aquinas.

[7] If it were true that heat was in fire as a *part* (i.e. that heat was part of fire), then heat would not be in fire as a subject, thus would not be in fire as an accident. Similarly, the fact that fire does not receive cold, the contrary of heat, seems to indicate that it doesn't "receive" heat either (as an accident)—remember that that was Porphyry's argument, anyway.

of substances are qualities. They did not know that the differentiae of substances are called by this name ["quality"] only equivocally, but thought that the "quality" which is a category, which we will mention later, included the differentiae of substances. And since that [category of] quality was according to them a [category of] accident[s], the differentiae of substances turned out, according to them, to be accidents. But the differentiae of substances were also substances according to them, so that it was as if a thing were both substance and accident. . . .

And as for us, we say that this is false and impossible, and that these examples are all false. And we say, first, that we mean by "substance" a thing such that the true nature of its essence exists without being in any subject whatsoever:[8] that is, that the true nature of its essence does *not* exist **[a] in any thing whatsoever, [b] not as a part of it, [c] by a being such that, moreover, it is not possible that it be separated from [the thing it exists in], whereas [the thing it exists in] is existent by itself**.[9] And an accident is a thing whose being is such that it cannot but exist in something or other in this way, so that its quiddity does not attain being unless it has [some]thing such that it is in that thing in this way [i.e., unless it has a subject to exist in].[10]

Since, then, things are [classified] according to two divisions—[1] a thing whose essence and true nature has no need to exist in any thing at all with a being like that of a thing in its subject; and [2] a thing which cannot but exist in some thing or other in this way—[therefore] every thing is *either* a substance *or* an accident. And it is impossible for there to be a single thing [2] whose quiddity is so deficient in being that there is any thing at all which it exists in as a thing in a subject, *and* [1] whose quiddity nevertheless does not *require* that there be any thing whatsoever which it exists in as a thing in a subject.[11] So no thing at all is both accident and

[8]Notice what Avicenna has added here: a substance isn't just something which *happens* not to be "in a subject"; rather, its not-being-in-a-subject has something to do with "the true nature of its essence" (*ḥaqīqat dhātihi*). We'll see how he (sort of) justifies that addition in the next paragraph. Why is it important?

[9]Here, again, Avicenna gives his definition of "in a subject" (in the context of saying that a *substance* is *not* in a subject). Note that he is consistent (he adds exactly the same thing to Aristotle's version here as he did in the other passage).

[10]Remember that "quiddity" (Latin *quidditas* = Arabic *māhīya*) and "essence" (Latin *essentia* = Arabic *dhāt*) are basically the same. So Avicenna is saying the same thing about accidents as he did about substances: the fact that something is "in a subject," i.e. is an accident, has to do with its *essence*, i.e. with what makes it what it is ("quiddity" = literally "whatness").

[11]So here we see the center of Avicenna's argument: if there is *ever* an individual of a certain kind (i.e., with a certain essence) which exists "in a subject," this shows that the kind of being associated with that essence is "deficient." So, for example, if the heat in this water is an accident (is in the water as a "subject"), then there must be something "deficient" about the kind of *being* which belongs to a member of the species *heat*. Therefore, all other individuals of that species must also (because they have the same essence) have the same "deficient" kind of being. But then (he claims) something with such a "deficient" kind of being can *never* exist on its own; it *always* "requires"

substance. . . .

So a form [i.e., a substantial form, which makes something the kind of substance it is] is not an accident at all; rather, it is absolutely substance. That nature which is a [substantial] form in fire (I do not mean the sensible quality[12]) exists in fire as a part of the composite, and it is in the *matter* of fire, not as a thing in a subject, but as a thing in matter.[13]

And the differentiae of substance... they, too, are not in any thing at all in the way that an accident is in a subject. . . . And they are not of the category which is quality, but if they are said to be "quality" it is by equivocality of the name. For, by equivocality of the name, "quality" *is* said of things which fall in different categories, and every power and every active principle and every thing which adorns a thing and specifies it is called a quality, even though it is a quantity or some other [such thing], and that is by equivocality of the name. But the category is but one of the meanings of the equivocal name, which is clarified in that it belongs to the [necessary] condition of that meaning that it is existent in a subject. And the equivocal name [as a whole] is not [i.e., does not signify] any [single] genus whatsoever. (*Shifā' al-Manṭiq* [=*Logic*] Book II, *al-Maqūlāt* [=*Categories*], 1.6)

If heat, for example, is not really a differentia of fire and does not belong to its essence, then what is the relationship between the form or essence of the substance itself and such sensible qualities? Here is Avicenna's answer.

(C) *On the relation of nature to matter and form and motion.* Every body has a nature and matter and a form and accidents. Its *nature* is the power from which issue its motion or its change which are generated from its essence, as well as its rest and its stability; its *form* is the quiddity by which it is what it is; its *matter* is the thing which bears the quiddity; and the *accidents* are the things which, when its matter is informed with its form, and its species is attributed [to it], are concomitant[14] to it or befall[15] it from outside. . . .

In[16] the case of simple [bodies], the nature is the form itself. The form of water

a subject. Therefore, the heat in this fire, assuming it is also a member of the same species (the species *heat* which is a species of quality) must also be an accident. If there's something we call "heat" which is not an accident, that must be because "heat" is used equivocally.

[12]What has happened here? Remember that, according to Aristotle (reading (U)) the differentiae of the elements are precisely sensible qualities, e.g. heat—at least, that's what it *sounds* like Aristotle is saying.

[13]Notice here how important is Avicenna's addition to the definition of "in a subject." Again: why (according to him) can't we count the being of a substantial form in matter as being "in a subject"?

[14]*Concomitant* properties are properties which naturally belong to a certain thing, but which do not belong to it essentially, i.e. by definition. The thing can therefore be conceived without them, although it doesn't actually exist without them—at least, not under normal circumstances.

[15]The verb used here is *'araḍa*, from which the noun *'araḍ*, "accident," is derived.

[16]In this paragraph Avicenna sorts out some puzzles about the terms "form" and "nature" which

[for example] is itself the quiddity by which the water is what it is, but it is "nature" only in one respect and "form" only in another respect: when it is related to the motions and the acts that issue from it, it is called "nature," and when it is related to its constitution of the species of water, and no attention is payed to what issues from it in the way of effects and motions, it is called "form."

The form of water, for example, is a power which constitutes the matter of water in species, and that [power] is not sensible. But from [that power] issue the sensible effects, such as sensible cold and weight (which is an actual inclination [to move], which does not come to the body when it is in its natural location[17]). And the act of [that power], in the substance of water, is, for example: in relation to what is affected by it, cold; in relation to what affects it and shapes it, moisture; in relation to its proximate place, motion; in relation to its proper place, rest.[18] And this *cold* and [this] *moist* are accidents concomitant on this nature, when no impediment [to the action of this nature, i.e. this power] is present. (*Shifā' al-Ṭab'iyyāt* [=*Natural Science*] Book II, *al-Samā' al-ṭabī'īy* [=*Physics*], 1.6)

Finally, we see that Avicenna applies the same argument to Philoponus' theory of "substantial quantity" as he does to Porphyry's theory of "substantial quality." "Body" in the sense of corporeal substance and "body" in the sense of three-dimensional quantity do not refer to the same thing.

(D) *The beginning of our speech about quantity....* The first thing that we must root out about the nature of quantity, if it is possible and the investigation allows it, is whether it is substance or accident. For if quantity were itself the corporeity [i.e., body-ness] which unites the matter and constitutes a body as body, then it would properly be a form constitutive of substances. And a form is a substance; quantity would therefore be substance.

We say: ... a body ... is a body only because something belongs to its nature

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aren't so important for our purposes. The main point is that (at least in simple bodies like water) the substantial form both (1) is that which makes the substance what it is (e.g. makes it water) and (2) is/has a power to cause certain effects—at least, so long as no impediments stand its way. In the next paragraph it will turn out that all the sensible properties of water are just effects caused by that power; they are not parts of the form itself.

[17]Avicenna is arguing implicitly that the kind of "weight" which is *sensible* is an accident. When a body is in its natural place (for water I guess that means: above the earth but below the air), it has no tendency to move down, therefore no sensible weight (also: no tendency to move up, therefore no sensible lightness). Therefore, this sensible weight is something which the same body has at some times and not at others—i.e., it is an accident.

[18]The details of this sentence may be confusing (don't worry too much about them), but the main point is: the species *water* has just one form/nature (therefore, presumably, just one true specific differentia), but many different effects flow, in different ways, from that one form/nature. So Avicenna is solving another problem here: why the elements each seem to have (at least) two differentiae (e.g., for water, cold and moist; for fire, hot and dry). Answer: those aren't the true differentiae anyway.

[*sha'an*] and is among its natural characteristics [*ṭibā'*], due to which it is possible to posit in it three dimensions absolutely [i.e., not any particular three dimensions, but three dimensions as such] which intersect at one shared limit in a perpendicular intersection. And this [possibility] is the form of corporeity.[19]

So a thing in which you can posit a dimension, then another dimension which intersects it perpendicularly, then a third which intersects the first two perpendicularly, is a body. And though bodies differ in that one of them receives one of the dimensions or two of them or the three of them which are bigger or smaller than the dimensions which are in another body, nevertheless they do not differ in that they receive any three dimensions whatsoever absolutely, but they differ in what they receive in the way of dimensions, according to what has been mentioned. And it [i.e., a body] is body absolutely insofar as it receives three dimensions. And insofar as it receives three dimensions in reality or three which have actual being in it, if that is possible, it is such as to be measured. . . .

The corporeal form which is its substantial form [i.e., which is the substantial form of body] is that in which no body exceeds any [other] body, and it belongs to the group of the first division [of being], and it is the form of a substance; but it is a substance, and is not an accident. But the thing which is determined and which measurement in the three dimensions befalls, definite or indefinite measurement—that is the accident which is of the class [i.e., category] of quantity.[20]

And a single body has being insofar as it befalls it that it changes with respect to quantity but does not change with respect to form. So that wax, with whatever shape you shape it—what is *preserved* in it that is that it is such that the positing of three absolute dimensions can happen in it according to the forms which were mentioned.[21] This does not change in it, though every shape changes, which defines and determines in it any of the dimensions, according to length, width, or depth, actually or potentially, since the shape defines those.[22] So if the wax was shaped with the shape of a sphere, there befell it, with respect to determinate dimensions, [dimensions] other than the definite and determinate [dimensions] which it received when its shape was the shape of a cube; and that [i.e., that kind of dimension which can change while the body of the wax, as a substance, remains] is quantity. And

[19]I.e., the form—that is, substantial form—of corporeity is not the actual measurements, or even the actual dimensions along which measurements take place, but just the power (possibility) of receiving such dimensions.

[20]Notice again: not only the actual ("determinate") measurements, but even the ("indeterminate") lengths (dimensions) which are measured, are quantities, therefore accidents.

[21]So the relationship between the substantial form of body and the accidental quantities is just what we expect (based on, e.g., Aristotle reading (D)): the substantial form remains while the accidents change.

[22]This part is a little obscure, but Avicenna apparently argues that even the indeterminate dimensions of a body (the dimensions along which it can be measured) depend on the shape; but the shape is itself an accident (a quality), so these must also be accidents.

water preserves its substance as water though it grows in bulk when it is rarefied [by heating], and [even] its specific substantiality remains in it, let alone its generic corporeity,[23] though its corporeal measure changes. (*Shifā' al-Manṭiq* [=*Logic*] Book II, *al-Maqūlāt* [=*Categories*], 3.4)

1.2 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS[24]

In this and the following readings, St. Thomas basically follows Avicenna's theory (though there are some differences—see if you notice them). But, partly because of the need to explain the sacrament of the Eucharist, he ends up drawing out the consequences much more starkly. It emerges that, in principle, any kind of substance is consistent with any sensible properties (including: any size and shape). We begin with a passage from Thomas's commentary on Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*.

(A) Secondly we must consider how this is said [by Aristotle]: that earth and fire differ by these differentiae, that is, cold and hot. For this *must* be understood [as being] about substantial differentiae: otherwise it would not pertain to generation and corruption, but rather to alteration.[25] But the principles of substantial differentiae, which are constitutive of species, must be substantial forms which are specific. According to this, therefore, it follows that heat and cold are the substantial forms of fire and earth—which is altogether impossible.

First, because it is not possible that the same thing—unless it be equivocally said—be in one thing an accident, and in another a substantial form.[26] But hot and cold in other bodies [besides the elements] are accidents, and [yet] they [i.e., heat and cold] are univocally said of those [other bodies] and of the elements [themselves], from the mixtures of which such qualities are found in [the other bodies].[27] It cannot be,

[23] I.e., not only is the water still a *body* after its quantity changes (not only does it still belong to the same genus), but it is still *water* (it still has exactly the same substantial form as before). This shows that the total three-dimensional quantity (the volume) is also an accident.

[24] Lived 1224–1274, in Italy and France. Wrote in Latin. Read Aristotle (and Avicenna) in Latin translation. Note: "Aquinas" is not really a last name (it means that he was from the city of Aquino, in Italy—not that his mother and father were Mr. and Mrs. Aquinas). Therefore it is normal to refer to him, for short, as "Thomas" or "St. Thomas," rather than as "Aquinas"—this doesn't imply that we're on a first-name basis with him. But you will sometimes see him called "Aquinas," too.

[25] Generation and corruption are the processes by which one substance changes into another (the old substance is corrupted and the new one is generated); alteration is the process in which a single substance changes from one quality to another. St. Thomas is pointing out that, in the context in question, Aristotle is talking about generation and corruption, so he must be talking about substance rather than quality.

[26] So we see already that Thomas follows Avicenna, not Porphyry, on this question.

[27] That is: composite bodies have such qualities as heat and cold because they are mixtures of the elements, and (therefore) "heat" and "cold" mean the same when they are said of composite bodies as they do when they are said of the elements. But "heat" and "cold" refer to *accidents* in those composite bodies. Therefore, they are accidents also in the elements.

therefore, that hot and cold in the elements are substantial forms.

Second, because no substantial form is perceptible by sense, but only by the intellect, whose object is the what-is-it, as is said in book 3 of [Aristotle's] *De anima*.[28] But the forms which are perceptible by sense are a species of quality, because they produce passions in the senses, as is said in the *Categories*.[29] Since, therefore, the heat of fire and the cold of earth or water are perceptible by sense, they cannot be substantial forms.

It must be said, therefore, that (as can be gathered from book 8 of the *Metaphysics*) substantial differentiae, because they are unknown, are *manifested* by accidental differentiae. And thus we often use accidental differentiae in place of substantial ones.[30] And in *this* way the Philosopher [i.e., Aristotle] says here that hot and cold "are" the substantial forms of fire and earth. For heat and cold, since they are proper passions of those bodies, are proper *effects* of their substantial forms.[31] (*Exposition of Aristotle's* On Generation and Corruption 1.8 [commentary to $1.3.318^{b}14$])

In the following passage, St. Thomas is talking about angels—that is, eternal, immovable, incorporeal, intelligible substances other than God. But along the way he also says something important about movable, corporeal, sensible substances, which is what matters for our present purposes.

(B) And because in these [angelic] substances [unlike in the case of God] quiddity is not the same as being, they are ordered in a category [unlike God, who does not belong to any category or genus whatsoever]; and because of this there are found in them genus and species and differentia, although their proper differentiae are hidden [*occulte*] from us. For even in sensible things the essential differentiae themselves are unknown, so that they are [instead] signified by accidental differentiae which *arise* from the essential ones, as a cause is signified by its effects: as, for example, *bipedal* is posited as the differentia of human.[32] But the proper accidents of immaterial

[28]There is no very clear place in the *De anima* where Aristotle says this, but there are passages which St. Thomas interprets that way.

[29]Aristotle, reading (J) (beginning "A third genus of quality").

[30]It seems that Thomas is actually referring to a passage in *Metaphysics* 7 (a passage we didn't read). There Aristotle suggests that, when we're unable to find the true differentia, we might sometimes use a substitute instead. (To be precise: the passage is *Metaphysics* $7.12.1038^{a}8$–20.)

[31]So notice that Thomas's solution is basically Avicenna's: the heat in fire is not actually a part of its substantial form, but it is a proper effect which flows naturally from the true substantial form of fire.

[32]That is: *bipedal* (which I guess is a shape, therefore an accident in the genus of quality) can't possibly be the true differentia of *human*, part of the true substantial form of humans. But it is an *effect* of the true substantial form, so we can use it to stand for the true differentia. In the case of *human*, St. Thomas seems to think that we do know the *true* differentia, as well (namely, *rational*). But in the case of other sensible substances, the true differentiae are "hidden" from us (they are "occult properties"), so we are forced to use their proper accidents—the accidents which naturally flow from their forms as effects—to stand for the true differentiae.

substances are unknown to us, so that their differentiae cannot be signified by us either per se or per accidens.[33] (*De ente et essentia*, ch. 5)

The following readings (from the *Summa Theologiae*) all have the peculiar scholastic form known as the *quaestio*. As you can see, it starts with (1) a question; then (2) it says that so-and-so *seems* to be the answer to that question (this first answer, with few exceptions, is always the *wrong* answer); then (3) there is a list of "objections" which support that (wrong) answer; then (4) a short proof, usually from authority, of the opposite (correct) answer (this is known as the *sed contra*, "but against"); then (5) the author's own response, in which he (the author is always a "he") establishes the correct answer by his own argument; finally, (6) a list of replies to the objections. (Sometimes there are variations on this form, but the below selections are all taken from relatively straightforward examples.) In the *Summa Theologiae*, each *quaestio* consists of several "articles," each of which has the above form (so, for example, this first reading is from the first article of the 77th *quaestio* in part I).

(C) *Whether the essence itself of the soul is its power.*[34]

Proceeding thus to the first [article]: it seems that the essence itself of the soul is its power.

[Objections]

1. For Augustine, in book 9 of the *De trinitate*, says that "mind, thought and love are in the soul substantially, or, to say the same thing, essentially." And in book 10 he says that "memory, intelligence and will are one life, one mind, one essence."...

5. **Furthermore**, everything which is not in the essence of a thing, is an accident. If, therefore, the power of the soul is other than its essence, it follows that it is an accident. Which is against Augustine, in book 9 of the *De trinitate*, where he says what was previously mentioned: "[the powers of the soul] are not in the soul as in a subject,[35] as color or shape, or any other quality or quantity, are in a body. For whatever is such, does not exceed the subject in which it is; but the mind can love and know other things, as well."...

But, against [this] is what Dionysius says in chapter 11 of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, that "celestial spirits are divided into essence, virtue, and operation." Much more, then, in the [human] soul, is essence one thing and virtue—or [in other words]

[33] I.e., in the case of angels, we are even worse off than we are in the case of sensible substances: we don't even know any proper accidents we can use to stand for their true differentiae. So, although we know that (unlike God) they fall under some genera and species, we can't say what those genera and species are.

[34] Here Thomas is concerned with some fairly arcane questions about the nature of the human soul. What matters for our purposes is what he says about the use of the term "accident" in general.

[35] If they are not "in a subject," then, of course (according to Aristotle's definition) they are not accidents.

power[36]—another.

I respond, saying that it is impossible to say that the essence of the soul is its power ...

Saying, to the fifth [objection], that, if "accident" is taken in the way in which it is divided against substance, it is never possible, in *that* way, for there to be a medium between substance and accident, because ["substance" and "accident" in that sense] are divided according to affirmation and negation—that is, according to *being in a subject* and *not being in a subject*.[37] And, since the power of the soul is not of its essence, [the power of the soul] must, in *this* manner, be an accident; and it is in the second species of quality. If, however, "accident" is taken according as it is posited as one of the five universals,[38] in *that* way there *is* a certain medium between substance and accident. Because whatever is essential to the thing pertains to substance, but not everything which is outside the essence can be in this way called "accident," but only that which is not caused by the essential principles of the species. For a proprium is not of the essence of the thing, but it is *caused* by the essential principles of the species; thus it is a medium between substance and accidents so-called. And in this manner the powers of the soul, as natural properties of the soul, can be called medium between substance and accident.... (*Summa Theologiae*, 1.77.1)

(D) *Whether the accidents of the bread and the wine remain in this sacrament.*[39]

Proceeding thus to the fifth [article]: it seems that the accidents of the bread and the wine do not remain in this sacrament.[40]

[Objections]

1. For, if a prior thing is removed, then the posterior is removed. But substance

[36]The Latin word *virtus* is used to translate the Greek ethical term *aretē* ("virtue"), but also means power or force.

[37]The point is that if you classify things into what is A and what is not-A ("according to affirmation and negation"), then, no matter what A is, nothing will be left out of your classification, since, no matter what A is, everything either is A or it isn't. In this case A is "in a subject": everything either is "in a subject" (therefore an accident) or is not "in a subject" (therefore a substance). (Is the issue really so simple? Compare Avicenna's argument for the same conclusion, reading (B), p. 3.)

[38]I.e., what we called "the five predicables": the five terms ("genus," "differentia," "species," "proprium," "accident") defined by Porphyry in reading (K) on the second handout.

[39]"This sacrament" is the Eucharist. According to Catholic doctrine, bread and wine consecrated for use in that sacrament actually turn into the body and blood of Christ. The question here is whether the accidents of the bread and the wine (for example, their shape and color) remain behind after the change has taken place.

[40]Remember, this is the *wrong* answer. In other words, Thomas is going to prove that the accidents of the bread and wine *do* remain after the transubstantiation. But first he will list "objections" which *seem* to support the wrong answer, i.e. which *seem* to show that the accidents do *not* remain. Of course, since these "objections" seem to support the wrong answer, they must be somehow mistaken. Therefore at the end (in the "replies to objections") Thomas will say exactly what the mistake is in each of them.

is naturally prior to accident, as is proved in book 7 of the *Metaphysics*.[41] Since, therefore, when the consecration is done, the substance of the bread does not remain in this sacrament, it seems that its accidents cannot remain.

2. **Furthermore**, there ought not to be any deception in a sacrament of truth. But we judge the substance by its accidents.[42] It seems, therefore, that human judgment would be deceived if, while the accidents remained, the substance of the bread did not remain. Therefore it is does not befit this sacrament [that this should occur].

3. **Furthermore**, although faith is not subject to reason, it is nevertheless not against reason, but above it, as is said in the beginning of this work. But our reason arises from sense. Our faith, therefore, ought not to be against sense, to the point where our sense judges this to be bread, and our faith believes it to be the substance of the body of Christ. Therefore it does not befit this sacrament that the accidents of the bread, the subjects of sense, should remain, when the substance of the bread does not remain.

4. **Furthermore**, that which remains when a conversion has happened appears to be the *subject* of the change. If, therefore, the accidents of the bread remain when the conversion [of the bread into the body of Christ] has happened, then it appears that the accidents themselves are the *subject* of the change. But there is no accident of an accident [i.e., an accident can't be a "subject," in which other accidents might come and go].[43] The accidents of the bread and the wine should not, therefore, remain in this sacrament.

But against [this] is what Augustine says in *Prosper's Book of Sentences*: "In the appearance [*species*][44] of the bread and the wine, which we see, we honor the invisible things—that is, the flesh and the blood [of Christ]."

I respond, saying that it is apparent to sense that, when the consecration has happened, all the accidents of the bread and the wine remain. Which, indeed, happens reasonably, due to divine providence.

First: because it is not customary, but horrible, for humans to eat the flesh of a human and drink its blood, the flesh and blood are presented to us under the appearance [*species*] of those things which frequently occur in human use—that is, bread and wine.

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[41] Aristotle, reading (E).

[42] Remember, this is what Thomas said above: we are forced to use sensible, accidental properties of things to stand in for their true, occult substantial differentiae. In other words, we use these accidents to judge what kind of substance anything is (to answer the question "what is it?").

[43] Recall that Avicenna said there *could* be an accident in another accident (reading (A), p. 2). Thomas is explicitly disagreeing with him here.

[44] Here the Latin word *species* is used in its ordinary sense of "appearance" (as opposed to the technical sense in which it goes along with genus and differentia).

Second: lest this sacrament be mocked by infidels, if we were to chew up our Lord under his own proper appearance.

Third: because, since we take the body and blood of our Lord invisibly, this adds to the merit of our faith.

Saying, therefore, to the first [objection] that, as is said in the *Liber de causis*, an effect depends more on the first cause than on the second cause. And thus the virtue [i.e., power] of God, which is the first cause of all things, can make it [happen] that posterior things remain when the prior ones have been removed.

Saying to the second [objection], that there is no deception in this sacrament. For the accidents, which are judged by the senses, *are* there according to the truth of the matter [so the senses are not themselves deceived]. But the intellect, whose proper object is the substance (as is said in book 3 of [Aristotle's] *De anima*), is preserved from deception by faith.

And thus the response to the third [objection] is [also] clear: faith is not against sense [it does not tell us that the senses are wrong], but it is about that which sense does not attain to [i.e., about the substance].

Saying to the fourth [objection], that this conversion does not properly have a subject, as has been said [in a previous article]. But the accidents, nevertheless, which remain, have a certain similarity to subjects. (*Summa Theologiae* 3.75.5)

(E) *Whether the whole of Christ is contained in this sacrament*

Proceeding thus to the first [article]: it seems that the whole of Christ is not contained in this sacrament.

[Objections]

. . . 3. **Furthermore**, a body greater in quantity cannot be wholly contained in a measure of lesser quantity. But the measure of the consecrated bread and wine is much less than the proper measure of the body of Christ. Therefore, it cannot be that the whole Christ is in this sacrament.

But against [this] is what Ambrosius says in the book *De officiis*: "Christ is in that sacrament."

I respond, saying that it is altogether necessary to confess, according to the Catholic faith, that the whole of Christ is in this sacrament. . . .

. . . **Saying to the third [objection]**, that, as has been said, when the conversion of the bread into the body of Christ or of the wine into his blood has happened, the accidents of [the bread and the wine] remain. From which it is clear that the dimensions of the bread or wine are not converted into the dimensions of the body of Christ, but rather the substance [of the bread or wine] into [its] substance. And thus the *substance* of the body or blood of Christ, but not the *dimensions* of the body or blood of Christ, are in this sacrament, due to the force of the sacrament. And it is

clear that the body of Christ is in this sacrament in the way of substance, not in the way of quantity. But the proper totality of a substance is contained indifferently in a small or large quantity—as, for example, the whole nature of air is contained in a large or small [quantity] of air, and the whole nature of human in a large or small human. Thus, too, the whole substance of the body and blood of Christ is contained in this sacrament after consecration, just as, before consecration, the [whole] substance of bread and wine is contained in it. (*Summa Theologiae* 3.76.1)