

SUBSTANCE - CHAPTER 5

The fifth chapter has two parts. The first part is about the distinction and order of first and second substance. And the second part is about the properties of substance.

Unlike what he does in the chapters on quantity and quality (where he distinguishes the first species of these highest genera), Aristotle does not distinguish the first species of substance. Perhaps the reason for this is that it is a question for the wise man to investigate and determine whether there are immaterial substances as well as the material substances known to all of us. If there are, the first division of substance would be into material and immaterial substances. But this would not be clear to a beginner. And therefore Aristotle gives another distinction or division, that between first and second substance.

What kind of distinction is this between first and second substance?

Thomas explains that the division or distinction of substance into first and second is not a division of a genus into its species, but a division of a genus by diverse ways of being:

...Cum dividitur substantia in primam et secundam, non est divisio generis in species, cum nihil contineatur sub secunda substantia quod non sit in prima, -

sed est divisio generis secundum diversos modos essendi. Nam secunda substantia significat naturam generis secundum se absolutam; prima vero substantia significat eam ut individualiter subsistentem.

Unde magis est divisio analogi quam generis.

Sic ergo persona continetur quidem in genere substantiae, licet non ut species, sed ut specialem modum existendi determinans.¹

First substance is neither said of another, nor does it exist in another. Hence, it is chiefly substance, first and most of all substance. The wise man, who considers things in themselves, would consider only first substance to

¹*Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia*, Q. 9, Art 2, Ad 6

be substance. Thomas explains why in logic, though, Aristotle will also call *substance* the species in which first substance is and the genus in which is that species:

Dicit quod substantia dicitur, quae non est de subiecto: et dicitur universale semper de aliquo subiecto: ergo universale non est substantia.

Videtur autem ratio haec non valere. Dictum est enim in *Praedicamentis*, quod de ratione substantiae est, quod non sit in subiecto. Praedicari vero de subiecto non est contra rationem substantiae. Unde ponuntur ibi secundae substantiae quae praedicantur de subiecto.

Sed dicendum quod secundum logicam considerationem loquitur Philosophus in *Praedicamentis*. Logicus autem considerat res secundum quod sunt in ratione; et ideo considerat substantias prout secundum acceptionem intellectus subsunt intentioni universalitatis. Et ideo quantum ad praedicationem, quae est actus rationis, dicit quod praedicatur "de subiecto", idest de substantia subsistente extra animam.

Sed Philosophus primus considerat de rebus secundum quod sunt entia; et ideo apud eius considerationem non differt esse in subiecto et de subiecto. Hic enim accipit dici de subiecto, quod est in se aliqua res et inest alicui subiecto existenti in actu. Et hoc impossibile est esse substantiam. Sic enim haberet esse in subiecto. Quod est contra rationem substantiae: quod etiam in *Praedicamentis* est habitum.²

The distinction between first and second substance could also be said to be a distinction of two meanings of the word *substance*. We have already met another sense of that word in the first two definitions of Chapter One. This is a good place to distinguish the meanings of the word *substance* in this book of the *Categories*. There is a text where Thomas in replying to an objection distinguishes the four meanings of substance that we meet in the *Categories*:

7. Item, substantia in usu Latinorum aequivocatur ad essentiam et hypostasim. Cum ergo dicitur, persona est substantia

²In *VII Metaphysicorum*, Lectio XIII, n. 1575-1576

individua aut ponitur pro essentia aut pro hypostasi. Si pro hypostasi: hypostasis autem est substantia particularis aut individua; videtur quod superflue additur "individua". Si pro essentia: cum individuatio ponatur circa subjectum, quae individuatio in divinis est per distinctionem proprietatis; sequeretur quod proprietas distingueret essentiam. Et praeterea, cum multiplicato definito multiplicetur definitio, sicut plures homines sunt plura animalia rationalia, etc., sequitur quod plures personae sunt plures essentiae; quod est inconveniens.

Ad septimum dicendum, quod substantia dicitur quatuor modis.

Uno modo substantia idem est quod essentia; et sic substantia invenitur in omnibus generibus, sicut et essentia; et hoc significatur, cum quaeritur: Quid est albedo? Color.

Alio modo significat individuum in genere substantiae, quod dicitur substantia prima, vel hypostasis.

Tertio modo dicitur substantia secunda.

Quarto modo dicitur substantia communiter prout abstrahit a substantia prima et secunda, et sic sumitur hic, et per individuum, quasi per differentiam trahitur ad standum pro substantia prima...³

After the distinction of first substance and second substance, Aristotle takes up the order of them. First substance is before all other things because they either are said of it or exist in it. Hence, if the first substances should cease to be, all other things would cease to be. But the species (of first substance) is more substance than the genus because it is closer to first substance and because it is like first substance (the subject underlying everything) in that it is the subject of which genus is said. But one first substance is not more substance than another and one lowest species (or species that is not a genus) is more substance than another such species.

At the end of the first part, Aristotle points out that reasonably only the species and genera of first substances should be called substances

³*Scriptum Super Lib. I Sententiarum*, Distinctio XXV, Quaest. I, Art. I, Obj. 7 & Ad 7

secondarily and not accidents, because only the former say what the first substances are.

In the second part of the chapter, Aristotle gives properties of substance. They fall into two groups of three. The first group pertains to substance alone while the last three can belong to something else.

In the first group, Aristotle gives a property of substance common to first and second substance, a property of second substance, and a property of first substance.

The property common to both is that they are not in a subject. This belongs to their differences as well.

The property of second substance is to be said only univocally (in the narrow sense of the First Chapter). This is true of differences in this genus also.

The property of first substance is to be a this something (the *hoc aliquid* of the Latins). A this something is something by itself, distinct from all other things, and complete in its nature.

The second group of properties revolves around contraries.

The first property is not to have a contrary. This is a property shared by quantity, which perhaps points to its closeness to substance.

The second property is not to be said more or less. This seems to follow upon not having a contrary. This property is also shared by quantity.

The third property is to be susceptible of contraries while remaining one in number. This seems to be a property of first substance.

APPENDIX

How in the book *About Places* can substance be called *what it is* when this is found in all genera and their species?

There are two reasons for this. The genera of categories are distinguished by how they are said of first substances. Only substance is said of individual substances signifying what it is. And second, only substance has definition and therefore a what it is. Or if the others do, it is so in a second way, as Aristotle shows in the seventh book of *Wisdom*, the *Metaphysics*.

Aristotle does not divide substance and toward something (at least not clearly) into their species as he does quantity and quality. One reason can be seen from the greater difficulty of the former. This difficulty can be seen from the two causes of difficulty in the second book of *Wisdom*, the *Metaphysics*. The cause of the difficulty in knowing immaterial substances is in us and the cause of the difficulty of knowing *toward something* is in the thing. One can also show their difficulty in comparison to quantity and quality because the latter, or at least some of their species, are per se sensible while substance and toward something are not per se sensible; and the beginning of our knowledge is in the senses. The division of substance into its species would be into material and immaterial substance, into bodies and the separated substances. But it is one of the chief and most difficult to answer questions of wisdom whether there are immaterial substances in addition to the material ones known to us.

For the logician there can be genus and species in the separated substances, but not for the wise man or the natural philosopher:

genus et differentia possunt accipi dupliciter.

Uno modo secundum considerationem realem, prout considerantur a metaphysico et naturali et sic oportet quod genus et differentia super diversis naturis fundentur;

Et hoc modo nihil prohibet dicere quod in substantiis spiritualibus non sit genus et differentia, sed sint formae tantum et species simplices.

Alio modo secundum considerationem logicam et sic genus et differentia non oportet quod fundentur super diversas naturas, sed supra unam naturam in qua consideratur aliquid proprium, et aliquid commune.

Et sic nihil prohibet genus et differentias ponere in substantiis spiritualibus.⁴

Why does he not divide substance into matter and form and composite, as in the second book *About the Soul* and in *Wisdom*?

This is known *per viam motus*, which is proper to natural philosophy and to wisdom using natural philosophy. But the logician wants to consider substance as it is known by reason or is in reason where it is *said of* another or *not said of* another. Moreover, this division is a division of material substance in particular rather than of substance in general which the logician is considering here. Further, matter and form, being *parts* of a substance cannot be contained directly in the praedicamental order. A part is not in substance *quasi directe contentum sub eo*:

...substantia, secundum quod est genus, non proprie praedicatur de parte. Manus enim si esset substantia, cum sit animata, esset animal - nihil enim est in genere quasi directe contentum sub eo, nisi quod habet naturam aliquam complete - tamen dicitur manus esse substantia, secundum quod substantia dividitur contra accidens; et similiter dico de natura humana in Christo. Cum igitur dicitur quod omnis substantia particularis est hypostasis, intelligendum est de illis quae directe recipiunt praedicationem; et haec sunt quae significantur ut res completae per se subsistentes.⁵

The hypostasis of the Word is secundum quid in the genus of substance:

...hypostasis Verbi, quamvis non sit in genere substantiae simpliciter, inquantum est hypostasis Verbi; tamen inquantum est hypostasis humanae naturae, est in genere substantiae, sicut est in specie hominis. Non enim hypostasis ordinatur ad genus vel speciem, nisi per naturam quam habet.⁶

⁴*Quaestio Disputata de Anima*, Art. 7, Ad 17

⁵*Scriptum Super Lib. III Sententiarum*, Distinctio VI, Quaest. I, Art. I. Quaestiuncula I, Ad 1

⁶*Scriptum Super Lib. III Sententiarum*, Distinctio VI, Quaest. I, Art. I. Quaestiuncula I, Ad 2

DIVISION OF CHAPTER FIVE ON SUBSTANCE

Distinction of 1st & 2nd substance or what is contained in genus of substance

Distinction between first & second substance: what each is

Order of first and second substances

Order of first substance to all other things (of division of beings)

Order of second substances among themselves (species more substance than genus)

No such order among first substances or among species

One first substance is not more substance than another.

Likewise, one species is not more substance than another.

Reasons why only what is said of first substance as a species or genus should be called (second) substance

Their properties

First three properties

Not in a subject - property of both, but also of difference.

Said only univocally - property of second substances (& differences)

This something - property of first substances

Second three properties

Does not have a contrary. - property of both (also of quantity)

Is not said more or less - property of both

Susceptible of contraries while remaining one in number - property of 1st substance

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