

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHOLOGY ON TRANSUBSTANTIATION

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Loci Theologici, vol. 5, chap. 12.²

Transubstantiation destroys the nature of bread and wine, leaving only the accidents; it also destroys the nature of the accidents, which would exist without a subject, even though being in a subject is part of the very definition of an accident. Bellarmine responds that inherence in a subject does not belong to the essence of an accident, since Basil, in Homily 6 on the Hexaemeron, teaches that the primordial light existed for three days without a vehicle, and Aristotle, in Book 3 on the soul, text 9, writes that magnitude is one thing and the being of magnitude is another.

We respond: everything that subsists without a subject of inherence is a substance. However, no accident is a substance. Therefore, no accident subsists without a subject of inherence. This proposition is demonstrated by the immediate division of Archytas, accepted in the schools: *every being either exists in a subject as an accident, or does not exist in a subject as a substance*. Aristotle, in the *Categories*, chapters 1 and 3, as explained by Zabarella in his table on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, teaches that *it is proper to every accident to exist in a subject of inherence, while it is proper to substance not to exist in a subject of inherence*.

Likewise, Aristotle affirms that *the being of an accident is to be in something (accidentis esse sit inesse)*, as deduced from Book 5 of the *Metaphysics*, text 35, and Book 6 of the *Metaphysics*, chapter 17. Thomas Aquinas, in the [ST], Part 1, Question 28, Article 2, says: *The being of an accident is to be in a subject (accidentis esse est inesse subjecto)*³. Scaliger, in Exercise 10: *The being of an accident is inherence (accidentis esse est inhaerere)*. In Exercise 325, section 2, he discusses that *accidents have their essence composed of potency and act*; moreover, he adds that *both have as their efficient cause the substance* (this should be understood with respect to efficiency by emanation), and that *inherence is the peculiar difference that distinguishes an accident from a substance*. Suárez, in Disputation 14, section 4: “The accident, by its nature, is incapable of subsisting and, therefore, needs a subject to sustain it.” (*Accidens sua natura ineptum est ad subsistendum ac proinde indiget aliquo subjecto sustentante*)

Biermannus, in the *Metaphysics*, proves that inherence is of the essence of an accident: 1. The proper condition of substance is not to be in another; 2. through inherence, the accident is formally a being, especially because the accident is said to be a being insofar as it is a

¹ Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) was a prominent Lutheran scholastic theologian.

² The original Latin text can be consulted at:

<https://archive.org/details/LociTheologici5%20Tomus%20Quintus/page/n119/>

³ Aquinas also affirms similar things in ST, Ia, q. 90, a. 2, c: “The accident, on the other hand, does not have esse, but something is by it, and for this reason it is called a being” and in *De veritate*, q. 27, a. 1, ad. 8: “Accidents, because they do not subsist, do not [have] properly their own esse, but the subject is such or such according to them, whence, properly, they are said more in-being than beings.”

being of something, that is, a being of a subject or substance; 3. if it is said that the inexistence of the accident is distinct from the accident itself, one may ask whether this inherence belongs to the substance or to the accident. If the accident, by nature, has a distinct inexistence; and if it itself is in something, why would the former not rather be true? Therefore, in general, inherence is nothing other than the very essence of the accident.

Objections

1. Inherence designates a relation to another, since to inhere is to inhere in another; if this is said to be of the essence of the accident, then every accident would be relative.

We respond: one thing is the relative relation, another the absolute. The absolute is that which is directed to the subject and to dependence, that is, from the accident to the subject; the relative relation is directed to the opposite term.

Indeed, there is no dependence, but opposition of correlatives. The relation refers to the term, not to the subject; the relation generates the contrariety of correlatives. However, inherence is a relation of the subject and the accident that indicates rather dependence and conjunction than dissension and separation.

2. If inherence is essential to the accident, how is it explained that the relation and what follows from the order of the relation are called adherent accidents?

We respond: 1. Inherence is attributed to the real accident; adherence, to the intentional accident. For adherence is nothing more than a denomination that our mind establishes between two things, and therefore adherence is the application of a thing that exists by itself to another thing, and if it pertains to something real, it pertains to the substance. 2. Both relations and other relative accidents really inhere. Indeed, the relation is in its foundation, the action is really in the patient, but the thing with respect to which the relation arises is what properly adheres.

The philosopher and martyr Justin adds his opinion in his *Exposition of the Correct Faith*⁴, p. 303, Commelin edition: “The accident does not exist by itself, but subsists in certain preexisting substances.” (*τὸ συμβεβηκὸς οὐ κατ’ αὐτὸ πέρυκεν, ἀλλ’ ἐν τισι προϋποκειμένοις ὑπάρχει*) Zabarella, in *De materia prima* 2, chap. 17: “Matter is not only the root of all receptivity, but also the reason for all corporeity, which makes natural things able to be bodies.”

From this it follows:

1. That accidents cannot exist unless there is a subject in which they are received and sustained, since in themselves they have no matter.
2. That accidents cannot constitute substance.
3. That accidents do not affect other accidents, but the substance, as the Philosopher says in Book 4 of the *Metaphysics*, chapter 1.

Therefore, the accidents of bread and wine after consecration either:

⁴ It was later discovered that the authorship of this work actually belongs to Theodoret of Cyrus.

1. Constitute substance, which is contrary to the second point;
2. Do not inhere in any subject at all, since the matter of bread and wine has been eliminated, which is contrary to the first point;
3. Or they will be nothing at all.

Furthermore, taste, color, and smell must be considered present:

- Either in the body of Christ, into which the bread has been converted, which would imply a new *metamorphosis* by which the accidents of bread are received by the body of Christ;
- Or they must be admitted as present in the residual accidents after consecration, which is contrary to the third point.

If this is conceded, the distinction between substance and accident is eliminated, which is absurd and must be rejected. But by admitting that accidents subsist by themselves without a subject, the distinction between substance and accident is also suppressed. Therefore...

Scaliger, in Book 4 *De causis linguae Latinae*, says: “Substance must not be confused with accident. Now, substance differs from accident in that the former subsists by itself, while the latter, due to its dependence, cannot exist unless it is supported by a substance.”

We argue, moreover:

1. Everything that can be reduced to contradictory terms has an opposite reason (*opposita est ratio*). Now, substance and accident can be reduced to contradictory terms. Therefore, substance and accident have an opposite reason. Moreover: That whose formal reason is to subsist by itself will have, in its opposite, the formal reason of not subsisting by itself. Now, the formal reason of substance is to subsist by itself. Therefore, the formal reason of its opposite, which is the accident, is not to subsist by itself, which is nothing other than to be in something as a subject. The major premise is evident, as is confirmed by induction in all other species that are opposed to each other in a contradictory manner. The minor also shines by its own clarity.
2. If the formal reason of accidents (*ratio accidentium formalibus*) is not to inhere in another as in a subject, then it will be necessary to establish this by one of two reasons: either because some accidents can exist without a subject, or because “being in” (*in esse*) is only a property (*proprium πάθος*) that follows the nature of accidents. But neither option is valid. Therefore... The reason for the major premise is evident, since there seems to be no other obstacle, especially because it is admitted that most accidents necessarily require a subject. The minor is proved with respect to the second point, because if “being in” (*in esse*) is a proper property of accidents, it will also be proper for substances to subsist by themselves, according to the nature of their opposition. With respect to the first point: if some accidents can exist without a subject, we ask: do they subsist by themselves or not? There is no third option. If they subsist by themselves, they will be substances, which implies a contradiction; if not, our position is maintained.

We do not consider it worthwhile to dispute whether, by a divine miracle, inherence could be separated from accidents (*Thomas Aquinas, Part 3, q. 77*, argues that it is not possible for a miracle to separate the definition of a thing from its essence. Now, “being in a subject” enters into the definition of accidents, so it could not be separated from them). Rather, let them prove from the divine Scriptures the will of God to preserve the accidents of bread and wine without a subject, and all dispute about the nature of accidents and divine power will cease.

As for the primordial light, opinions about it among the ancients are diverse. The most probable is that of those who, from the property of the word, from the work of the fourth day, from the function of light, and from the nature of the luminous heaven, maintain that this primordial light was a quality of the luminous body, which was undoubtedly the heaven, already created, but still submerged in waters, from which the light was weaker, since it had not yet emerged from the watery clouds, nor had it gathered in one part of the heaven, which is now the sun, but was scattered throughout the hemisphere of the celestial mechanism. Dr. Gesner, in his commentary on Genesis chapter 1, writes: “Opinions about what this light was (writes Johann Ferus Pontificio on this passage) are varied. Some believe that this light was a luminous cloud from which the sun was later formed; others believe that this light was the sun, though not yet perfect, as it was made on the fourth day; others believe that this light did not proceed from any luminous body, but was created immediately by God. But what is the point of investigating this in such detail, if we cannot learn anything certain from it?”

GISBERTUS VOETIUS⁵

Select Disputations, De Potentia Dei, part. 3 & 4.⁶

Exception 2: That properties necessarily exist in their subjects, and that subjects do not exist without their properties, must be understood with respect to aptitudinal inherence and not actual inherence, that is, that it is appropriate for them to be in that subject, and that they are apt to be in it, and the subjects are apt to receive them. And this is the last refuge of the more recent, of Ruvius in *Physics*, Book 4, Question 5, on place; of John of St. Thomas in *Thomistic Philosophy, Logic*, Question 11, Article 1, page 178.

Response:

1. Here an excellent fallacy of begging the question is made: for the whole difficulty concerns this, namely, whether a true body can really be or exist without an actual coexisting quantity, and man or angel without intellect or will, the will without freedom, the creature without actual dependence on the creator, and God without omniscience or omnipotence, and quantity without divisibility.

⁵ Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676) was a Reformed scholastic theologian, delegate to the Synod of Dort.

⁶ The text was translated from an English version that can be found at:

<https://brandoncorleyschoo.wixsite.com/brandongorley/post/gisbertus-voetius-select-disputations-translated-by-onkuoh>

2. Then, admitting this exception and distinction, it would follow that no implication of contradiction can exist or be thought that cannot be eluded by this reason. For it will be easy to conceive subjects under the negation of any attribute both in the first and in the second mode *per se*⁷. Man will not really be rational, nor an animal, an animal will not really be sensible, nor an angel really endowed with intellect or will; nor will it really be free, nor God really infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, nor a triangle really have three angles, etc.; but it is enough to avoid the contradiction to say that they are apt for those subjects, and that the subjects can be such: All of which is extremely absurd.
3. Finally, we presuppose that there is no true essence, except an actual essence: therefore, since the question is about things that really exist, and their actual essences, it must also be understood that the question is about their really coexisting things, or about individual and actual accidents. Therefore, as in the question about the purely possible or about the objective potency of a thing and the form or difference of a thing and the essential mode, of a subject and the essential property (which coexist by a necessary and reciprocal connection), one should not pass to the actual existence or essence, and apply it to any of the reciprocals, leaving the possibility or futurity for the other reciprocal: so also here, in the question about two reciprocals really coexisting, one should not pass to the possible, or to what can be appropriate or to inherence, or to the aptitudinal.

Problem 2: Whether the inherence of an accident in a subject can be absent without implication, and thus, whether the formal nature or property, of inhering, of being in the substance, or of being in a subject, can be truly denied of it.

Response: The papists commonly affirm this, see the [ST], Third Part, Question 77, Articles 1 and 3, and their philosophers in logic and metaphysics where [they treat] of the accident. For according to them, the quantity of bread remains in the Eucharist without the substance of bread, and the remaining accidents of bread, namely, color, figure, smell, taste, etc., are subjectivized in the quantity. The reason is adduced *a posteriori* from faith (namely, with respect to transubstantiation), because supernaturally it is not incoherent for an accident to exist outside its substance, and to be a last subject with respect to other accidents; although according to the natures of things it is incoherent: as Suárez distinguishes, *Metaphysical Disputations* 11, section 4, paragraph 1. Indeed, in Disputation 37, section 2, he openly confesses that it cannot be demonstrated by natural reason. Therefore, he strives to resolve the objections, both there and in his commentary on the Third Part of Thomas, vol. 3, Question 77, Article 1. Which this very subtle man does so absurdly, so timidly, so coldly that from there you can deduce not obscurely the repugnance and fear of the inner conscience, mixed with Roman credulity, and the blind obedience of

⁷ The first mode of being said “*per se*” refers to when a predicate is a constitutive part of the essential definition of the subject, inseparably. For example, lines are constitutive “*per se*” of a triangle, and a man is inseparable from his definition as “rational animal.” Separating such predicates from the subject would generate an impossible contradiction, such as affirming that a man exists, but is not a rational animal. The second mode of being said “*per se*” applies when the predicate is an essential property of something, but the subject is a property or attribute of another thing. For example, “curved” and “straight” are properties that are predicated “*per se*” of the line, since the line is that on which these properties depend. See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, Book 1, Chapter 4.

implicit faith. We here only expose our objections, which we will defend in the dispute itself as solid reasons for our opinion.

Reason 1: The definition of an opposite cannot be attributed to the opposite, without contradiction: Therefore, neither can the definition of substance in the Aristotelian sense, hitherto accepted by all philosophers, especially the papists, be attributed to the accident. But this is done, when the accident (namely, quantity) is said to subsist per se and to underlie the accidents.

Reason 2: Through the absolute power of God, the definition cannot be absent or removed from the thing defined: therefore, neither can the definition of accident be removed from the accident. But this is done when some accident (suppose the quantity of bread) is denied to be a being that is in a subject; or, that it inheres in the substance; or, that it affects the substance.

Reason 3: A thing cannot be without actual entity: therefore, an accident cannot be without actual entity; but it has it from the subject. It is proved, from what the accident has individuation, from that it has actual entity: The accident (for example, quality and consequently much more quantity) has individuation from the subject. Therefore.... I do not add the proof of the minor: because the adversaries recognize its truth, as can be seen in Lobkowitz, Book 4 of Metaphysics, section 4, in the epilogue.

All the exceptions of Suárez, and of Thomas there and of the commentators, as well as of the Ferrariensis on the *Summa Contra Gentiles* 4, chapter 65, can be reduced to these.

Exception 1: Aptitudinal inherence is of the nature of the accident, but not actual inherence.

Response: It is as if someone said, the man who exists actually is not a rational animal in act, nor does animality or rationality actually belong to him, but only aptitudinally; and this is enough to avoid the contradiction.

Example of the Ferrariensis: It is confirmed, he says, because although aptitudinal inherence is of the essence of the accident, however, actual inherence is its proper passion, accompanying it naturally and necessarily if left to its own nature, and, nevertheless, by divine power the accident is without a subject in the sacrament of the altar.

Response: An excellent begging of the question. Moreover, let us concede that actual inherence is nothing more than a necessary and essential concomitant, or rather a proper property of the accident: even so, it cannot be denied or separated from it, as has already been demonstrated above.

Suárez clumsily amplifies the same example in the Third Part, Question 77, Article 1, first denying the definitions of substance and accident: *To the quiddity of substance it corresponds to have being not in a subject, and to the quiddity of accident it corresponds to have being in a subject. However, in this sacrament it is not conceded to the accidents that, by virtue of their essence, they are in a subject, but that they are by divine virtue that sustains them. And therefore they do not cease to be accidents, because the definition of accident, which is the aptitude for a subject, is not separated from them, which always remains in them, nor does the definition of substance correspond to them.*

Response: An accumulation of absurdities and stupidities.

1. What is in question is assumed: it is not proved.
2. There is a notable discord among themselves about whether inherence, if inherence is in any way even aptitudinally of the essence of the accident; as Suárez refers there. What a slippery and lamentable refuge, in which they themselves do not even find satisfaction!
3. From this it follows that the definition can, by divine virtue, be absent and denied with respect to the defined; or, at least, that the definition, the essence, and the quiddity of the genus or species do not actually correspond to the existing thing or the individual contained under that genus and species. It is as if someone said that the quiddity and definition of man consist in being rational, and that, by the absolute power of God, rationality could be lacking in a man who walks here, not because by his own essence he is a man without rationality and intellect, but because he is sustained by divine virtue. Therefore, it is not defined that man is man, since the definition of man, which consists in the aptitude for rationality and intellect, is not separated from him, which always remains in him, although not in the actual presence of rationality and intellect; and, nevertheless, the definition of brute does not correspond to him.

This is a parody of Suárez's words. One could institute a similar one about matter, about form, about the efficient cause, about the effect, about the dog, about the horse, about the earth, about water, about God the first being, and the creature or second and finite being, and about all other things, adapting to them the definitions of absurdities, and denying their own definitions of them in the singular or in some individual.

2. By divine virtue, an accident can be preserved without a substance, because it can supply the causality of the subject. Thus, [says] Thomas Aquinas in Part 3, Question 77, Article 1. The Ferrariensis amplifies this in the same passage: The divine power can produce the effects of any secondary cause, without the secondary causes themselves, which is true of efficient causes, but not of material and formal causes.

Response: Correctly, God cannot supply the virtue of the corporeal substance, which is the subject and material cause, as well as formal, of its own accidents.

To this difficulty Suárez responds in the cited place: *That God cannot supply material or formal causality, which consists in the intrinsic composition of subject and form (for this includes both imperfection and repugnance), but that He can supply a certain causality that consists in an extrinsic influx or adhesion of one thing to another, etc.* The last type of causality is the mutual causality that matter and form have between themselves: for neither composes the other, and each depends in some way on the company of the other, which God can supply through His active and creative power.

Response: Mere absurdities that refute themselves. Therefore, there will be a causality of matter and form, one, namely, intrinsic that looks to the compound, and another that looks to the internal causes between themselves; the first will be called intrinsic composition, the other only extrinsic adhesion. But, how will the intrinsic causes not become extrinsic, and the essences and formal reasons of these not be confused, nor mutually attributed, and all this without contradiction? One might as well say that there is a similarity without a nose, a

lameness without progressive movement of animals, a privation and any evil, whether sad or ugly, without a good subject in which it is founded.

But what effective dependence of God can be imagined here, that supplies the defect of the subject and the subjective dependence of that subject? By the same reasoning, imagine a relative, for example, the filiation of Alexander, for example, the filiation of Alexander, without the correlate of the paternity of Philip, an above without a below, a husband without a wife, a master without a servant, etc., so that God, that is, in all these cases of a related or correlative subject, or of the formal relation or correlation, supplies the defect.

He also adds to the accumulation of absurdities, the vision or the secondary power of seeing without an eye and without organs, the tactile qualities without a body, the corporeal or material qualities without a body or matter, and why not the divine properties (for example, infinity, omnipotence) without God or without the divine essence? Because, of course, God can supply in them the causality of the subject Moreover, one could affirm with the same right, along with Ariaga, that there can be a living and intellectual being that is not volitional. This, however, is rejected by Thomas in the First Part, Question 19, Article 1, and with him Vásquez, Suárez, Molina, Hurtado Mendoza, etc.

Moreover, I do not see why, with equal reason, it should not be affirmed that a modal entity or an essential modification can exist without an absolute entity; if, for example, God supplies the defect of the absolute entity to which the modal entity adheres. This is denied by Baranzano in *Diglad. 2, Theor. 12*. Finally, I say the same about the relation without its proper foundation, for example, Hermachus, son of Titius, without the active generation of Titius and the passive generation of Hermachus. Indeed, also about the whole and part, about any subject and adjunct, about the principle and what proceeds from a principle, about the cause and the caused: among which, although a bond and mutual respect is necessary, one can exist without the other without implication, the first cause being the one that supplies everywhere the reason of the part or the coordinated whole, or of the principle or what proceeds from a principle, or the caused, or the subject or adjunct.

Especially it must also be said that indivisibles can exist by themselves and separately without and outside of a continuum: which, however, the more recent authors commonly deny, and with them Ruvius in *Physics 6*, in the treatise on the composition of the continuum, whatever Suárez says against in *Disputation 40, Section 5, Paragraph 46*. Indeed, with equal reason it must be said that a formal effect can be preserved without a formal cause, and a union without the extremes of the union; and a line without the indivisibles that continue it, and in turn the collection of all the points in a line without the line: all of which, however, Suárez demonstrates to be implied in *Disputation 40, Section 5, Paragraphs 45, 46, 47*. How will the adversaries show that all these things are extremely absurd and implicating, if indeed the exception of Suárez raised above must be admitted?

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Institutionum metaphysicarum, lib. 2, cap. 17.⁹

XVII. The pontiffs recognize that, although an accident cannot exist without a subject, which is evident for various reasons, it can exist separately and, indeed, really exist in the Eucharist, thanks to the virtue of God omnipotent, who takes the place of the eliminated substance and supplies the necessary causality to conserve the accident through an extraordinary concurrence. But this evasion is too narrow: for those things that imply contradiction cannot be done by God; however, that the accident exists separately implies contradiction. For since the being of the accident is to be in something, it will not be an accident that is not in a substance: therefore, the accident that exists separately will be a non-accident; indeed, it will not only be a non-accident, but a substance: for that which is not in the subject subsists by itself, and what subsists by itself is a substance. If they say that the accidents are not therefore substances, because, although they are not in the subject, they can be in the subject, they do not resolve the argument: for all define substance as the Being that subsists by itself, and they do not ask whether that which subsists by itself can be in the subject or not, but they presuppose that what subsists by itself cannot be in the subject, and that is correct: for to subsist by itself and to be in the subject are opposites between themselves, and one of them includes the negation of the other; for to subsist by itself means not to be in the subject, and to be in the subject means not to subsist by itself: moreover, if the accident is not an accident because it is in the subject, but because it can be in the subject, neither will the substance be a substance because it subsists by itself, but because it can subsist by itself; however, according to them, every accident can subsist by itself, at least by divine virtue, and yet in such a way that it remains an accident; therefore, every accident can be a substance by divine virtue, and yet be an accident, which is more absurd.

XVIII. What they say about the extraordinary concurrence of God that supplies the causality of the deficient substance, to conserve the separated accident, is absurd. For I ask whether God, to conserve the separated accident, employs the causality of matter, which is exercised by every created substance to conserve the accidents that are naturally infused in it, or whether He employs the causality of production. The first cannot be said, because the causality of matter or of the subject implies an imperfection unworthy of God, for it would follow that God is the subject of the accidents, if He Himself conserves the separated accidents through material causality; nor can the second be said, because as the causalities are opposed between themselves, one cannot be the other.

XIX. From what has been said it follows that the same accident cannot migrate from one subject to another: for that which depends on a subject in such a way that its being is to be in that subject, cannot move except in and with the subject, and therefore with the movement of the subject; the accident cannot, therefore, carry its subject with it, nor migrate to another subject; they sometimes seem to migrate, like odors, and other similar cases, but in reality they do not carry the subject with them, but move with it and are transported to another place; but as the subject is so subtle that the sense and sight can be

⁸ Franco Burgersdijk (1590-1635) was a Dutch logician of the Aristotelian tradition.

⁹ The original Latin text can be consulted at: <https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=WyRjE81epGsC>

deceived, it only seems that the accident is transferred to another place or to another subject.

XX. The accident cannot be the subject of the accident. For, since every accident is in a subject, if an accident were the subject of another accident, the subject would be in the subject, which is absurd. It is often said that an accident is added to another accident, thus heat is increased in humidity with water, however, the first accident is not the subject of another, but the substance is the subject of both. Thus, when water is heated, the heat is not in the humidity as in its subject, but in the humid water: this is so true that it might be thought that accidents cannot even be in substantial forms as subjects, but all are in the formed matter.

XXI. Just as accidents behave with respect to the reason of existing, so they behave with respect to the reason of acting: therefore, they do not act by themselves, but all act as instruments, and by virtue of the substances in which they are; indeed, if I speak properly, accidents do not act, but substances clothed with accidents; for accidents modify and determine substances to act, and serve them while they act. And this is true not only when substances act, but also when accidents are produced: for just as the accident that occurs depends on some substance with respect to its occurrence, so it is necessary that the accident that acts depends on some substance with respect to the action itself; the reason is the same both in what occurs and in what acts. From this I conclude that no accident acts anything by virtue of a substance in which it is not, and much less of one that is not in the nature of things.

VI.¹⁰ The distinction that corresponds to things by their own nature is given without the need for the intervention of the intellect. This distinction is recognized through separation, for everything that can be separated is distinguished according to its own nature. It is said that things are separated when they exist in different places or times, or reside in different subjects within reality; however, the same is not said of those whose existence does not depend on that of another, since this principle is also found in those cases that are distinguished by reason. For example, Alexander and the son of Philip are not distinguished by their own nature, although Alexander ceased to be the son of Philip, without ceasing to be Alexander. I do not think, however, that this distinction by nature can be confused with the distinction by reason, although many have affirmed it carelessly, since not all things that are distinguished by nature can be separated, nor always those that cannot be separated are distinguished by nature.

DANIEL FEATLEY¹¹

Transubstantiation exploded, par. 10.¹²

5. Everyone who professes the doctrine of transubstantiation holds that accidents can subsist without their subjects. Transubstantiation, as defined by the Church, constitutes a change or transformation of the whole substance of bread into the whole substance of the

¹⁰ Book 1, Chapter 15.

<https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=WyRjE81epGsC&hl=es&pg=PA90#v=onepage&q&f=false>

¹¹ Daniel Featley (1582-1645) was an English Puritan, theologian of Westminster.

¹² The original text can be consulted at: <https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=RndjAAAAcAAJ>

body of Christ, and of the whole substance of wine into the substance of His blood, while the accidents of bread and wine persist —namely, the whiteness, thickness, roundness, and taste of bread, as well as the thinness, moisture, color, and taste of wine, along with the quantity of both.

The cardinal question then arises: having disappeared the original subject, where do these accidents reside? Perhaps in the air? Or perhaps in the body of Christ? Neither of these propositions is sustainable, for every accidental form necessarily designates the subject in which it exists, according to the logical axiom: *Quicquid inest in dicitur de* (“that which is in a thing is predicated of it”). However, neither the body of Christ nor the air are characterized by these accidents; neither possesses the color, quantity, figure, or taste of bread or wine. Neither the air nor the body of Christ are white or circular like a host. Therefore, according to this doctrine, these accidents subsist without any subject.

St. Augustine¹³, however, rejected the possibility that accidents could subsist without their subjects. He defines the accident as *that which exists in a subject, not as a part of it, and which can never exist without that subject*. He categorically affirms that, *if the quantity or volume of a body is completely removed, its qualities cannot persist*¹⁴. And in his *Soliloquies*¹⁵, he censures such a proposition as absurd and monstrous. “Who,” he asks, “could conceive that that which exists in a subject remains when the subject itself has been suppressed?”

What the defenders of Transubstantiation consider miraculous, St. Augustine repudiates as aberration. Indeed, it is prodigious to conceive quantity without magnitude, the whiteness of the sacrament without a white object, thickness without anything thick, redness without a red substance, moisture without a moist element. Such a conception transcends even the most fantastic transformations narrated in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*: to turn accidents into substance and substance into accidents, to speak of mere accidents that are fragmented, ingested, digested, and excreted; to describe accidents that rot, that generate mold, that engender life; accidents that freeze and coagulate.

Even more extraordinary is to conceive accidents that not only subsist by themselves, but also sustain substance, as when filth adheres to the Sacrament after falling to the ground, or when poison has been introduced into it, as in the cases of Victor III and Henry IV of Luxembourg.

¹³ In *Categories*, 10: A subject that is in another cannot exist as a part of it, nor can it exist without that in which it is, nor after it. That is, a subject cannot exist without the subject to which it belongs. (*In subjecto quod in altero est, non ut pars quaedam, neque sine eo in quo est potest unquam esse et post. Id est, in subjecto quod sine subjecto esse non potest*)

¹⁴ Literally in Latin: *Si moles ipsa corporis quacumque vel quantula cum, fit penitus auferenda, qualitates ejus non erunt, ubi finitae.*

¹⁵ *Soliloquies*, Book 2, Chapter XIII, 23: It is monstrous and absolutely alien to the truth that that which would not be, unless it were in the subject, could be even when the subject itself no longer exists. (*Monstruosum enim et a veritate alienissimum est ut illud quod non esset nisi in ipso esset, etiam cum ipsum non fuerit, possit esse*)

It is not enough here to invoke the miracle, as Homer resorts to the cloud when he finds himself in a narrative impasse. St. Augustine explicitly denies¹⁶ the miraculous character of the Sacraments. These, known and administered by men, deserve veneration as sacred elements, but not admiration as miraculous facts. They cannot arouse the astonishment proper to miracles. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, however, requires more miracles than the letters contained in the words of consecration, from which it is inferred, inexorably, that St. Augustine could not be a partisan of such a doctrine.

MARC DUNCAN¹⁷

Institutionis logicae, lib. 1, cap. 5.¹⁸

I. Substance is that which exists by itself, that is, that which is not in another thing as in a subject.

On the other hand, that which is in a subject is that which exists in something without being a part of it and which cannot exist separately from that something. Substance can also be defined as that which underlies other things.

In Greek, substance is called *οὐσία*, a term that, if we attend to its etymology, means “essence,” that is, “that which is.” Although each genus of accident has its own essence, the name of essence, which is a general term, has been claimed by substance as something proper, because it is the being in its primary and absolute sense, as we said in the previous chapter.

To say that something exists by itself (*per se existit*) or that it is a being by itself (*per se existens*) should not be understood here in the sense that it excludes the essential and necessary dependence of a thing on its productive and conserving cause. If we understood it thus, only God could be said to exist by Himself, for only He does not depend on any cause, while everything else depends on Him as an efficient, productive, and conserving cause, as well as an exemplary model and final end.

Nor is it taken in the sense of an absolutely isolated existence, as if every substance could exist separated from any other thing. If so, only complete substance and that which is not part of another thing would be truly substances. Rather, to say that something exists by itself is opposed to saying that it exists “in a subject” (*τῷ εἶναι ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ*), that is, that it is found in another.

It is said that something is in another when it is found in a complete and perfect individual. Accidents, for example, differ from the essential forms of natural bodies because the former are received in a complete, perfect, and total being, without which they cannot exist; while the latter exist in an incomplete being, that is, in formless matter, without which they cannot subsist, as explained in *De Ortu et Interitu*, Book I, Chapter 4.

¹⁶ *On the Trinity*, Book 3, Chapter 10: As holy things, the Sacraments must be revered, they must not be admired as miraculous things (*honorem tamquam religiosa possunt habere, stuporem tamquam mira non possunt*)

¹⁷ Marc Duncan (1581-1640) was a professor of philosophy at the Academy of Saumur.

¹⁸ The original Latin text can be consulted at:

<https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=9k82JZTwoewC&hl=es&pg=PA42#v=onepage&q&f=false>

For example, the soul of a dog or any other soul, except the human, is found in a body and cannot exist separated from it. However, it is not an accident, since the body to which the soul is united is an incomplete being.

Not as part of another. Something can be in another in many ways, as Aristotle explains in *Physics*, Book IV, Chapter 3. Therefore, it is not in vain that this condition has been added, along with the following. Moreover, this condition must be understood reciprocally: just as that which is in something as a part is not an accident of that something, so the whole is in its parts taken together, but it is not an accident of them.

And it cannot exist separated from it. I do not say that that which is in a subject cannot be separated from it, for there are many separable accidents; what I say is that that which is in a subject cannot exist apart from it. A separable accident, at the very moment it is separated, disappears and ceases to exist in reality.

From this two principles are derived:

1. An accident cannot exist without a subject.
2. An accident cannot be transferred from one subject to another.

Consult Aristotle, not only in *Categories*, Chapter 2, from which we take this definition and the expression *εἰναι καθ’ αὐτὸ* (“to be by itself”), but also in *Physics*, Book I, Chapter 3; *De Ortu et Interitu*, Book VII, Chapter 4; and *Metaphysics*, Books IV and VII, Chapter 1.

That which underlies others. The first definition of substance is broader than this last, since every substance exists by itself, but only created and finite substance underlies accidents. God, on the other hand, is not the subject of any accident. However, this last definition is more familiar to us, since all our knowledge comes from the senses, which perceive the accidents inherent in corporeal substances.

JOHANN HEINRICH ALSTED¹⁹

De Manducatione, cap. 8.²⁰

XXII. Gardiner’s argument: *The inherence of the accident is distinguished into two types: aptitudinal and actual. The first refers to the very essence of the accident, and is inseparable from it, while the second refers to a relation not necessarily inseparable.* But this reasoning falls into a begging of the question, since substance is defined as the being that subsists by itself, and accident as the being that inheres in substance.

Therefore, if the accident is in act, it inheres in act; and if it is in potency, it possesses the aptitude to inhere. It follows that it is contradictory to affirm that the accidents of bread in the Eucharist conserve a merely aptitudinal inherence. Indeed, those accidents are in act, therefore they inhere in act.

¹⁹ Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588-1638) was a prominent Reformed philosopher and theologian.

²⁰ The original Latin text can be consulted at:

<https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=KA5A0Ezz4h4C&hl=es&pg=PA71#v=onepage&q&f=false>

It is not valid to resort to the subterfuge of saying that, just as God supplies the deficiency of every cause, He also supplies the lack of a subject. For God only supplies the deficiency of the efficient cause and of matter, but not of the end or of the form; and He will supply only in the realm of the efficient cause, not in that of matter or of an essential part. This is because it is impossible for the first cause to become matter or an essential part of something.

Likewise, it does not correspond to the nature of God to become the subject of an accident, especially of a corporeal accident. Some attempt to make an exception, saying that the accidents are in God not as in a subject, but as in a conserving cause. But even under this consideration, the accidents would cease to be accidents, since they would lack a subject to which they were inherent.

CLEMENS TIMPLER²¹

Metaphysicae Systema, lib. 3, cap. 3.²²

IX. Can any accident subsist without a subject of inherence?

This question is resolved with a universal negative thesis, which is true for the following reasons:

1. First reason: Everything that subsists without a subject of inherence is a substance. But no accident is a substance. Therefore, no accident can subsist without a subject of inherence.

This proposition is proved, first, from the immediate division of beings proposed by Archytas of Tarentum in his book *Πεί ἡ καθολικῶς λόγων δέκα* (On the Ten Universal Discourses), where he affirms: “Every being either exists in a subject, that is, inheres as an accident, or does not exist in a subject, as substance.” Second, it is proved from the definition of substance that Archytas offers in the same place: “Substance is ὄντως ἀυθύπαρκτον (truly subsistent by itself), that is, a being that exists by itself, or what is the same, that subsists without a subject of inherence.”

2. Second reason: The essential property of substance is to subsist by itself, that is, without the need for a subject of inherence. On the other hand, the essential property of accident is to subsist in a subject of inherence. Therefore, no accident can exist without a subject of inherence.

The reason for this proposition is that no being can exist without its essential properties, as will be demonstrated later.

3. Third reason: The testimony of Aristotle supports this thesis. In his book *Categories*, chapters 1 and 3, as explained by Zabarella in his *Tables on Porphyry's Isagoge*, Aristotle teaches that it is proper to every accident to exist in a subject of inherence, just as it is proper to substance not to exist in a subject of inherence.

²¹ Clemens Timpler (1563-1624) was a German metaphysician of the second scholasticism.

²² The original Latin text can be consulted at:

https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_QCB8la4TAGUC/page/n362/

4. Fourth reason: The common definition of accident, insofar as it is opposed to substance, affirms that it is a being that subsists in a subject of inherence. For example, Scaliger, in *De subtilitatibus*, ex. 10, says: “The essence of accident is inherence.” To this is added Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, Question 28, Article 2, where he affirms: “The being of accident is inherence in a subject.”
5. Conclusion: If any accident could subsist without a subject of inherence, it would follow that an accident could be a substance, and that it could be maintained without its essential property. But this is absurd. Therefore, the negative thesis is true.

Objections of the Scholastics and Responses:

The Scholastics, to defend the dogma of the Church’s transubstantiation, according to which the accidents of bread and wine remain after consecration without the substance in which they previously subsisted as a subject of inherence, present four main objections against our universal negative thesis:

1. First objection: The inherence of the accident is twofold: one potential and the other actual. The first is essential for the accident, but the second is not.

Response: This distinction between potential and actual inherence is a mere invention of the human intellect and has no foundation in reality. Inherence always denotes an act of inherence, not a mere potency. Our thesis refers to the act of inherence, not to the potency, since the essential property of the accident is inherence in a subject, not the mere possibility of inherence.

2. Second objection: Although naturally it is not possible for an accident to subsist without a subject of inherence, the supernatural power of God can do it.

Response: God, in His omnipotence, can do everything that does not imply contradiction. But it is manifestly contradictory for a being to be an accident and, at the same time, to subsist without a subject of inherence, as has been demonstrated above. Therefore, this case cannot be covered by the veil of divine omnipotence.

3. Third objection: God can supply the role of the subject and sustain the accidents of bread and wine in the Eucharist without their substance.

Response: This contradicts the nature and perfection of God, who cannot act as a subject of inherence for accidents. Therefore, this affirmation cannot be sustained without incurring blasphemy.

4. Fourth objection: The mathematician abstracts quantity from every subject of inherence.

Response: The mathematician considers quantity not as a property inherent to a body, but as a subject from which other properties can be demonstrated. But this does not imply that quantity is separated from every subject of inherence. Therefore, this example is not relevant to the case in question.

I. Is every accident a true and proper being, and can it be called a creature of God?²³

In the past, some philosophers, among whom are Parmenides and Melissus, recognized only one kind of being, namely, substance, and considered that every accident should be excluded from the number of beings. However, this opinion contradicts the celebrated division of being into substance and accident, which Aristotle and all the most judicious philosophers have approved until now as conforming to the nature of things. Therefore, it is necessary to know that there are two types of accidents: one positive and the other negative. The positive accident can be called a true and proper being, since it possesses a positive essence and existence. On the other hand, the negative accident cannot be called a true and proper being, since it lacks a positive essence and existence, as is the case with privation.

From this the answer to the second part of the problem is also easily deduced, that is, whether the accident can be called a creature of God. In the case of the positive accident, the affirmation is true; in the case of the negative, it is false. Although some philosophers prefer to call the positive accident “concreature” instead of “creature” of God, arguing that the term “creature” is proper only to substance and not to accident, which is co-created with substance, this distinction lacks solidity. Rather, it seems to hide more falsity than truth, both because it establishes an intermediate being between the creator and the creature, and because it supposes that every accident is co-created with substance, when experience shows that many accidents are adventitious or added.

II. What is the accident considered in general, insofar as it is opposed to substance?

The term “accident” has great homonymy, but it can conveniently be reduced to two general meanings, depending on whether it is considered absolutely or respectively. In the first sense, it is taken as a kind of incomplete being, distinct from substance. In the second sense, it is understood as an adjunct, that is, everything that is added to something beyond its essence, whether necessarily or contingently, intrinsically or extrinsically. In this sense, even a substance can be called an accident of another substance, as hair is an accident of the head, the beard of the chin, plants of the earth, or leaves of the tree.

However, in this context, the accident is considered only in the first sense, not in the second, and is defined as an incomplete being that exists in another as in a subject of inherence. In this definition, “incomplete being” is used as the proximate genus, to exclude the complete being, and “existence in another as in a subject of inherence” is added as the specific difference, which distinguishes the accident from substance. Just as substance subsists by itself, that is, it does not need a subject of inherence for its existence, the accident does not exist by itself, but in another, which serves as its subject of inherence.

Hence the philosopher Goclenius, partly in the categories of substance and partly in Disputation 5 of the Metaphysics, calls substance a being “self-subsistent” (σὐθυπόστατον), that is, that subsists by itself, and the accident a being “heterosubsistent” (έτερουπόστατον), that is, that subsists in another. However, some modern authors define the accident as a being that depends on substance both in its being and in its existence, but this definition is not free from doubts. First, the substance in which the accident inheres does not constitute the essence of the accident, but only serves as the support of its existence. Second, not only

²³ Book 5, Chapter 1. https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_QCB8la4TAGUC/page/488/

is substance the subject of accidents, since an accident can also inhere in another accident as in a subject, as was demonstrated earlier in Book 3, Chapter 3, Paragraph 15.

III. Does every accident exist actually in a subject of inherence, and in what manner?

Although the Scholastic doctors, to defend the dogma of the Church's transubstantiation, unanimously affirmed that it is possible for an accident to exist without a subject of inherence, that is, that an accident can be conserved by divine power even if it does not exist or inhere in any subject, this opinion is false and absurd, and has been refuted by us in Book 3, Chapter 3, Problem 9. Therefore, the true thesis is the following: every accident exists actually in a subject of inherence.

Just as the essential property of substance is to subsist by itself, that is, without the need for a subject of inherence, the essential property of the accident is to exist actually in a subject of inherence. Even Francisco Suárez, albeit reluctantly, recognizes this in his Disputation 14, Section 4, when he affirms that the accident, by its nature, is incapable of subsisting by itself and, therefore, needs a subject to sustain it.

But an additional question arises: how does the accident exist in the subject of inherence, necessarily or contingently? To this I respond that the subject of the accident can be considered in two ways: indeterminately or determinately.

- If it is considered indeterminately, every accident exists necessarily in some subject, because without it it could not exist even for a moment.
- If it is considered determinately, not every accident exists necessarily in its subject, but some do so necessarily and others contingently.

Hence some accidents are called necessary and inseparable, while others are called contingent and separable.

FRANCIS TURRETIN²⁴

Institutes, 19.27.14

VII. Reason must be heard here, since transubstantiation conflicts with it in many ways. Sound reason teaches that a single body occupies a single place and cannot be at the same time in more than one place, because it would be one and not one, separated from itself and exposed to diverse and contrary movements, which all recognize as absurd (*asystaton*). It teaches that it belongs to the nature of the body to have parts outside parts, which differ among themselves in situation and are impenetrable. A body cannot be conceived that does not have quantity and extension, since quantity and extension do not differ really from material substance, but are identified with it. It teaches that accidents cannot exist without a subject, because, just as it is proper to substance to subsist by itself, so the formal reason of an accident is to be in another thing or to inhere in it. And so great is their communion and dependence on substance that they cannot exist even for a moment without it, nor can bodies be without their own accidents and essential properties. Finally, it teaches that a

²⁴ Francis Turretin (1623-1687) was an Italian theologian, he has been called "the best expositor of the doctrine of the Reformed Church."

conversion of one thing into another cannot be realized except with the change of substance; its accidents also change (the subject of the change remaining unaltered), unless the thing into which the other is converted is produced anew. But here all the opposites occur. They maintain that in the Eucharist the body of Christ is at the same time in many very remote places (such as heaven and earth) while the intermediate spaces remain unoccupied; that it is in the glorious heaven, on earth exposed to a thousand accidents; in heaven it occupies a certain place, while in the host no place, but it is in a point in the manner of spirits; that it moves in one place and is at rest in another; in one it is elevated, in another descended; that a body is granted that is not extended, that lacks dimensions, that does not have parts outside parts, but whose parts mutually penetrate in a point; that there is length, width, and thickness, without long, wide, and thick matter, as if there could be matter that is not extended, since it consists in extension; that there is a change without change (namely, the conversion of a thing, which ceases to be and is annihilated, into another that already preexisted and that cannot be produced anew). They affirm that the accidents of bread and wine exist under the subject in which they inhere and, by a contrary prodigy, the body of Christ exists without its accidents and essential properties; that the accidents are without substance (that is, they are no longer accidents), but are changed into substance because they subsist by themselves, produce the same effects as substance, and are exposed to the same eventualities; they are heavy and solid, subject to corruption and putrefaction, can generate worms by themselves and turn into ashes; they nourish the body itself as bread and become our substance. All these and many other monstrosities of the same kind (which we refrain from enumerating) are not so much prodigies of nature as absolutely absurd and inconsistent (*asystata*) creations of human imagination, which discredit the Christian religion before infidels. They are the monstrous corollaries of the dogma of transubstantiation, which right reason not only does not accept, but constantly rejects.

VIII. It is not admissible here to respond: (1) “Reason must not be heard in matters of faith, but must be captive.” For, although we do not deny that the mysteries of faith are above reason, neither do we think that they are contrary to it; so that, although their truth cannot be proved by reason, their credibility can be sufficiently established by faith. Moreover, there are certain mysteries that are the object of faith alone, depending exclusively on revelation; others that have various elements annexed to them, which depend on the testimony of the senses and of reason and which can be the object of them, such as the sacraments, which, since they consist of two parts (the sign, which is visible, and the thing signified, which is invisible), can and must be subjected to the senses and to reason with respect to the first, although only faith can judge concerning the second. In the first class, we grant that only faith must be heard and reason made captive, but not equally in the second class. Third, reason can be blind and corrupt, repugnant to revelation and rising against it; or it can be sound and well-constituted, consenting with it and subordinate to it. The first must be completely denied; but it is not only lawful to hear the second, but also just, because grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it; nor does faith exclude, but presupposes reason. Finally, some mysteries of faith are true and genuine, clearly revealed in the Scriptures; others are false and spurious, not flows and rays of divine revelation, but the fruit of human ignorance and blindness. Although reason is not sufficient to demonstrate the latter, it is sufficient to strip them of their deceit and falsity. We hold that the artifice of transubstantiation is one of these.

IX. (2) “The contradictions that are opposed are not true or real, but only apparent, because they are not attributed to the subject in the same aspect, but in a different one.” For example, the same body must be considered in two aspects: as natural and as sacramental. It is argued that the same body can be in different places, not with respect to its being as an entity, but locally, because it is found in more than one place. However, the unity of a thing must not be sought in the place. But all that is presented as an excuse cannot eliminate the truth of the contradiction. Different aspects only have a place when two things are compared with each other or the same thing according to the various relations (*scheseis*) that it can assume. However, here we speak of the one body of Christ, which can only assume one relation (*chesin*) in this context. What is said of natural being and sacramental being could be admitted if, by “sacramental being,” the symbolic and significative being of bread (insofar as it is the sacrament of the body of Christ) is understood, but not with respect to its natural body (which is what we are dealing with here). As each first and indivisible substance has only one proper substance, two opposite modes of existence cannot be attributed to the body of Christ, unless it is held that said body is double. What is added about local and not entitative division is irrelevant. Although the unity of a thing does not depend on place as a cause, it does so as a necessary condition of existence, and local division necessarily implies entitative division, because what is circumscribed to a place is in that place in such a way that it cannot be in any other. Therefore, if the body of Christ is in heaven and on earth, it must be separated from itself due to the distant places it occupies.

X. If it is argued that “this only implies a contradiction when it is said that a thing is and is not, but to say that the same body is in this place and at the same time in another does not imply that the body is and is not, because it is not an affirmation and a negation, but a double affirmation,” the response is simple: (a) This is not a sufficient enumeration. A contradiction does not only concern the essence of the subject, but also its accidents. For example, it is a contradiction to say that a man is at the same time white and not white, just as it is to say that he is and is not. (b) Although in the referred proposition there seems to be a simple affirmation, in reality it implicitly implies an affirmation along with a negation. That a body is in a place means that it is within the limits of that place. “A limit, however, is that beyond which no part of the thing can be received,” as Aristotle says (*Metaphysics* 5.17). Therefore, when it is said that the same body is at the same time in another place, it is determined that it is outside this place and, consequently, it is denied that it is within the limits of that place.

XI. (3) “Accidents are related to the subject in the same way as subsistence is to substance. Therefore, just as substance could have been separated from the human nature of Christ, there is nothing to prevent accidents from being deprived of their inherence in the subject and existing by themselves.” But here two types of subsistence are confused: one of independence, by which substance is constituted in its substantial being; and another of incommunicability, by which substance is situated in its being as subsistence. The first can be separated from substance, as happened in the human nature of Christ, which had to be devoid of that subsistence to be able to be hypostatically united with the Word; but the second can never be separated, because, otherwise, it would become an accident. Now, it is said that accidents are related to the subject in the same way as the subsistence of independence is to substance, but not as the subsistence of incommunicability.

XII. (4) Some more recent writers (who recognize the inseparability of accidents from the subject and the real identity of quantity and extension with matter) have attempted another way of escape. They affirm that it is enough for the form (surface) of bread and wine to remain, since the necessary contact for the action of one body on another can only occur on the surface, and therefore, it is this that affects our senses. However, they do not succeed in resolving the problem more successfully. If only the form (surface) remains, how could Christ and Paul repeatedly refer to bread and the fruit of the vine as such? Moreover, although bodies cannot act on other bodies or affect our senses without contact (which occurs on the surface), who will affirm that the surface alone can achieve this without the body? Finally, instead of denying corporeal substance based on the permanence of the surface, the opposite happens: from the permanence of the surface the existence of the body necessarily follows. The form (surface) cannot be conceived without extension, nor extension without matter, since they are really identified. Moreover, this applies not only to the external form of the entire host, but also to the internal form of each of its particles.

XIII. (5) They resorted to omnipotence as a sacred anchor to justify their absurdities and contradictions. They say: "The affirmations about the essence of the body and its properties are true in the natural order, but here we are dealing with what God does by His omnipotence beyond the natural order." However, this argument does not resolve the difficulty: (a) We are not speaking here of what God can do, but of what He desires to do. Faith is not governed by the power of God, but by His will. Although everything is possible for God, He does not do everything He can, but only what He desires. Therefore, the omnipotence of God must not be argued without His will or against it. First we must inquire about His will, which directs His omnipotence, concerning what must be done. (b) Omnipotence extends to everything possible, but not to the impossible, such as that which implies a contradiction. To say that God can do a contradiction is as absurd as saying that He can lie or sin. These are not signs of power, but of defect, and God not only cannot do them, but He cannot even desire to do them, since they are contrary to His wisdom, holiness, and truth, and repugnant to the laws that He Himself established in nature. The impossibility does not reside in God, but in what cannot be done. Indeed, power only applies to what can be done, and a contradiction, being an absolute "nothing," does not enter into divine power. Thus, it is useless to distinguish between the natural order and what is beyond it. Although we admit that God can act beyond the natural order, we deny that His omnipotence reaches what is contrary to nature and the order that He Himself established, since He cannot change the essence of things or destroy the order that He created.

XIV. What God can do with secondary causes, He can also do without them in the same kind of cause (whether efficient or final), because as the primary agent and final end, He can supply any defect without this implying imperfection. However, the same does not happen with material and formal causes, which God cannot supply, since He cannot be part of a body, nor be informed by another, nor inform. Nor can He play the role of a subject, which is the one that receives in itself an essential or accidental form, because God is absolutely simple and perfect. Therefore, although God can create accidents along with their subjects, it does not follow that He can produce the former without the latter. Not for lack of power, but for the incompossibilitate (*incompossibilitate*) of the thing. God can do everything that the mind can conceive, because the mind does not exceed divine power. But

the mind cannot conceive an accident that exists really without its subject. It can mentally abstract an accident without thinking of its subject, but it cannot conceive an accident that exists really without its subject, because, being the thing impossible, it is simply nothing (which, consequently, cannot be conceived).

DIETRICH VON FREIBERG²⁵

*De Accidentibus*²⁶

21. Accidents can in no way exist without a subject, whether they belong to the first or the second mode of being by themselves

1. With respect to the proposed investigation of whether an accident can, by any virtue that acts or conserves, exist without a subject, it must first be considered that those things that exist by themselves according to the first and second modes of being, enumerated by the Philosopher in the *Book of the Second Analytics*, absolutely and in all cases, it is impossible that they do not belong to that to which they belong by themselves. This impossibility is founded and has its root in the first impossibility, which is implied in the first principle of all nature, namely, that it is impossible for something to be and not be at the same time, and in the first principle of art, which affirms that of any thing, an affirmation or a negation is true, but never both simultaneously.
2. However, something impossible would occur if it were admitted that any of the things that exist by themselves, whether according to the first or the second mode of being, did not belong to that to which it belongs by itself. With respect to the first mode of being by itself, if it were admitted that a man exists and it were denied that he is a rational animal, or his entire definition were eliminated —that is, “rational animal”—, it would necessarily follow that the man is and is not at the same time. For the man, in essence, is nothing other than a rational animal; therefore, if one of these things is granted as existing and the other is eliminated, it follows that the same thing exists and does not exist, which implies a contradiction, which is the first impossible of all and in which all impossibles are reduced. Therefore, by no virtue, whether natural or supernatural, can these things not belong to that to which they belong by themselves.
3. This, moreover, applies universally to the definition and to the defined, since they cannot be separated from each other, given that in both one and the same thing is implied in essence. Therefore, the same applies to those things that belong to the second mode of being by themselves. In this case, the subject enters into the definition of the passion, in such a way that the definition of the subject and of the passion are one and the same, indicating what the subject is and why the passion.

²⁵ Theodoric of Freiberg (1250-1318) also known as Theodoricus Teutonicus or Dietrich von Freiberg, was a Dominican theologian and philosopher, successor of St. Albert the Great and contemporary of St. Thomas Aquinas.

²⁶ The original Latin text can be consulted at:

https://www.google.com.pe/books/edition/Opera_omnia/YwIrAAAAMAAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&pg=PA82&printsec=frontcover

Therefore, in this type of case, if it is admitted that the subject exists, it is necessarily also admitted that its definition exists; but, this definition being the same as that of the passion, if it is granted that the passion does not belong to the subject, it follows that the same thing exists and does not exist, which implies a contradiction with respect to the same thing, which is absolutely and in all cases impossible. For example, if the definition that indicates why the number is even or odd were admitted and, at the same time, the even or odd were eliminated from the number.

4. The same applies to other positive accidents in nature, which exist by themselves in some category of predicaments, such as quantity, quality, and other genera and species of these. In these cases, the things that enter into their definition belong to the first mode of being by themselves, insofar as that which enters into their definition and the definition itself are predicated of them and belong to them by themselves. According to this, substance enters into their definition, without which it is impossible to define any of them, as the Philosopher says in *Book VII of the Metaphysics*. The reason for this is that the entire essence of any of them consists in being a disposition of substance, as has been shown before, and they are beings because they are of the true being, which is substance, as is said there at the beginning of *Book VII*. Therefore, if it is admitted that any of these accidents exists, for example, quantity, quality, or any other, and the definition of any of them that indicates that its essence is to be a disposition of substance is eliminated, and it is granted that it is not a disposition of substance, but that such an accident is admitted as existing in act, this implies a contradiction. Therefore, by no virtue, whether natural or supernatural, can it occur that such an accident exists in act without a subject.

22. Refutation of certain objections against the determined truth

1. It is not an obstacle to the above the argument of those who attempt to defend their position by saying that inhering in the subject is accidental for accidents, such as quantity, quality, and others. They can, according to them, be separated by a supernatural virtue, placing themselves in being without their subject; therefore, they maintain that, at least by a supernatural virtue, quantity or quality can exist without inhering in any subject.
2. But it must be responded to this that, granted that inhering in the subject is accidental for quantity or quality, it is still accidental in the sense in which it is said that a proper and by itself passion is an accident or something accidental, as are the even and odd for the number. In these cases it is observed that the definition that indicates what the subject is and that which explains the cause of the passion are the same, and both belong to the second mode of being by themselves. Indeed, the essence of any accident consists in being a disposition of substance, and this is the reason that explains why the accident belongs to substance, as is evident in itself. Therefore, in no way can separation between the subject and the passion be given in this type of accident or passion, so that one is found or can be found without the other, as if it were affirmed that the number exists and is neither even nor odd.

3. Nor can it be maintained that accidents are said to be dispositions of substance only potentially, but not necessarily in act, so that it is not necessary that they always be inherent, but that they can not be inherent at least by a supernatural virtue.
4. However, this trivial argument, born of ignorance and lack of rigor, undermines the foundations of nature and of science. It destroys the proper reason of substances and of accidents, as well as the differences between them, as has already been amply demonstrated. Moreover, these general categories of substance and accident encompass all the matter of human and divine sciences. Nevertheless, because we are debtors both to the wise and to the ignorant, it must be said that the definitions of beings, insofar as they are beings, are definitions of them in act, according to the reason of their essence. Indeed, according to the Philosopher in *Book IV of the Metaphysics*, the reason that the name signifies is the definition; and, as the Commentator comments in *Book VII of the Metaphysics*, names are imposed on things insofar as they are in act, not in potency, since man is not something existing as man in potency. Therefore, what is established by itself in the reason signified by the name and is a definition is taken not according to aptitude or potency, but according to act. If not, it would necessarily follow that a being whose definition is such would be a being in potency and not in act; for example, something that were animated only potentially would not be an animal in act, and something that were animal only potentially would not be a man in act, and the same applies to the other cases.
5. The relations between definitions and the parts of definitions with respect to the defined are by themselves and essentially, since they belong to the immutable rules of eternal truth. Indeed, in such relations between definitions and their parts with respect to the defined are founded the considerations of the sciences with respect to their immutable truths. Thus affirms St. Augustine in the *Book on the Immortality of the Soul*: “What is more eternal than the reason of the circle or any other thing in these arts, which is not comprehended nor has it been nor will it be?”. These truths are immutable because they are founded on eternal and immutable truth, which is God, insofar as immutable truth in itself and by itself, not in the way that God immutably disposes or foreknows some future contingencies. These, whether evil, He foreknows, or, if good, He foresees and disposes according to the design of His will, imposing on them entity and order. However, such truths are not of this type, nor are they beings nor true by themselves from immutable truth insofar as such, since, if they were, they would be absolutely necessary and by themselves according to their proper reason.
6. The relations between definitions and the defined, therefore, are by themselves according to immutable truth that is in God, and this by itself, belonging to the first mode of being by itself. Given that accidents, which are defined from substance, are beings in act, they are defined and are beings in act insofar as they participate in the true being, which is substance. Indeed, they are beings because they are dispositions of the true being, as the *Commentator on Book IV of the Metaphysics* comments. Therefore, any accident that is found in act in the number of beings must necessarily be in act a disposition of substance; thus, accidents are not dispositions of substance

only potentially, but always in act when they are put into existence. From this it follows that what belongs to them by themselves according to the second mode of being by themselves, that is, inhering in substance, as has been shown before, is necessary. Therefore, by no virtue, whether natural or supernatural, can it be given that an accident exists without any subject.

23. Responses to the arguments presented against the determined truth

1. The objections presented against are not difficult to refute, since in their reasonings multiple defects are found.
2. Sometimes they proceed from the supposition of something false, as when they affirm that accidents have their own essence in themselves and absolutely, without reference to substance, and that God can make the essence of an accident not inherent in any subject. This, as to both parts of such an affirmation, has already been amply refuted above.
3. They also cite in support of their position, that is, that an accident can exist without a subject, what is affirmed at the beginning of the *Book of Causes*, namely, that the first cause influences more in the effect or caused of the second cause than the second cause itself. Therefore, when the causality of the second cause is eliminated from the caused, the causality of the first cause still remains. Thus, since the second cause of the accident is the subject, but God is the first cause of such an accident, eliminating the subject, God can still sustain the accident in its being.
4. This argument is totally insufficient for the purpose in question. First, because it has not been taken from the authority according to the intention of the author; the author of the *Book of Causes* speaks, in the cited authority, within the same genus of cause, whether efficient, formal, or material, as he himself exemplifies in formal causes, that is, in being, living, rational. However, in the case that concerns us, the same does not happen, since God is the efficient cause of the accident, while the subject is the material or subjective cause.
5. Moreover, the presented argument fails in that the intention of the author in the cited authority is not that, by eliminating the second cause from its effect, the latter remains identical in number or in species, as is seen in the example that he himself introduces: by eliminating the rational, the man does not remain identical either in number or in species. But in this case it is affirmed that quantity or quality remain not only identical in species, but also in number.
6. Also the presented argument does not apply to the case. If something, according to the reason of its quiddity, depends intrinsically on another by its essence, by eliminating this intrinsic principle it is impossible that that which depends on it remains; otherwise, it would follow that the thing would be separated from its essence and the essence of the thing from that of which it is essence. This occurs in the case in question, since, as has been demonstrated on many occasions, the essence of the accident is nothing other than being a disposition of substance; therefore, by eliminating substance, no causality of the first cause remains that sustains the accident in its being.

7. Therefore, the authority of the *Book of Causes* cited must be interpreted and understood in its true meaning, which does not apply to the case, as is evident.
8. Likewise, what is adduced against the determined truth, namely, that “nothing is impossible for God” (*Luke* 1, 37), and from this that God can make an accident exist without a subject, has no validity.
9. If by “all that is said” is understood all that is signified by word or voice, this is false and is not the intention of the evangelist, since by word or voice it can be signified that contradictories are true at the same time.
10. If, on the other hand, by “word” is understood a mental concept, as Augustine frequently uses it, and if an intellectual concept is understood that is always true, since the intellect always deals with the true, as the Philosopher and Augustine say in *On Genesis*, then it is true that “nothing is impossible for God”. For everything that can truly be conceived by the intellect is possible for God. But, in that case, the cited authority does not apply to the case, since it is not possible to really conceive that an accident exists without a subject, because it implies a contradiction, as has been demonstrated above.
11. If, on the other hand, the term “word” implies any fantastic concept, in such cases the cited authority does not have universal validity, as in the case of those who said that motion does not exist, or of those who held that dimensions are separated. From these positions it is also argued against the determined truth, saying that God can do more than we can understand; however, some philosophers understood and held that dimensions are separated. To this it must be responded that, although the philosophers conceived it in that way, they did not really understand it, since, as has been said, the intellect always deals with the true.
12. Moreover, they argue thus: From things that differ essentially a separation can be made, at least by supernatural virtue; but accidents have their own essences, different from the essences of substances; therefore, each of these essences, whether of substance or of accident, can exist by itself separated one from the other.
13. To which it must be responded that the foundation of this reasoning has been refuted more amply above, and it has been shown that accidents do not have their own essences by themselves, that is, that they do not essentially affect substance, but that their own essence is to be a disposition of substance; and according to this they are beings, because they are of being by their essences, and according to this they have analogy with substance by their essence, not insofar as they are in substance, which is accidental for the accident, although by itself, insofar as the second mode of speaking, it is said by itself. The accident, however, does not contribute to the thing its quiddity nor essence nor definition; and therefore, of the different by essence, one of which is defined and essentialized from the other, and one is formally the principle of the other according to being and definition, as substance is for the accident, and from this it necessarily falls in its definition that separation between them cannot exist, so that one can be found without the other, that is, the accident without the subject.

14. As for what they say, that what belongs to something according to the reason of its quiddity, God can make it so that it does not belong to it, and therefore, it can happen that an accident, by divine virtue, does not exist, although it belongs to it according to the reason of its quiddity, to say this is truly worthy of admiration if it is said by some wise man.
15. What is in the intrinsic reason of the quiddity, is according to the principles of the species, so that from those same principles the definition of such a thing consists according to its species, saying what the subject is and saying why, what is according to the reason of its quiddity, as the definition of a triangle, saying what a triangle is and saying why, the passion that is to have three right angles. Therefore, God could make a triangle be and not have three right angles; and thus the definition would be separated from the defined. For the triangle has its definition according to the reason of its quiddity; but the same is the definition of said passion: therefore, if a triangle is placed with its definition, which is the same as the definition of the passion, if the passion is not present, the definition would remain without the defined, and a contradiction would arise in such a position, which cannot occur by supernatural virtue.
16. As for what they say about the order of accidents with respect to substance and the order among themselves, namely, that some accidents, such as quality and others, are in substance through quantity, as color is on the surface, as they say, and that quantity separated from the subject by supernatural virtue is the subject of other accidents, which in themselves are not separated, but insofar as they are in quantity, which is separated by supernatural virtue, this is equally worthy of admiration.
17. First, by the common reason of accidents in relation to substance, from which they obtain their essences, in which, to speak ironically, quantity is not more privileged than other accidents of other genera. Indeed, it is common to all accidents to have a way of possessing their essences from their order with substance, since they are dispositions of substance; and this is their essence. And for this, quantity is not more separable from substance than other accidents; and in this sense, the Philosopher speaks in *Book VII*, saying that nothing else can be separated from substance.
18. As for what they say, that in quantity not yet separated from substance other accidents exist as in the subject, as color on the surface, and that through it they are in substance, contains an intolerable falsity. For it would follow that quality and such accidents would be beings, not because they are true beings, which is substance, but first because they are dispositions of quantity and then of substance, which is absurd.
19. The same happens if it is said that quality and other accidents are in quantity separated from substance, because thus the accident would be the accident of the accident and the form of the form and the disposition of the disposition, and it would follow that quantity would be hot or cold and white or black, which is not intelligible. In that case, all the things that, according to this mode, were in quantity, would fall from their proper definitions. Indeed, color would no longer be the

extremity of the visible in a terminated body, insofar as color by essence is a disposition of the body that has in itself the nature of much or little transparency and much or little luminosity, as the Commentator says in his treatise on *The Sense and the Sensed*; such a disposition of the colored body is impossible to attribute to quantity separated; although it is not inappropriate to say that quantity is hot or cold or of this or that taste, or rare or dense, given that such qualities, by their essence, are dispositions of substance that has some qualitative parts disposed in such or such a way among them, parts that are not found in quantity.

20. And what shall we say of the aspects of nature, which are not considered within the number with their foundations with respect to the indifference of essence, such as the aspect of heating in fire, which does not differ by essence from heat, and the inclination of the heavy and light to their places, which does not differ from their inclining principle, which is the substantial or accidental form of the heavy and light, which are not found and it is impossible to find them in quantity separated from substance for the reason already given?
21. Therefore, the impossibility and the absurd position that says that quantity can be separated from substance and others be in quantity as the immediate subject is clear.
22. Another defect is also found in the incorrect process of investigating disputatively what corresponds to the present matter. For one part, they reinforce their intention with reasons taken from the nature and properties of things; but if by the other part it is also argued more effectively, they resort to the miracle, that is, they say that miraculously, by supernatural virtue, this is done, which they defend in their position.
23. As for accidents with respect to their essences and quiddities and their mode of relation with substances, also about the modes of their definitions and their being or existence in them, this is all that has been said. Thanks be to God.