

The idea of absolute substance: why the concept of substance cannot be rejected in metaphysics.

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Abstract:

Substance (substantia – underlying, underlying – the Latin translation of the Greek) is that which exists independently, in itself, unlike accidents, or properties existing in another (namely, in substance) and through another. Substance is something stable and permanent, as opposed to the volatile and transient; essence (Greek), underlying the phenomenon; indivisible, one, comprehended by the mind, in contrast to the plurality of the sensually perceptible. In the concept of substance, the most important aspect of being finds expression. In European thought the notion of substance received different interpretations: it was regarded as a concrete individual and as a single foundation of all that exists; as ontological reality and as a logical subject; as a spiritual principle and as a material substratum; as the invariable, self-identical essence of the phenomenon and as the law of change, the principle of constructing a series of events, the relation of the accessory of the set of single cases.

Keywords: Metaphysics, Substance, Modes, Attributes, God, essence and Substratum.

In the history of philosophy, two basic approaches to the treatment of the concept of substance are traced: monistic and pluralistic. Philosophers, who gravitate towards pantheism, admit a single and unique substance that is conceived as something that, for its existence, does not need anything else, for there is a cause for itself; the independence of a substance is understood here as absolute. Everything that exists is regarded as a state, phenomenon or attribute of this single substance. This view is presented in antiquity in the eleates and stoics, in the Middle Ages, some representatives of extreme realism gravitate toward him, in the Renaissance – J. Bruno, in modern times – Descartes (not completely, however, consistently) and most radically – Spinoza; To this understanding of substance are close Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Ed. Gartman, to a certain extent VS Soloviev. This understanding of the substance is also shared by representatives of the natural-science materialism of the 18th and 19th centuries – Holbach, Diderot, Focht, Buechner, Moleschott, E. Heckel, etc. Such an interpretation of the substance determines the understanding of causality as a uniform flow of all world

processes, as a steady need for what is happening in nature, society and the human soul; There is no room here not only for a chance but for freedom.

Another understanding of the substance is formed by philosophers of a pluralistic orientation, to which, in particular, those who come from the principle of creationism and the doctrine of the transcendence of God belong, among others. Considering substances as independent principles, unlike their accidents, philosophers of this orientation recognize the relative nature of their independence, which is determined by the place occupied by the substance in the hierarchy of being. Absolute independence is possessed only by the highest – the divine – substance, which is therefore sometimes called not a substance, but a supersubstantial principle. However, because the creature substances do not have complete independence since they depend on the higher and to some extent also on other substances, they do not cease to be centers of power and activity, proving to be real causes of what is happening in the physical and spiritual world. Approximately such an interpretation of the substance is given with certain reservations – Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, Boethius, Thomas Aquinas, Leibniz, Berkeley, Bolzano, Teichmüller, modern Neo-Thomists, personalists and religious philosophers-Leibnizians.

Although the question of the origin of all things was raised in ancient philosophy from the first steps, the concept of substance in its sense was formed only in Aristotle. The prerequisites for this were created in the Eleatics school and in Plato, who opposed the truly existing as one, eternal and unchanging to the sensible world of the plural, temporal and changing. Truly, the existing is comprehended only by the mind and is inaccessible to the senses, the subject of which are the transient phenomena of the empirical world. According to Plato, “true being is some kind of intelligible and disembodied idea” (“Sophist”, 246 c); Plato calls them “essences”?, separated from sensory things and are the prototypes of the latter. Criticizing the Platonic doctrine of ideas, Aristotle in the “categories” identifies essence (substance) with a single individual: the first essence is “this is something” “this man” or “this horse.” Unlike all other categories that are predicated of substance according to Aristotle, is an independent being, it “does not affect any subject and is not in any subject” (Cat. 5, 2a). Logically, the substance is the subject of all its predicates, with the ontological – the substrate (?), the real carrier of properties and the premise of relations. From the first essences, Aristotle distinguishes the second, to which not individuals belong, but the general concepts – genera and species: “so, for example, a certain person is, as in kind, in a man, and a kind for this species is a living being” (ibid.). Unlike the non-predicative first essence, usually called the substance, the second, which served as the predicate of the first, was called the pure essence (essentia). Aristotle after Plato believes that it is substances possessing stability and self-identity that constitute the subject of knowledge. And yet the substance as a separate individual in its singularity can not be

known; Aristotle is forced to admit that the subject of knowledge is the “indivisible species”, i.e. the least common, the species-eidos closest to individuals, which goes back to the Platonic idea and is called indivisible because it is not further divided into species. Essence as an “indivisible form” is the essence of being (?), the quidditas of a thing expressed in its definition. In the case of the indivisibility of existence in appearance, we are talking about the essence-eidos, the identical form of the thing as the reason for being the latter; such, for example, “the soul as the cause of the living being” (Metaphysics, V, 8).

In the case of the indivisibility of being in number (that is, indivisibility of the individual), the essence (substance) will be a composite of form and matter; such are all sensible substances, primarily living beings. In addition to composite, there are also simple substances that represent a pure relevance, or a pure form. The highest among them is, according to Aristotle, the perpetual motion, the pure mind, thinking itself, the reason for being and the life of everything. As we see, the substance is identified by Aristotle not only with a single being, but also with form, which gave rise to many problems and difficulties in the further interpretation of this concept.

Another influential philosophical school, which proposed a different interpretation of the concept of substance than the Aristotelian interpretation, was the Stoics. They treat the substance as a substrate?, also?, and consider the first of the four categories recognized by them. The existing Stoics consider a single substance: it is the “fiery god-logos and it is also cosmos”. This beginning is bodily, because, according to the Stoics, to exist means to be bodily (the Stoics considered both the soul and God to be corporeal). God Logos, identified with the creative fire, the source and cause of all generation (Sext. Adv. M. IX 196 sq.), Permeates the whole cosmos as honeycombs, and is “nature” and “pneuma”, “Warm breath”, fire ether (Diog. L. VII 137). Thanks to the pervasive “tension” of the pneumatic system, the unity of the cosmos and the individual existence of things are ensured, which, however, should not be thought of as a substance in the spirit of Aristotle. “Stoic ontology is not the ontology of substances, but the ontology of the given (Tatsachen-)” (Graser, A. Zenon von Kition, Positionen und Probleme, V.-?., 1975, p. 27). In the pantheistic ontology of the Stoics, the Logos and the unqualified substratum, matter (?-?., Diog. L., VII 134), active and passive beginnings are thought of as inseparable and, therefore, constitute a single world substance. Close to the stoic understanding of the substance is revived in the pantheistic and materialistic teachings of the Renaissance and New Age.

In the Middle Ages, the treatment of substance relies primarily on the Aristotelian and partly Neoplatonic tradition. The duality of the Aristotelian doctrine of substance gave birth to two directions: its understanding as a single individual formed the basis of nominalism, and the extreme realism gravitated towards understanding it

as Eidos, whose representatives proceeded from the real existence of the common. At the origins of medieval scholasticism stands Boethius, who acted as a mediator between ancient philosophy and Christian theology, as well as between Greek and Latin education. Boethius tries to bring terminological clarity into Aristotle's doctrine of substance as an individual and as a species. "With the words *subsistentia* and *subsistere* we call what the Greeks call *and*?; and we translate them? and as *substantia* and *substrate*. A subsistence is something that does not itself need accidents to exist. And the substance is what serves as a subject for other accidents, without which they can not exist... Thus, genera and species are only subsistences, for genera and species do not have accidents. And individuals – not only subsidies, but also substances, because they do not need accidents for their existence, but serve as subjects for accidents... »(Against Eutyches and Nestorius – Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy and Other Treatises M.*, 1990, page 173). However, Boethius himself does not always consistently distinguish between subsidy and substance. In his *Commentary on Porphyry*, he calls the most generic kind of substance, which speaks out about all the others: "... Substance is the highest kind, because it precedes all, but itself is not subordinated to anything" (ibid., P. 56). The individual and the higher race receive, therefore, the same name.

Gilbert of Porretan (12th century), following Boethius, distinguishing substances as actual individuals from subsidies as genera and species, examines the ontological status of subsidies, from which, he believes, substances arise. The source of sensible substances, according to Hilbert, is what the Greeks called ideas, and the Latins called forms. Ideas are pure substances (*substantiae sinceræ*), since they are free from matter. There are four basic pure substances: fire, air, water and earth, which do not need to be confused with the corresponding sensually given elements, because they are about their ideal prototypes. In general, all forms of composite substances are only images of pure and eternal substances – ideas. Thus, the forms, as Aristotle thought them, in the extreme realist Hilbert, are transformed into universals existing before things. God, according to Hilbert, is an essential being (*essentia*), from which all things receive their essence and being. The beingness of God is the being of all creatures. Unlike God, in which being and essence coincide, in created things their being (*esse*) and essence (*what is – id quod est*) are different. The source of the being of a thing is its idea, or its pure form; so, corporeality is the being of the body, the very body that exists due to corporeality is that which is. Hilbert gives an interpretation of the substance in the spirit of Platonism, to which other representatives of realism are close to varying degrees-Bernard Chartres, Guillaume from Champo, Guillaume from Conch, and others.

A closer to Aristotelian understanding of the substance is defended by Thomas Aquinas. Identifying substances with individuals, he distinguishes between substantial and accidental forms: the latter are the sources of

qualities, while the former inform beings of being (Summa theol., I, q. 76 4 s). “Being itself is an act of substance” (Summa contra gent., II 54). Depending on the nature of the form inherent in it, the substance occupies a certain place in the hierarchy of creatures. In lower substances – inorganic elements and minerals – the form is *causa formalis* and constitutes the external certainty of the thing. At the next stage – in plants – the form appears as *causa finalis*, the ultimate cause of the substance, or the soul from within it forming. In animals, the form is *causa efficiens* – the acting cause, and such substances are not only animate, but also active. Finally, in the fourth stage, the form appears not as the beginning that organizes matter, but in itself (*forma per se, forma separata*). It’s a spirit, or an intelligent soul. Being immaterial, it does not perish with the death of the body, it can be destroyed only by the Creator. Thomas calls this substance “self-existent.” If the sensual animal soul carries out its actions through the body, then the sensible has actions separated from the body, thinking and will. All substances, except spiritual, consist of matter and form, while spiritual beings are from substance and being: the substance in them is a potential beginning. “It is not the same consist of matter and form and of substance and being, although both are related (in both cases) as a potency and an act” (Summa contra gent., II 54).

The nominalists of the 14th century consider the problem of substance quite differently. – William Ockham, Nicholas from Otrekura, Peter Lombard and others. They proceed from Aristotle’s doctrine of substances as individual individuals, but place it in a new context, seeing the supreme cause of all things in an all-powerful divine will that does not have any determinism on it and that which is represented by the ideas of the divine mind itself. Relying on Duns Scotus, who maintained that “nothing but will is the cause of all that the will wants” (Oxon II, d.25 quic n. 22), Occam believes that first God creates his own will by his will things, and then as their representations, ideas arise-the signs of individual things in the mind. Thus, the substance loses its meaning as an independent being, the bearer of accidents, which have no existence without substances. According to Peter of Lombard, God “can create any accident without mediating substance only by his action, therefore, he can create any accident without another and the substance without accident – by his own action” (Petros Lombardi, Lion, 1495, I d 30 qu 1).

Such an argument removes the difficulties of the “transubstantiation of substances” in the sacrament of the sacrament, but at the same time entails a radical reorganization of the former ontology and theory of knowledge. If in scholasticism from Bonaventura to Thomas the object of cognition are substances as intelligible realities, then, according to Occam, knowledge must be directed to the empirical reality of individual things, because not substances are learned, but only accidents; This is intuitive knowledge – *cognitio intuitiva*. T., a tendency is to treat knowledge as the establishment of a link between accidents, i.e. limit it to the

world of empirical phenomena, and the Aristotelian principle of ontology and logic is being revised, which states that the substances are the first relations. This trend triumphed in modern times in natural science and philosophy – in English empiricism, Kant's transcendental idealism, in neo-Kantianism and positivism. The elimination by nominalists of the intelligible substances and the reduction of the empirical being to the level of phenomena unexpectedly turned out to be consonant with the principles of the stoic ontology, which considered all things as actual data, manifestations of a single world substance. Nominalism thus prepared the ground for the reception of Stoicism, which received a new life in the natural philosophy of the 16th century – Telezio, J. Bruno, Campanella, etc. Nature acts as a single self-sufficient and self-sufficient, pantheistically interpreted dynamic system in which everything is subordinated to the laws of necessity. Bruno's doctrine of infinite substance as an impersonal absolute, which manifests itself in all things, anticipates the pantheistic interpretation of substance in Spinoza. In the 17-18 centuries. the controversy surrounding the concept of substance is conducted between two directions, each of which, albeit to varying degrees, has been influenced by both nominalism and stoicism-rationalism and empiricism. The rationalistic interpretation of substance is given by Descartes, occasionalists, Spinoza, Leibniz; empiricist understanding of it is found in Fr. Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Hume. Descartes defines substance as a thing that, for its existence, does not need anything but itself, therefore in the strict sense of the word, only God can be considered a substance, which is "eternal, omnipotent, the source of all good and truth, the Creator of all things..." (Selected works of M., 1950, p. 436).

Nevertheless, Descartes calls the substance and created things, namely those that "for their existence need only the ordinary assistance of God" (ibid., P. 448), unlike attributes and qualities that can not exist without substance. Such are the thinking and corporeal substances: the first is unextended and indivisible, the second is long and divisible, has a figure, movement and a certain arrangement of parts. The indivisible substance – the mind, or the intelligent soul, is the object of metaphysics, the divisible substance – matter, or space, is the subject of physics. Identifying a material substance with space, Descartes eliminates the target causes and creates prerequisites for the mathematical science of nature – mechanics. Following Descartes, Spinoza defines substance as that which exists in itself and is represented by itself; The independence of a substance is conceived by Spinoza as absolute.

The substance has the attributes that make up its essence, and the modes – the states of the substance (substantiae afectiones), i.e. that which exists in the other and through the other (see Election in 2 vol., vol. 1. M., 1957, p. 361). Rejecting the Cartesian doctrine of created substances as contradicting the very notion of substance, Spinoza asserts that "apart from God, no substance can neither exist nor be represented" (ibid., P. 372). The substance is infinite, endowed with infinitely many attributes, each of which expresses its eternal

essence, but only two of them are open to human knowledge – extension and thinking. All finite beings are modes of substance. Spinoza's substance is not a personal transcendent God of the Christian religion: "In the nature of God, neither mind nor will has a place" (ibid., P. 378), it is the immanent cause of all things acting, like the Stoic nature, and therefore can be called nature. Criticizing Descartes' thesis about the pluralism of spiritual substances and considering intelligent souls as modes of divine substance, Spinoza thereby turns them into relationships that do not have independent existence; between ideas as modes of the attribute of thinking and intelligent souls, Spinoza makes no distinction: the links between those and others are equally necessary in the nature of the logical sequence (it is no coincidence that the real reason for Spinoza coincides with the logical basis).

Aristotelian-Thomist tradition in the understanding of substance in the 17th century continued Leibniz, in a polemic with Descartes and Spinoza revived pluralistic metaphysics. Unity, indivisibility, i.e. simplicity, – the main definition of substances from Leibniz, which is why they are called monads. According to Leibniz, monads do not influence each other ("do not have windows") precisely because of their unity, because the single, included in the system of relations, becomes many. Leibniz points out the contradictoriness of the Cartesian concept of extended substance: extent, space, being a passive, inactive, beginning, is only an opportunity, whereas substance always means reality. Substances-monads are expediently organized oneness, entelechy, centers of activity, life and power, which Leibniz thinks by analogy with the soul; the activity of monads consists in representation and aspiration. The number of monads is infinite, they differ in the degree of clarity of their representations, beginning with the highest – God – through the most perfect among the created – intelligent souls – to the lower ones, whose perception and aspiration is becoming less and less distinct and more unconscious – such are the monads making up inorganic substances. Thus, only the indivisible, and therefore non-material, substances have a real existence; As for extended and divisible bodies, they, according to Leibniz, are not substances, but only assemblies, or aggregates of monads. In the smallest part of matter there is a whole world of living entelechies, souls.

Although traces of nominalistic influence can be found in the new European rationalism, the most consistently nominalist line in the treatment of substances was continued in English empiricism – from Fr. Bacon, J. Locke, D. Jum. Without denying the existence of substances directly, Locke, however, is convinced of their unknowability. He proceeds from the thesis that the source of all knowledge is experience – both external and internal (the latter he as a psychologist attributed a particularly important role). But in experience, only the qualities and properties of things are always given, but not their intelligible substances. The idea of substance, according to Locke, is "nothing more than the assumption of an unknown... bearer of those qualities that

simple ideas can conjure up in us and which are usually called” accidents “(elected philosopher in 2 tons, 1. M., 1960, page 301). Body substances, for example. oak or horse, represent only a combination of simple ideas of those sensory qualities that we find in objects called these names; not understanding how these qualities can exist together, we, according to Locke, attribute them to some common basis that supports their substratum. The same is true with spiritual substances, which are unknown carriers of such simple ideas of inner feelings as thinking, striving, doubt, etc. The material substance, that is, is the substratum of simple ideas that we receive from without, and the spiritual substance is the substratum of the activity that we discover within ourselves.

Descartes recognized the reality and cognizability of the infinite substance and substances of the finite – bodily and spiritual. Spinoza claimed the real existence of a single substance – a pantheistically understood God, or nature, whose knowledge is thereby the cognition of all things that are contained in God and flow from his infinite essence. Locke declared the substances unknowable, thereby depriving the metaphysics of its traditional subject and replacing it with epistemology and psychology. J. Berkeley deepened Locke’s agnosticism in relation to material substances, declaring them not only unknowable, but also nonexistent. Unlike Locke, he proved the reality of spiritual substances, the perception of which constitutes the material world (“to be is to be perceived”). Using the term “ideas” in the same sense as Locke, i.e. meaning under them sensual qualities (color, smell, sound, etc.), Berkeley shows that they exist only for the perceiving subject – the spirit, the soul, our Ya. Only he is the real substance. “There is no substance other than the spirit or what it perceives... There can be no unthinking substance or an unreasoning substratum of these ideas” (Works of M., 1978, p. 174). Berkeley, like Leibniz, considers the concept of “material substance” to be self-contradictory, for the properties attributed to it-extension, form, movement-are only ideas existing in the spirit-the thinking substance. D.Yum drew skeptical arguments against all substances, including spiritual ones. The concept of a substance, according to Hume, arises in our mind due to subjective, psychological reasons and has no objective significance. Hume rejects the main argument in favor of the existence of spiritual substances, namely, conviction in the metaphysical identity of I. “I can not in any way catch my Ego as something existing apart from perceptions and I can not notice anything except any perception” (Works in 2 t., t. 1. M., 1965, p. 366). I, or the human personality, is not a spiritual substance, but a “bundle or bundle of... different perceptions that follow one after another with inconceivable speed and are in a constant flow... In the spirit there is no simplicity at any given moment and there is no identity in the various moments... “(ibid., p. 367). The idea of self-identity of the soul, I as a substance arises, according to Hume, for purely psychological reasons: by virtue of the unity of the act of perception of alternating impressions. We accept the unity of this act for the identity of its object. “The act of our imagination, through which we perceive... an unchanging object, and the one by which we contemplate the sequence of correlative objects, is experienced by us almost equally... This similarity is the cause of confusion

and error, forcing us to replace the representation of correlative objects by the representation of identity “(ibid., p. 368). The nominalization of substance initiated by the nominalists leads to a logical end.

Since Kant, the subject of philosophy is not a substance, but a subject. The transition from substance to subject was already committed by Locke and Hume, who had in mind a psychological, that is, empirical, subject in his individuality. Kant introduces the concept of the transcendental subject, thereby freeing himself from psychology in the theory of knowledge, but to a large extent sharing Hume’s criticism of the concept of substance. The empirical world, the world of experience, both external (nature as an object of natural science) and internal (the soul as an object of empirical psychology) exists only in relation to the transcendental subject who constructs this world with the help of a priori forms of sensuality (space and time) and a priori forms of reason (categories).

The definitions attributed to the material substance – the extent, figure, movement – are the products of the activity of the transcendental subject. In the world of nature there is no place for the self-existent, here everything is determined by the connection of mechanical causes, i.e. another and through another, because this world exists by its relation to *Ya*. Kant rejects the notion of substance as applied also to the individual soul, treating it not as a substance, but as a phenomenon constructed by the inner feeling. In a polemic with Descartes and Berkeley, Kant proves that the individual consciousness is secondary to external objects, since the function of the external sense serves as a prerequisite for the function of the sense of the inner. However, relicts of substances as independent beings, without reference to the transcendental subject, are preserved in Kant in the form of unknowable things in themselves, affixing sensuality. Unavailable to theoretical knowledge, things in themselves belong to the world of freedom – the world of practical reason: man as a moral being carries in himself those traits traditionally endowed with spiritual substances. Kant gave a logical-ontological analysis of the category of substance, which had a significant influence on the interpretation of this concept in transcendentalism – in Fichte, Hegel, and neo-Kantians. Kant’s substance is a category of reason and belongs to the category of dynamic categories, not concerning objects of contemplation, as mathematical categories, but the existence of these objects in relation to each other or reason. The first of these relationships is inherent and independent existence (*substantia et accidens*). Substance, therefore, is nothing more than a constancy of relations: “That constant, only in relation to which it is possible to determine all the temporal relations of phenomena, is a substance in a phenomenon, i.e. the real (content) of the phenomenon, which always remains the same as the substratum of any change”.

It is clear that one can speak of substance only in relation to the world of experience: it is that form of reason by which it regulates temporal relations. Kant radicalizes the tendency in nominalism and English empiricism to equalize the ontological status of substance and accidents, ascribing priority to the relation in comparison with substance. Being a category of reason, the substance has a meaning – through pure contemplation (space and time) – only for the world of phenomena and does not exist independently of the knowing subject. This interpretation of knowledge is even more consistently pursued in post-Kantian German idealism. Eliminating the thing in itself and transforming the transcendental subject into the absolute creator of all things, Fichte did not leave room for the independent existence of individual substances – as a single thing, and as a single soul. Substance as a category of reason is, according to Fichte, only the totality of the terms of some relation. Schelling, like Fichte, believes that substances exist only for the ego, and “the question of how substances are for themselves is meaningless” (Works in 2 vol., Vol. 1. M., 1987, p. 349).

Being a product of the activity of the I, the substances belong to the phenomenal world and are reduced to its spatial and temporal dimensions. “What is substantial in an object has only a value in space, something that is accidental is only a quantity in time” (ibid., P. 345). Criticizing the “subjective subject-object” of Fichte, Hegel puts the self-developing idea, the pure logical concept as the unity of subjectivity and objectivity, into the place of the absolute self (see Collected Works, Vol. 1. M.-L., 1929, p. 266). It is an absolute substance-subject, a pantheistically understood Logos, immanent in the world and not allowing near to itself any independent beings, substance-individuals. In the 2nd part of the 19th century, as a reaction to German idealism, the materialist doctrine of substance, on the one hand, and the various versions of realism that revive Leibniz- vu’s treatment of substance, on the other. In the materialism of Buchner, Focht, Moleschott, as well as their predecessors in the 18th century, – Holbach, Diderot, etc., as a substance, a single, eternal, uncreated matter is put forward, the form of manifestation of which is the diversity of things. Combining Focht’s materialism with the natural-science notions of his time, E. Haeckel formulated the so-called. the law of substance in which “the two supreme universal laws of various origins have been united: the older chemical law on the” conservation of matter “and the physical law on” conservation of force “discovered relatively recently” (Haeckel, E., World Mysteries, St. Petersburg, 1906, p. 109). The law of substance is, according to Haeckel, the basic cosmological law, which proves the unity of the world and the causal connection of all phenomena, “finally breaking up the three central dogmas of metaphysics: God, freedom and immortality...” (ibid., P. 120). Force and substance Haeckel sees as indivisible attributes of a single substance, thereby giving a materialistic interpretation of the worldview of Spinoza and Goethe.

Representatives of realism in the treatment of substance do not equally accept both the idealistic and materialistic understanding of it. IF Herbart treats substances as immutable and self-identical principles of things (reals); B.Bodzano restores the independent being of monadic substances, in the spirit of Leibniz, understanding it as irrelevant to the knowing subject, but in contrast to Leibniz allowing the interaction of monads. F. Brentano contrasts Aristotle's realism with the "sophist" Hegel, who reduced the substance to the level of mere phenomena, dissolving them in this way in a relationship. G. Teichmuller, rejecting the Kantian criticism of rational psychology and defending the thesis of the immortality of the individual soul, proceeds in his personalistic metaphysics from the understanding of the I as a prototype of the concept of substance in general and considers immaterial substances-monads as real, active principles of everything.

Substance can be most directly defined as what something is. Man is a substance, a horse is a substance and a rock is a substance. Going in depth of the substance one is introduced to secondary substance which is when something is in essence, for example man, has certain attributes to accentuate a man's individuality. To say a man is just a man is very general and giving these attributes makes the simple man an individual man. 'Man' is a common noun, so it does not refer to a property of the subject but rather the class of which the subject is a member. That which is said of but not in a subject is the predicate term in a subject-predicate sentence which employs the 'is' of identity, rather than of predication. The negative criterion ("neither in a subject nor said of a subject") of the categories tells us only which things are substances. We can know that a particular something is a substance but we have to define what makes this a substance. A substance can receive contraries which alter substances to change, move, grow etc. Individual substances, apart from their accidentals/qualities are simple in essence.

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