

Ibn Sīnā: Madkhal i.6

Trans 29 September 2013

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فصل في تعقب ما قاله الناس في الذاتي والعرضي i.6 Section on investigating what people say about essential and accidental

قد قيل في التمييز بين الذاتي والعرضي: إنّ الذاتي مقوم والعرضي غير مقوم،

[1.6.1] It has been said, as a way of distinguishing between the essential and the accidental attributes, that

(1) The essential is constitutive and the accidental is not constitutive.

{There is a puzzle here. The word ‘constitutive’ (*muqawwim*) is not known to have occurred in any Arabic logician before Ibn Sīnā himself. In particular it is not known in the Arabic translations of Greek logic, so there is no indication of what Greek word it might have translated. I don’t think Ibn Sīnā would have written this line if he hadn’t had a text in front of him to justify it, and probably a text by a logician of some substance. Zimmermann thinks that Al-Fārābī in the century before Ibn Sīnā was responsible for bringing the root *qwm* into Arabic logical writing (though neither this word nor any close relative has been found in Al-Fārābī himself). So maybe someone in Al-Fārābī’s school in the late 10th century is the target. The notion of a constitutive attribute seems very close to Kant’s notion of *Merkmal*, which passes down to Frege and (as ‘mark’) to Peirce. But we don’t know a common Greek origin. }

ثمّ لم يحصل، ولم يتبين إنّه كيف يكون مقومًا، أو غير مقوم. وقيل أيضًا:

But then it wasn't made well-defined or clear what it is for a thing to be constitutive or not constitutive. Also it was said that

إنّ الذاتيّ لا يصحّ توهمه مرفوعاً مع بقاء الشيء، والعرضيّ يصحّ توهمه مرفوعاً

- (2) The essential is what can't correctly be imagined as removed while the idea itself remains; and the accidental is what can correctly be imagined as removed while the idea itself remains.

{Possibly Porphyry *On Categories* 95.22–27, if Ibn Sinā reads Porphyry's 'substantial' as 'essential'. }

مع بقاء الشيء. فيجب أن نحصل نحن صحّة ما قبل أو إختلاله، فنقول:

We need to confirm for ourselves the correctness or defectiveness of previous views.

أمّا قولهم إنّ الذاتيّ هو المقوم، فإتما يتناول ما كان من الذاتيات غير دالّ

[1.6.2] So we say: As for their statement that the essential is the constitutive, it only covers what is an essential attribute that doesn't signify 33.12

على الماهيّة، فإنّ المقوم مقوم لغيره. وقد علمت ما يعرض من هذا،

the [whole] whatness, since a constitutive attribute is constitutive of something other than itself; you already know the facts about this.

اللهمّ إلّا أن يعنوا بالمقوم ما لا يفهم من ظاهر لفظه، ولكن يعنون به ما عيننا

That is, unless they mean by 'constitutive' something different from what is normally understood by the plain expression, and mean by it what we mean

بالذاتي. فيكونوا إتما أتوا بإسم مرادف صرف عن الإستعمال الأوّل،

by 'essential'. In this case they are just using 'constitutive' as a synonym of 'essential'; this deflects it from its original use, 33.15

ولم يدلّ على المعنى الذي نقل إليه، ويكون الخطب في المقوم كالخطب

since it doesn't signify the meaning that it has been transferred to. The facts about 'constitutive' are similar to those

في الذاتيّ، وتكون حاجة كلّ واحد منهما إلى البيان واحدة.

about 'essential'. The two of them are equally in need of explanation.

وأما إعتمادهم على أمر الرفع في التوهم، فيجب أن تتذكر ما أعطيناك

[1.6.3] And as for their reliance on the device of removing in the estimation, you need to remember what we gave you 34.1

سالفًا: أنّ المعنى الكلّي قد يكون له أوصاف يحتاج إليها أولاً حتى يحصل ذلك
earlier: that for any universal meaning there are descriptions which are needed in order for the meaning to become available in the first place,
{This is *Madkal* 29.1f.}

المعنى، ويكون له أوصاف أخرى تلزمه وتتبعه، إذا صار ذلك المعنى حاصلًا.
and that there are other descriptions which are entailed by it and follow along after it, when this meaning has become available.
{This is *Madkal* 20.11.}

فأما جميع الأوصاف التي يحتاج إليها الشيء حتى تحصل ماهيته، فلن يحصل
معقولاً

[1.6.4] As for all the descriptions which an idea requires in order for its whatness to become available: it won't become available as an intellected idea 34.4

مع سلب تلك الأوصاف منه. وذلك أنه قد سلف لك أنّ للأشياء ماهيات،
which is compatible with the denial of these descriptions that correspond to it. To explain: you have already been told that ideas have a whatness, 34.5

وأنّ تلك الماهيات قد تكون موجودة في الأعيان، وقد تكون موجودة
and that these whatnesses can be satisfied in the world, and they can be satisfied

في الأوهام؛ وأنّ الماهية لا يوجب لها تحصيل أحد الوجودين، وأنّ كلّ
in the estimation; and that the whatness doesn't require either of the two kinds of satisfaction to occur, and that each
{NB CHECK THIS. Several manuscripts think '*awhām* should be '*adhān*. That looks likely to me. Does Ibn Sīnā ever talk of mental wujuud being in the estimation? }

واحد من الوجودين لا يثبت إلا بعد ثبوت تلك الماهية، وأنّ كلّ واحد

of the kinds of satisfaction can be established after the establishment of this whatness; and that

من الوجودين يلحق بالماهية خواص وعوارض تكون للماهية، عند ذلك
 {I'm translating with *talhaqu* in place of *yalhaqu*, without support from the manuscripts. The Latin translator found this clause untranslatable or missing, and hence contorted the sense of the next clause. }

الوجود، ويجوز أن لا تكون له في الوجود الآخر. وربما كانت له لوازم تلزمه
 forms of satisfaction, without having to have it in the other form of satisfaction. And in some cases there are things that follow from the idea 34.10

من حيث الماهية، لكنّ الماهية تكون متقرّرة أولاً، ثمّ تلزمها هي، فإنّ
 because of its whatness, but the whatness has to be confirmed first, and then these things follow from it. So

الإثنيّية يلزمها الزوجية، والمثلث يلزمه أن تكون زواياه الثلاث مساوية
 [EVEN] follows from [TWO], and [HAVING THREE INTERNAL ANGLES THAT SUM TO 180 DEGREES] follows from [TRIANGLE],

لقائمتين، لا لأحد الوجودين، بل لأنّه مثلث. وهذه الماهية إذا كان لها
 not because of one of the two kinds of satisfaction, but because the idea is [TRIANGLE]. And when this whatness has

مقومات متقدّمة - من حيث هي ماهية - لم تحصل ماهية دون تقدّمها؛ وإذا
 a constitutive attribute which is prior to it — in the sense of being a constitutive attribute of a whatness — the whatness doesn't become available without [the constitutive becoming available] first; and when

لم تحصل ماهية، لم تحصل معقولات ولا عينا. فإذن إذا حصلت معقولة،
 a whatness doesn't become available, it doesn't become available either as an intellected idea or as a concrete individual. Thus when it becomes available as an intellected idea, 34.15

حصلت وقد حصل ما تتقوّم به في العقل معها على الجهة التي تتقوّم به؛
 it becomes available after what it is constituted by has already become available in the intellect; it becomes available together with that thing and as something constituted by that thing.

فإذا كان ذلك حاصلًا في العقل، لم يمكن السلب، فيجب أن تكون هذه

So when it has become available in the intellect, denial is impossible, because these constitutive attributes have to be

المقومات معقولة مع تصوّر الشيء، بحيث لا يجهل وجودها له، ولا يجوز سلبها

intellected alongside the conceptualisation of the idea, given that their being attributes of the idea is not something one can be unaware of. It's not possible to deny them

عنه، حتى تثبت الماهية في الذهن، مع رفعها في الذهن بالفعل. ولست أعني

of the idea, in such a way that that the whatness is affirmed in the mind at the same time as the constitutive attributes are denied explicitly in the mind. And by 'available in the intellect' I don't mean

بوصولها في العقل خطورها بالبال بالفعل، فكثير من المعقولات لا تكون

its explicit entry into the working mind, since many things that are intel- 34.20
lected are not

{NB Several times in this passage, *bi al-ficl* means explicitly or consciously.}

خاطرة بالبال، بل أعني إنها لا يمكن مع إخطارها بالبال، وإخطار ما هي

introduced into the working mind. But I do mean that when both the whatness and its constitutive attributes are introduced into the working mind,

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مقومة له بالبال، حتى تكون هذه مخطرة بالبال، وذلك مخطرا بالبال بالفعل،
so that these constitutive ideas are present in the working mind and the
idea itself is explicitly present,

أن يسلبها عنه، كأنك تجد الماهية بالفعل خالية عنها مع تصوورها، أعني تصوّر
then it's impossible for the intellect to hold that the constitutive attributes
are false of the idea — so that you find the whatness explicitly lacking these
constitutive attributes at the same time as it is conceptualised. (I mean
conceptualisation

الماهية في الذهن. وإذا كان كذلك، فالصفات التي نسميها ذاتية للمعاني
of the whatness in the mind, [not of the constitutive attributes].) And this
being so, it's very necessary that the descriptions which we are describing
as essential for the intellected meanings
{NB Ibn Sīnā has got himself caught using a feminine ending for two items
that he needs to distinguish; so he has to add a note explaining which one
he intended. }

المعقولة، يجب ضرورة أن تعقل للشيء على هذا الوجه، إذ لا تتصوّر الماهية
are intellected with the idea in this way, since the whatness of the idea can't
be conceptualised

في الذهن دون تقدّم تصوورها.

in the mind without there being a previous conceptualisation [of these at- 35.5
tributes].

وأما سائر العوارض، فإذ ليست مما يتقدّم تصوورها في الذهن تصوّر

[1.6.5] The rest of the accidental attributes are not among the things 35.6
whose conceptualisation in the mind precedes the conceptualisation

الماهية فيه، ولا أيضا هي مع تصوّر الماهية، بل هي توابع ولوازم ليست مما
of the whatness in it, and they are not things [that are conceptualised] at
the same time as the conceptualisation of the whatness, but rather they are
things that follow and are entailed. Hence they are not included among

يحقّق الماهية، بل مما يتلو الماهية، فالماهية تثبت دونها؛ وإذا ثبتت دونها،
the criteria for the whatness, but rather they are things that are consequent

on the whatness, so the whatness can be established without them. Since it is established without them,

لم يتعدّر أن تعقل الماهيّة، وإن لم تتقدّم، أو إن لم يلزم تعقلها.
it is not unfeasible for you to intellect the whatness even if those things don't precede, and even if intellecting of them is not entailed [by intellecting the idea].

وقد علّمت أنّي

[1.6.6] You have already been told that when I 35.9

لست أعني في هذا التعقل أن يكون، إذا تصوّرت الشيء بالفعل ملحوظا إليه،
speak of this 'intellecting' I don't mean that it is, when you conceptualise 35.10
the thing explicitly and consciously,

يكون مع ذلك تصوّرت أفراد المقوّمات له أيضا بالفعل، فربّما لم تلحظ الأجزاء
you will also conceptualise its separate constitutives explicitly; sometimes
the parts are not a thing that

بذهنك، بل أعني بهذا أنّك إذا أخطرت الأمرين معا بالبال، لم يمكنك
your mind is conscious of. Rather I mean that when you introduce the two
things together into the working mind, it's not possible for you

أن تسلب الذي هو مقوم عن الذي هو مقوم له سلبا يصحّ معه وجود المقوم
to assert of the constitutive attributes that they are false of the idea that they
constitute. It is not allowed for you in your mind to deny the constitutive
attributes at the same time as you are asserting the

بماهيته في الذهن من دون وجود ما يقومه فيه. فإذا كان كذلك، فيجب
whatness of the idea that they constitute. And that being the case, it has to
be that

أن لا يمكنك سلبه عنه، بل يعقل وجوده له لا محالة.
it's not possible for you to deny [that the constitutive attribute holds] of the
constituted idea, in fact you just have to intellect that it does hold. 35.15

وأما العوارض فلا أمتنع صحّة إستبانتك في الذهن معنى الماهيّة، ولا يعقل
[1.6.7] I'm not saying that you can't correctly assert in your mind the 35.16

meaning of the whatness while you are not intellecting that the accidental attributes of the whatness are true of it.

وجودها للماهية، بل يسلبها سلبا كاذبا. ولا أوجب ذلك أيضا في كلّ
(Though if you deny that they are true of it, the denial is a falsehood.) Also
I am not affirming this for all

العوارض، فإنّ من العوارض ما يلزم الماهية لزوما أوّليّا بيننا ليس بواسطة
the accidents. For there are accidental attributes that are entailed by the
whatness in a primary and clear way that doesn't go indirectly via

عارض آخر، فيكون سلبه عن الماهية مع إستثبات الماهية وإخطارهما معا بالبال
another accidental attribute. So it would be impossible to assert that they
don't hold of the whatness, at the same time as one affirms the whatness
and has both of them enter the working mind together,

مستحيلا، إذا كان ليس هو له بسبب وسط بينه وبينه. وذلك مثل كون
given that the entailment doesn't go via something intermediate between 35.20
the two. An example

المثلث بحيث يمكن إخراج أحد أضلاعه على الإستقامة توّهما، أو معنى آخر
[TRIANGLE], where it is possible to extend one of side of the triangle in a
straight line in the imagination, or some other

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مما يشبه هذا مما هو عارض له. وقد يمكن أن يكون وجود العارض بواسطة،
 فإذا
 accidental attribute of [TRIANGLE]. But it can happen that the accidental
 attribute is true of the idea because of some intermediate idea, and then
 when

لم تخطر تلك الوساطة بالبال، أمكن سلبه، مثل كون كل زاويتين من المثلث
 this intermediate idea doesn't come into the working mind, one can deny
 it. An example is that any two of the internal angles of a triangle

أصغر من قائمتين. ولولا صحّة وجود القسم الثاني لما كانت لوازم مجهولة؛
 sum to less than 180 degrees. If it weren't true that the second kind of
 accidental attribute exists, then we would know everything entailed [by
 what we know].

ولولا صحّة القسم الأوّل لما كان ما نبين لك بعد من إثبات عارض
 If it weren't true that the first kind of accidental attribute exists, then what
 we were going to explain to you later about affirming that an accidental
 attribute

لازم للماهية بتوسط شيء حقاً. وذلك لأنّ التوسط، إن كان لا يزال يكون
 holds of the whatness because of some intermediate idea wouldn't be true.
 And this is because the intermediary, assuming it is not denied, would be 36.5

لازماً للماهية غير بين الوجود لها، ذهب الأمر إلى غير النهاية؛ وإن
 [another] necessary accident of the whatness, so [again] it would not be
 clear that it holds of the idea, and so on to infinity. If the intermediate

كان من المقومّات، صار اللازم المجهول - كما تعلم - لازماً لهذا المقوم،
 was a constitutive attribute of the idea, then the necessary accident which is
 not known to hold would become — as you know — a necessary accident
 of this constitutive attribute

لا مقوم، إذ مقوم المقوم مقوم، وكان لازماً آخر الأمر بلا واسطة.
 while not being [itself] constitutive, since a constitutive attribute of a consti-
 tutive attribute is constitutive, and so it would be an immediate necessary
 accident of something else [that is already known].

فما

[1.6.8] Then

36.8

كان من اللوازم غير يبين للشيء صحح في الذهن أن يتوهم الشيء مرفوعا عنه ذلك
those necessary accidents that don't clearly hold of the idea can from one
point of view be correctly imagined in the mind as being false of the idea,

اللازم من جهة، ولم يصح من جهة. أمّا جهة الصحة فمن حيث أن تصوّره
but from another point of view they can't. The point of view from which it 36.10
is correct is that the mind can make a well-defined conceptualisation of the
idea

قد يحصل في الذهن مع سلب اللازم عنه بالفعل، وإعتبار هذه الصحة والحواز
and at the same time explicitly deny that the necessary accident holds of it;
this is a point of view about what is correct and permitted

بحسب الذهن المطلق. وأمّا جهة الاستحالة فإن يتوهم أنه يجوز أن لو كان
purely as a mental operation. The point of view from which it is not correct
is to take it as permissible — if it happened —

يحصل في الأعيان، وقد سلب عنه فيها اللازم، حتّى يكون مثلا كما يصح
for some idea to be satisfied in the world, while one imagined that some
necessary accident of the idea was false of it. The effect would be as if it
would be correct — if it happened — that this individual exists

أن لو كان يكون هذا الشخص موجودا، ولا الندب الذي لزمه في أصل الحلقة،
correct — if it happened — that this individual exists but that [what one
imagines needs] no authorisation in terms of what the basic facts about
him require.

فصار يصح أيضا أنه كان يكون هذا المثلث موجودا، ولا زاويته أقلّ
So for example it would also be correct [to imagine that] this triangle exists
and has no angle less 36.15

من قائمتين؛ فإنّ هذا التوهم فاسد لا يجوز وجود حكمه، وليس كالمذكور معه.
than 180 degrees. This imagining is defective; there is no way that its con-
tents could be true, and it is incompatible with what has been said [about
triangles].

واعتبار هذه الصّحة والجواز بحسب ذهن مطابق للموجود.
When we speak of 'correct' and 'permissible' here, this is a matter of whether the mind is in correspondence with what is the case in the world.

فقد بان لك من هذا أنّ من الصفات ما يصحّ سلبه وجوداً، ومنها
[1.6.9] It will have become clear to you from this that some descriptions
are correctly taken to be false in the world, and some 36:18

ما يصحّ سلبه توهماً لا في الوجود، ومنها ما يصحّ سلبه توهماً مطلقاً، ومنها
are correctly denied in imagination but are not false in the world. Also
some are correctly denied in imagination without any qualification, while

ما لا يصحّ سلبه بوجه وهو عارض، ومنها ما لا يصحّ سلبه وهو ذاتي،
some are not correctly denied, though only from a certain point of view
(these are accidental attributes), and for some of them can't be correctly 36.20
denied at all (these are the essential attributes).

37

لكن يتميِّز من العارض بأنّ الذهن لا يوجب سبق ثبوت ما الذاتي له ذاتي
 [Essential attributes] are distinguished from accidental ones by the fact that
 — although the mind doesn't require the prior establishment of what the
 essential attributes are essential attributes of,

قبل ثبوت الذاتي، بل ربّما أوجب سبق ثبوت الذاتي. وأمّا العرض
 before establishment of the essential attributes themselves — in some cases
 the mind does require prior establishment of the essential attributes. But

فإنّ الذهن يجعله تاليًا، وإن وجب ولم ينسلب.
 the mind makes the accidental attributes come later, even if [these acciden-
 tal attributes] are affirmed [of the idea] and not denied [of it].

فقد إتّضح لك كيف لم يحصل معنى الذاتي والعرضي من إقتصر على البيانين
 [1.6.10] This will have made clear to you how it is that a person who 37.4
 restricts himself to the two previously mentioned explanations
 {Presumably these are (1) and (2). }

المذكورين.
 won't get control of the meanings of 'essential' and 'accidental'. 37.5