2d. Proper and common names

8 ARISTOTLE: Categories, CH 5 [2a11-18] 6a-b / Interpretation, CH 7 [17a37-40] 26d / Sophistical Refutations, CH 22 [178b38-179a10] 246c / Metaphysics, BK VII, CH 10 [1035b28-32] 559b; CH 11 [1037a5-9] 560c; CH 15 [1040a8-13] 564a

19 AQUINAS: Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 1, REP 3 62c-63c; A 9 71b-72c; A 11 73c-74b; Q 30, A 4 170c-171b; Q 33, AA 2-3 181c-183c; Q 34, AA 1-2 185b-188a; Q 108, A 5, ANS and REP 1 555d-558b

20 AQUINAS: Summa Theologica, PART II-II, Q 9, A 2, ANS 424b-425a

22 CHAUCER: Second Nun's Prologue [15,553-587] 462b-463a

23 HOBBES: Leviathan, PART I, 55b-c

35 LOCKE: Human Understanding, BK I, CH I, SECT 15 98d-99a; BK II, CH XI, SECT 9 145b-c; BK III, CH I, SECT 3 251d-252a; CH III, SECT 1-9 254d-256c; SECT 11-12 257a-c; CH VI, SECT 42 280b-c

35 BERKELEY: Human Knowledge, INTRO, SECT 11-12 407b-408b; SECT 15 409a-b; SECT 18-19 410a-c; SECT 122 437b-c

35 HUME: Human Understanding, SECT XII, DIV 125, 507b [fn 1]

36 STERNE: Tristram Shandy, 217b-221a; 351a-353b

38 ROUSSEAU: Inequality, 341b-342b

45 LAVOISIER: Elements of Chemistry, PREF, 4b-c

53 JAMES: Psychology, 310a-311a; 447b-448a

8 ARISTOTLE: *Categories*, CH 5 [2^{a}11-18] 6a-b / *Interpretation*, CH 7 [17^{a}37-40] 26d / *Sophistical Refutations*, CH 22 [$I78^{b}$38-$I79^{a}$1O] 246c / *Metaphysics*, BK VII, CH 10 [1035^{b}28-32] 559b; CH 11 [1037^{a}5-9] 560c; CH 15 [1040^{a}8-13] 564a

Categories, CH 5 [2^{a}11-18] 6a-b

Substance, in the truest and primary and most definite sense of the word, is that which is neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject; for instance, the individual man or horse. But in a secondary sense those things are called substances within which, as species, the primary substances are included; also those which, as genera, include the species. For instance, the individual man is included in the species 'man', and the genus to which the species belongs is 'animal'; these, therefore—that is to say, the species 'man' and the genus 'animal'—are termed secondary substances.

Interpretation, CH 7 [17^{a}37-40] 26d

Some things are universal, others individual. By the term 'universal' I mean that which is of such a nature as to be predicated of many subjects, by 'individual' that which is not thus predicated. Thus 'man' is a universal, 'Callias' an individual.

Sophistical Refutations, CH 22 [$I78^{b}$38-$I79^{a}$1O] 246c

Again, there is the proof that there is a 'third man' distinct from Man and from individual men. But that is a fallacy, for 'Man', and indeed every general predicate, denotes not an individual substance, but a particular quality, or the being related to something in a particular manner, or something of that sort. Likewise also in the 179^{a} case of 'Coriscus' and 'Coriscus the musician' there is the problem, 'Are they the same or different?' For the one denotes an individual substance and the other a quality, so that it cannot be isolated; though it is not the isolation which creates the 'third man', but the admission that it is an individual substance. For 'Man' cannot be an individual substance, as Callias is. Nor is the case improved one whit even if one were to call the element he has isolated not an individual substance but a quality: for there will still be the one beside the many, just as 'Man' was. It is evident then that one must not grant that what is a common predicate applying to a class universally is an individual substance, but must say that it denotes either a quality, or a relation, or a quantity, or something of that kind.

Metaphysics, BK VII, CH 10 [1035^{b}28-32] 559b

But man and horse and terms which are thus applied to individuals, but universally, are not substance but something composed of this particular formula and this particular matter treated as universal; and as regards the individual, Socrates already includes in him ultimate individual matter; and similarly in all other cases. 'A part' may be a part either of the form (i. e. of the essence), or of the compound of the form and the matter, or of the matter itself.

Metaphysics, BK VII, CH 11 [1037^{a}5-9] 560c

It is clear also that the soul is the primary substance and the body is matter, and man or animal is the compound of both taken universally; and 'Socrates' or 'Coriscus', if even the soul of Socrates may be called Socrates, has two meaning (for some mean by such a term the soul, and others mean the concrete thing), but if 'Socrates' or 'Coriscus' means simply this particular soul and this particular body, the individual is analogous to the universal in its composition.

Metaphysics, BK VII, CH 15 [1040^{a}8-13] 564a

Nor is it possible to define any Idea. For the Idea is, as its supporters say, an individual, and can exist apart; and the formula must consist of words; and he who defines must not invent a word (for it would be unknown), but the established words are common to all the members of a class; these then must apply to something besides the thing defined; e. g. if one were defining you, he would say 'an animal which is lean' or 'pale', or something else which will apply also to some one other than you.

19 AQUINAS: *Summa Theologica,* PART I, Q 13, A 1, REP 3 62c-63c; A 9 71b-72c; A 11 73c-74b; Q 30, A 4 170c-171b; Q 33, AA 2-3 181c-183c; Q 34, AA 1-2 185b-188a; Q 108, A 5, ANS and REP 1 555d-558b

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 1, REP 3 62c-63c

Article 1. *Whether Any Name Is Suitable to God?*

We proceed thus to the First Article: It seems that no name is suitable to God.

Objection 1. For Dionysius says (*Div. Nom. i*)[1] that, "Of Him there is neither name, nor can one be found of Him"; and it is written: "*What is His name, and what is the name if His Son, if thou knowest?*" (Prov. 30. 4).

Obj. 2. Further, every name is either abstract or concrete. But concrete names do not belong to God, since He is simple, nor do abstract names

[1] Sect. 5 (PG 3, 593).

belong to Him, since they do not signify any perfect subsisting thing. Therefore no name can be said of God.

Obj. 3. Further, nouns are taken to signify substance with quality; verbs and participles signify substance with time; pronouns the same with demonstration or relation. But none of these can be applied to God, for He has no quality, nor accident, nor time; moreover, He cannot be felt, so as to be pointed out; nor can He be described by relation, since relations serve to recall a thing mentioned before by nouns, participles, or demonstrative pronouns. Therefore God cannot in any way be named by us.

On the contrary, It is written (Exod. 15. 3): "*The Lord is a man of war, Almighty is His name*".

I answer that, Since according to the Philosopher,[2] words are signs of ideas, and ideas the likeness of things, it is evident that words relate to the meaning of things signified through the medium of the intellectual conception. It follows therefore that we can give a name to anything in as far as it can be known by our intellect. New it was shown above (Q. XII, AA. 11, 12) that in this life we cannot see the essence of God; but we know God from creatures as their principle, and also by way of excellence and remotion. In this way therefore He can be named by us from creatures,, yet not so that the name which signifies Kim expresses the divine essence in itself, as for instance the name "man" express by its meaning the essence of man by declaring his essence. For the notion expressed by the name is the definition.

Reply Obj. 1. The reason why God has no name, or is said to be above being named, is because His essence is above all that we understand about God and signify in word.

Reply Obj. 1. Because we know and name God from creatures, the names we attribute to God signify what belongs to material creatures, of which the knowledge is natural to us as we have said before (Q. XII, A. 4). And because in creatures of this kind what is perfect and subsistent is composite, whereas their form is not a complete subsisting thing, but rather is that whereby a thing is, hence it follows that all names used by us to signify a complete subsisting thing must have a concrete meaning according as they belong to composite things. But names given to signify simple forms signify a thing not as subsisting, but as that by which a thing is; as, for instance, whiteness signifies that by which a thing is white. And as God is simple, and subsisting, we attribute to Him abstract names to signify His simplicity, and concrete names to signify His subsistence and perfection, although both these kinds of names fail to express His mode of being, since our intellect does not know Him in this life as He is.

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[2] Interpretation, 1 (16^a3).

Reply Obj. 1. To signify substance with quality is to signify the suppositum with a nature or determined form in which it subsists. Hence, as some things are said of God in a concrete sense to signify His subsistence and perfection, so likewise nouns are applied to God signifying substance with quality. Further, verbs and participles which signify time are applied to Him because His eternity includes all time. For just as we can apprehend and signify simple subsistences only by way of composite things, so we can understand and express simple eternity only by way of temporal things, because our intellect has a natural affinity to composite and temporal things. But demonstrative pronouns are applied to God as pointing out what is understood, not what is sensed. For we can only describe Him as far as we understand Him. Thus, according as nouns, participles and demonstrative pronouns are applicable to God, so far can He be signified by relative pronouns.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 9 71b-72c

Article 9. *Whether This Name God Is Communicable?*

We proceed thus to the Ninth Article: It seems that this *God* is communicable.

Objection 1. For whosoever shares in the thing signified by a name shares in the name itself. But this name God as we have said above (A. 8) signifies the divine nature, which is communicable to others, according to the words, *He hath given us great* [Vulg., *most great*] *and precious promises, that by these we* [Vulg., *ye*] *may be made partakers of the divine nature* (II Pet. 1. 4). Therefore this name *God* can be communicated to others.

Obj. 2. Further, only proper names are not communicable. Now this name God is not a proper, but an appellative noun, which appears from the fact that it has a plural, according to the text, *I have said, You are gods* (Ps. 81. 6). Therefore this name God is communicable.

Obj. 3. Further, this name God comes from operation, as explained (A. 8). But other names given to God from His operations or effects are communicable, such as good, wise, and the like. Therefore this name God is communicable.

On the contrary, It is written: *They gave the incommunicable name to wood and stones* (Wisd. 14.21), in reference to the divine name. Therefore this name God is incommunicable.

I answer that, A name is communicable in two ways, properly, and by likeness. It is properly communicable in the sense that its whole signification can be given to many; by likeness it is communicable according to some part of the signification of the name. For instance this name “lion” is properly communicated to all things of the same nature as lion; by likeness it is communicable to those who participate in something lion-like,

as for instance by courage, or strength, and those who thus participate are called lions metaphorically.

To know, however, what names are properly communicable, we must consider that every form existing in the singular suppositum, by which it is individualized, is common to many either in reality, or at least according to reason; as human nature is common to many in reality, and in idea; but the nature of the sun is not common to many in reality, but only in idea; for the nature of the sun can be understood as existing in many supposita, and the reason is because the mind understands the nature of every species by abstraction from the singular. Hence to be in one singular suppositum or in many is outside the idea of the nature of the species. So, given the idea of the nature of a species, it can be understood as existing in many. But the singular, from the fact that it is singular, is divided off from all others. Hence every name imposed to signify any singular thing is incommunicable both in reality and idea, for the plurality of this individual thing cannot fall within the apprehension. Hence no name signifying any individual thing is properly communicable to many, but only by way of likeness; as for instance a person can be called Achilles metaphorically, because he may possess something of the properties of Achilles, such as strength.

On the other hand, forms which are individualized not by any suppositum, but by themselves, because they are subsisting forms, if understood as they are in themselves could not be communicable either in reality or in idea, but only perhaps by way of likeness, as was said of individuals. But because we are unable to understand simple self-subsisting forms as they really are, we understand them after the mode of composite things having forms in matter, therefore, as was said in the first article (Ans. 2), we give them concrete names signifying a nature existing in some suppositum. Hence, so far as concerns names, the same rules apply to names we impose to signify the nature of composite things as to names given by us to signify simple subsisting natures.

Since, then, this name God is given to signify the divine nature as stated above (A. 8), and since the divine nature cannot be multiplied as shown above (Q. XI, A. 3), it follows that this name God is incommunicable in reality, but communicable in opinion, just in the same way as this name "sun" would be communicable according to the opinion of those who say there are many suns. Therefore, it is written: *You served them who by nature are not gods* (Gal. 4. 8), and a gloss adds,[3] Gods not in nature, “but in human opinion." Nevertheless this name God is communicable not in its whole signification, but in some part of it by way of likeness, so that those are called gods who share in divinity by likeness, according to the text, *I have said, You are gods* (Ps. 81. 6).

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[3] *Glossa Lombardi* (PL 192, 139); cf. *Glossa interl.,* (VI, 84V).

But if any name were given to signify God not as to His nature but as to His suppositum, according as He is considered as "this something," that name would be in every way incommunicable; as, for instance, perhaps the name Tetragrammaton among the Hebrews; and this is like giving a name to the sun as signifying this individual thing.
Reply Obj. 1. The divine nature is only communicable according to the participation of some likeness.
Reply Obj. 2. This name God is an appellative name, and not a proper name, for it signifies the divine nature in the possessor, although God Himself in reality is neither universal nor particular. For names do not follow upon the mode of being which is in things, but upon the mode of being as it is in our knowledge. And yet it is incommunicable according to the truth of the thing, as was said above concerning the name sun.
Reply Obj. 3. These names good, wise, and the like, are imposed from the perfections proceeding from God to creatures; but they do not signify the divine nature, but rather signify the perfections themselves absolutely, and therefore they are in truth communicable to many. But this name God is given to God from His own proper operation, which we experience continually, to signify the divine nature.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 11 73c-74b

Article 11. *Whether This Name, He Who Is, Is the Most Proper Name of God?*

We proceed thus to the Eleventh Article: It seems that this name HE WHO IS is not the most proper name of God.
Objection 1. For this name God is an incommunicable name, as we have said (A. 9). But this name HE WHO IS, is not an incommunicable name. Therefore this name HE WHO IS is not the most proper name of God.
Obj. 2. Further, Dionysius says (*Div. Nom*. iii)[4] that "the name of good excellently manifests all the processions of God." But it especially belongs to God to be the universal principle of all things. Therefore this name good is supremely proper to God, and not this name HE WHO IS.
Obj. 3. Further, every divine name seems to imply relation to creatures, for God is known to us only through creatures. But this name HE WHO IS imports no relation to creatures. Therefore this name HE WHO IS is not the most applicable to God.
On the contrary, It is written that when Moses asked, *If they should say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them?* the Lord answered him, *Thus shalt thou say to them,* HE WHO IS *hath sent me to you* (Exod. 3. 13, 14). Therefor this name, HE WHO IS, most properly belongs to God.

[4] Sect. I (PG 3, 680).

I answer that, This name, HE WHO IS, is most properly applied to God, for three reasons.

First, because of its signification. For it does not signify form, but being itself. Hence since the being of God is His essence itself, which can be said of no other (Q. III, A. 4), it is clear that among other names this one specially names God, for everything is denominated by its form.

Secondly, on account of its universality. For all other names are either less universal, or, if convertible with it, add something above it at least in idea, hence in a certain way they inform and determine it. Now our intellect cannot know the essence of God itself in this life, as it is in itself, but whatever mode it applies in determining what it understands about God, it falls short of the mode of what God is in Himself. Therefore the less determinate the names are, and the more universal and absolute they are, the more properly are they applied to God. Hence Damascene says (*De Fid. Orth.* i)[5] that, "HE WHO IS, is the principal of all names applied to God; for comprehending all in itself, it contains being itself as an infinite and indeterminate sea of substance." Now by any other name some mode of substance is determined, whereas this name HE WHO IS determines no mode of being, but is indeterminate to all; and therefore it denominates the "infinite sea of substance."

Thirdly, from its consignification, for it signifies being in the present, and this above all properly applies to God, “whose being knows not past or future,” as Augustine says (*De Trin.* v).[6]

Reply Obj. 1. This name HE WHO IS is the name of God more properly than this name God both as regards its source, namely, being, and as regards the mode of signification and consignification, as said above. But as regards the meaning intended by the name, this name God is more proper, as it is imposed to signify the divine nature; and still more proper is the Tetragrammaton, imposed to signify the substance of God itself, incommunicable and, if one may so speak, singular.

Reply Obj. 2. This name "good" is the principal name of God in so far as He is a cause, but not absolutely; for being considered absolutely, comes before the idea of cause.

Reply Obj. 3. It is not necessary that all the divine names should import relation to creatures, but it suffices that they be imposed from some perfections flowing from God to creatures. Among these the first is being itself, from which comes this name, HE WHO IS.

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[5] Chap. 9 (PG 94, 836).

[6] Cf. Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, I, d. 8, chap. I (QR 1, 58); cf. Isidore, *Etym.,* VII, I (PL 82, 261).

Article 4. *Whether This Term "Person" Can Be Common to the Three Persons?*

We proceed thus to the Fourth Article: It would seem that this term person cannot be common to the three persons.

Objection 1. For nothing is common to the three persons but the essence. But this term person does not signify the essence directly. Therefore it is not common to all three.

Obj. 2. Further, the common is the opposite to the incommunicable. But the very meaning of person is that it is incommunicable, as appears from the definition given by Richard of St. Victor (Q. XXIX, A. 3, ANS. 4). Therefore this term person is not common to all the three persons.

Obj. 3. Further, if the name person is common to the three, it is common either really or logically. But it is not so really; otherwise the three persons would be one person. Nor again is it so logically; otherwise person would be a universal. But in God there is neither universal nor particular, neither genus nor species, as we proved above (Q. III, A. 5). Therefore this term person is not common to the three.

On the contrary, Augustine says (*De Trin.* vii, 4)[7] that when as ask, "Three what?" we say, "Three persons," because what a person is, is common to them.

I answer that, The very mode of expression itself shows that this term person is common to the three when we say three persons; fo when we say three men we show that man is common to the three. Now it is clear that this is not community of a real thing, as if one essence were common to the three; otherwise there would be only one person of the three, as also one essence.

What is meant by such a community has been variously determined by those who have examined the subject. Some[8] have called it a community of negation, because the definition of person contains the word incommunicable. Others[9] thought it to be a community of intention, as the definition of person contains the word individual; as we say that to be a species is common to horse and ox. Both of these explanations, however, are excluded by the fact that person is not a name of exclusion nor of intention, but the name of a reality.

We must therefore resolve that even in human things this name person is common by a community of notion not as genus or species, but as a vague individual thing. The names of genera and species, as man or animal, are given to signify the common natures themselves, but not the intentions of those common natures, signified by the terms genus or species. The vague

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[7] PL 42, 940.

[8] William of Auxerre, *Summa Aurea,* I, 6, 2 (fol. 10C).

[9] See Alexander of Hales, *S. T.,* II, 389 (QR I, 573).

individual thing, as "some man," signifies the common nature with the determinate mode of being of singular things — that is, something self-subsisting distinct from others. But the name of a designated singular thing signifies that which distinguishes the determinate thing; as the name Socrates signifies this flesh and this bone. But there is this difference — that the term "some man" signifies the nature, or the individual on the part of its nature, with the mode of existence of singular things, while this name person is not given to signify the individual on the part of the nature, but the subsistent reality in that nature. Now this is common in idea to the divine persons, that each of them subsists distinctly from the others in the divine nature. Thus this name person is common in idea to the three divine persons.

Reply Obj. 1. This argument is founded on a real community.

Reply Obj. 2. Although person is incommunicable, yet the mode itself of incommunicable existence can be common to many.

Reply Obj. 3. Although this community is logical and not real, yet it does not follow that in God there is universal or particular, or genus, or species; both because neither in human affairs is the community of person the same as community of genus or species, and because the divine persons have one being, whereas genus and species and every other universal are predicated of many which differ in being.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 33, AA 2-3 181c-183c

Article 2. *Whether This Name "Father" Is Properly the Name of a Divine Person?*

We proceed thus to the Second Article: It would seem that this name "Father" is not properly the name of a divine person.

Objection 1. For the name Father signifies relation. Moreover person is an individual substance. Therefore this name Father is not properly a name signifying a Person.

Obj. 2. Further, a begetter is more common than father, for every father begets; but it is not so conversely. But a more common term is more properly applied to God, as stated above (Q. XIII, A. 11). Therefore the more proper name of the divine person is begetter and genitor than Father.

Obj. 3. Further, a metaphorical term cannot be the proper name of anyone. But the word is by us metaphorically called begotten, or offspring; and consequently, he to whom the word applies is metaphorically called father. Therefore the principle of the Word in God is not properly called Father.

Obj. 4. Further, everything which is said properly of God is said of God first before creatures. But generation appears to apply to creatures before God, because generation seems to be truer when the one who proceeds is distinct from the one from whom it proceeds, not only by relation but also

by essence. Therefore the name Father taken from generation does not seem to be the proper name of any divine person.

On the contrary, It is said (Ps. 88 27): *He shall cry out to me: Thou art my Father.*

I answer that, The proper name of any person signifies that whereby the person is distinguished from all other persons. For as body and soul belong to the notion of man, so to the comprehension of this particular man belong "this soul and this body" as it is stated in the *Metaphysics;*[10] and by these is this man distinguished from all other men. Now it is paternity which distinguishes the person of the Father from all the other persons. Hence this name Father, whereby paternity is signified, is the proper name of the person of the Father.

Reply Obj. 1. Among us relatioon is not a subsisting person. So this name father among us does not signify a person, but the relation of a person. In God, however, it is not so, as some wrongly thought, for in God the relation signified by the name Father is a subsisting person. Hence, as above explained (Q. XXIX, A. 4), this name *person* in God signifies a relation subsisting in the divine nature.

Reply Obj. 2. According to the Philosopher[11] a thing is denominated chiefly by its perfection, and by its end. Now generation signifies something in process of being made, while paternity signifies the complement of generation; and therefore the name Father is more expressive as regards the divine person than genitor or begetter.

Reply Obj. 3. In human nature the word is not a subsistence, and hence is not properly called begotten or son. But the divine Word is something subsistent in the divine nature, and hence He is properly and not metaphorically called Son, and His principle is called Father.

Reply Obj. 4. The terms generation and paternity, like the other terms properly applied to God, are said of God before creatures as regards the thing signified, but not as regards the mode of signification. Hence also the Apostle says, *I bend my knee to the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all paternity in heaven and on earth is named* (Eph. 3. 14). This is explained thus. It is manifest that generation receives its species from the term which is the form of the thing generated; and the nearer it is to the form of the generator, the truer and more perfect is the generation, just as univocal generation is more perfect than non-univocal, for it belongs to the essence of a generator to generate what is like itself in form. Hence the very fact that in the divine generation the form of the Begetter and Begotten is numerically the same, while in creatures it is not numerically, but only specifically, the same, shows that generation, and consequently paternity, is applied to God before creatures. Hence the very fact that in

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[10] Aristotle, VII, II ($1037^{a}9$).

[11] *Soul*, II, 4 ($416^{b}23$).

God a distinction exists of the Begotten from the Begetter as regards relation only belongs to the truth of the divine generation and paternity.

Article 3. *Whether This Name "Father" Is Applied to God, Firstly As a Personal Name?*

We proceed thus to the Third Article: It would seem that this name Father is not applied to God firstly as a personal name.

Objection 1. For in the intellect the common precedes the proper. But this name Father as a personal name is proper to the person of the Father; and taken in an essential sense it is common to the whole Trinity, for we say "Our Father" to the whole Trinity. Therefore Father comes first as an essential name before its personal sense.

Obj. 2. Further, in things of which the notion is the same there is no predication of before and after. But paternity and sonship seem to be of the same nature, according as a divine person is Father of the Son, and the whole Trinity is our Father, or the creature's; since, according to Basil (*Hom.* XV, *De Fide*),[12] "to receive is common to the creature and to the Son." Therefore "Father" in God is not taken as an essential name before it is taken personally.

Obj. 3. Further, it is not possible to compare things which have not a common notion. But the Son is compared to the creature by reason of sonship or generation, according to Col. 1. 15: *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.* Therefore paternity taken in a personal sense is not prior to, but has the same notion as, paternity taken essentially.

On the contrary, The eternal comes before the temporal. But God is the Father of the Son from eternity, while He is the Father of the creature in time. Therefore paternity in God is taken in a personal sense as regards the Son before it is so taken as regards the creature.

I answer that, A name is applied to that wherein is perfectly contained its whole meaning before it is applied to that which only partially contains it; for the latter bears the name by reason of a kind of likeness to that which answers perfectly to the meaning of the name, since all imperfect things are taken from perfect things. Hence this name lion is applied first to the animal containing the whole nature of a lion, and which is properly so called, before it is applied to a man who shows something of a lion's nature, as boldness, or strength, or the like, and of whom it is said by way of likeness.

Now it is manifest from the foregoing (QQ XXVII, A. 2; XXVIII, A. 4), that the perfect idea of paternity and filiation is to be found in God the Father and in God the Son, because one is the nature and glory of the Father and the Son. But in the creature, sonship is found in relation to God not in a perfect

[12] PG 31,468.

manner, since the Creator and the creature have not the one nature, but by way of a certain likeness, which is the more perfect the nearer we approach to the true idea of sonship. For God is called the Father of some creatures by reason only of a trace, for instance of irrational creatures, according to Job 38. 28: *Who is the father of the rain? or who begot the drops of dew?* Of some, namely, the rational creature (He is the Father), by reason of the likeness of image, according to Deut. 32. 6: I*s He not thy Father, who possessed, and made, and created thee?* And of others He is the Father by likeness of grace, and these are also called adoptive sons, as ordained to the heritage of eternal glory by the gift of grace which they have received, according to Rom. 8. 16, 17: *The Spirit Himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God; and if sons, heirs also.* Lastly, He is the Father of others by likeness of glory, because they have obtained possession of the heritage of glory, according to Rom. 5. 2: *We glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God.* Therefore it is plain that "paternity" is applied to God first, as expressing the relation of one Person to another Person, before it expresses the relation of God to creatures.

Reply Obj. 1. Common terms taken absolutely, in the order of our intellect, come before proper terms because they are included in the understanding of proper terms, but not conversely. For in the comprehension of the person of the Father, God is understood, but not conversely. But common terms which express relation to the creature come after proper terms which express personal relations, because the person proceeding in God proceeds as the principle of the production of creatures. For as the word conceived in the mind of the artist is first understood to proceed from the artist before the thing made, which is produced in likeness to the word conceived in the mind, so the Son proceeds from the Father before the creature, to which the name of sonship is applied as it participates in the likeness of the Son, as is clear from the words of Rom. 8. 29: *Whom He foreknew and predestined to be made conformable to the image of His Son.*

Reply Obj. 2. “To receive" is said to be common to the creature and to the Son not in a univocal sense but according to a certain remote likeness whereby He is called the First Born of creatures. Hence the authority quoted adds: *That He may be the First Born among many brethren* (Rom. 8. 29)*,* after saying that *some were conformed to the image of the Son of God*. But the Son of God naturally possesses a position of singularity above others, in having by nature what He receives, as Basil also declares (*ibid.*); hence He is called the only begotten (John. 1. 18): *The only begotten Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared unto us.*

From this appears the *Reply* to *Obj*. 3.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 34, AA 1-2 185b-188a

Article 1. *Whether Word in God Is a Personal Name?*

We proceed thus to the First Article: It would seem that Word in God is not a personal name.

Objection 1. For personal names are applied to God in a proper sense, as Father and Son. But "Word is applied to God metaphorically," as Origen says[13] on (John 1. 1), "*In the beginning was the Word*". Therefore Word is not a personal name in God.

Obj. 2. Further, according to Augustine (De Trin. ix, 10),[14] "The Word is knowledge with love;" and according to Anselm (Monol.),[15] "To speak is to the Supreme Spirit nothing but to see by thought." But knowledge and thought, and sight, are essential terms in God. Therefore Word is not a personal term in God.

Obj. 3. Further, it is essential to word to be spoken. But, according to Anselm (Monol. lix), as the Father is intelligent, the Son is intelligent, and the Holy Ghost is intelligent, so the Father speaks, the Son speaks, and the Holy Ghost speaks; and likewise, each one of them is spoken. Therefore, the name Word is used as an essential term in God, and not in a personal sense.

Obj. 4. Further, no divine person is made. But the Word of God is something made. For it is said, "Fire, hail, snow, ice, the storms which do His Word" (Ps. 148:8). Therefore the Word is not a personal name in God.

On the contrary, Augustine says (De Trin. vii, 2):[16] "As the Son is related to the Father, so also is the Word to Him Whose Word He is." But the Son is a personal name, since it is said relatively. Therefore so also is Word.

I answer that, The name of Word in God, if taken in its proper sense, is a personal name, and in no way anessential name.

To see how this is true, we must know that our own word taken in its proper sense has a threefold meaning; while in a fourth sense it is taken improperly or figuratively. The clearest and most common sense is when it is said of the word spoken by the voice; and this proceeds from an interior source as regards two things found in the exterior word--that is, the vocal sound itself, and the signification of the sound. For, according to the Philosopher,[17] vocal sound signifies the concept of the intellect. Again the vocal sound proceeds from the signification or the imagination, as stated in the book on the *Soul*[18]. The vocal sound, which has no signification cannot be called a word: hence the exterior vocal sound is called a word because it signifies the interior concept of the mind. Thus, therefore first and chiefly, the interior concept of the mind is called a word; secondarily, the vocal sound itself, signifying the interior concept, is so called; and thirdly, the

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[13] PG 14, 59.
[14] PL, 42, 969.
[15] Chap. 63 (PL 158, 208).
[16] PL 42, 936.
[17] *Interpretation*, I (16^a3).
[18] Aristotle, II, 8 (420^b32).

imagination of the vocal sound is called a word. Damascene mentions these three kinds of words (De Fide Orth. i, 13),[19] saying that "word" is called "the natural movement of the intellect, whereby it is moved, and understands, and thinks, as light and splendor;" which is the first kind. "Again," he says, "the word is what is not pronounced by a vocal word, but is uttered in the heart;" which is the third kind. "Again," also, "the word is the angel"--that is, the messenger "of intelligence;" which is the second kind. Word is also used in a fourth way figuratively for that which is signified or effected by a word; thus we are wont to say, "this is the word I have said," or "which the king has commanded," alluding to some deed signified by the word either by way of assertion or of command.

Now word is taken strictly in God, as signifying the concept of the intellect. Hence Augustine says (De Trin. xv, 10):[20] "Whoever can understand the word, not only before it is sounded, but also before thought has clothed it with imaginary sound, can already see some likeness of that Word of Whom it is said: In the beginning was the Word." The concept itself of the heart has of its own nature to proceed from something other than itself--namely, from the knowledge of the one conceiving. Hence "Word," according as we use the term strictly of God, signifies something proceeding from another; which belongs to the nature of personal terms in God, since the divine persons are distinguished by origin (Q. XXVII, Introd.; Q. XXXII, A. 3). Hence the term "Word," according as we use the term properly of God, is to be taken as said not essentially, but personally only.

Reply Obj. 1. The Arians, who sprang from Origen,[21] declared that the Son differed in substance from the Father. Hence, they endeavored to maintain that when the Son of God is called the Word, this is not to be understood in a strict sense; lest the idea of the Word proceeding should compel them to confess that the Son of God is of the same substance as the Father. For the interior word proceeds in such a manner from the one who pronounces it, as to remain within him. But supposing Word to be said metaphorically of God, we must still admit Word in its strict sense. For if a thing be called a word metaphorically, this can only be by reason of some manifestation; either it makes something manifest as a word, or it is manifested by a word. If manifested by a word, there must exist a word whereby it is manifested. If it is called a word because it exteriorly manifests, what it exteriorly manifests cannot be called word except in as far as it signifies the interior concept of the mind, which anyone may also manifest by exterior signs. Therefore, although Word may be sometimes said of God metaphorically, nevertheless we must also admit Word in the proper sense, and which is said personally.

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[19] PG 94, 857.
[20] PL 42, 1071.
[21] *In Joann.,* II (PG 14, 109).

Reply Obj. 2. Nothing belonging to the intellect can be applied to God personally, except word alone; for word alone signifies that which emanates from another. For what the intellect forms in its conception is the word. Now, the intellect itself, according as it is made actual by the intelligible species, is considered absolutely; likewise the act of understanding which is to the actual intellect what existence is to actual being; since the act of understanding does not signify an act going out from the intelligent agent, but an act remaining in the agent. Therefore when we say that word is knowledge, the term knowledge does not mean the act of a knowing intellect, or any one of its habits, but stands for what the intellect conceives by knowing. Hence also Augustine says (*De Trin.* vii, 2)[22] that the Word is "begotten wisdom;" for it is nothing but the concept of the Wise One; and in the same way It can be called "begotten knowledge." Thus can also be explained how "to speak" is in God "to see by thought," forasmuch as the Word is conceived by the gaze of the divine thought. Still the term "thought" does not properly apply to the Word of God. For Augustine says (*De Trin.* xv, 16):[23] "Therefore do we speak of the Word of God, and not of the Thought of God, lest we believe that in God there is something unstable, now assuming the form of Word, now putting off that form and remaining latent and as it were formless." For thought consists properly in the search after the truth, and this has no place in God. But when the intellect attains to the form of truth, it does not think, but perfectly contemplates the truth. Hence Anselm (*loc. cit.*) takes "thought" in an improper sense for "contemplation."

Reply Obj. 3. As, properly speaking, Word in God is said personally, and not essentially, so likewise is to "speak." Hence, as the Word is not common to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, so it is not true that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one speaker. So Augustine says (*De Trin*. vii, 1):[24] "He who speaks in that co-eternal Word is understood as not alone in God, but as being with that very Word, without which, forsooth, He would not be speaking." On the other hand, "to be spoken" belongs to each Person, for not only is the word spoken, but also the thing understood or signified by the word. Therefore in this manner to one person alone in God does it belong to be spoken in the same way as a word is spoken; whereas in the way whereby a thing is spoken as being understood in the word, it belongs to each Person to be spoken. For the Father, by understanding Himself, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and all other things comprised in this knowledge, conceives the Word; so that thus the whole Trinity is "spoken" in the Word; and likewise also all creatures: as the intellect of a man by the word he conceives in the act of understanding a stone, speaks a stone. Anselm took

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[22] PL 42, 936.
[23] PL 42, 1079.
[24] PL 42, 933.

the term "speak" improperly for the act of understanding; whereas they really differ from each other; for "to understand" means only the habitude of the intelligent agent to the thing understood, in which habitude no trace of origin is conveyed, but only a certain information of our intellect; forasmuch as our intellect is made actual by the form of the thing understood. In God, however, it means complete identity, because in God the intellect and the thing understood are altogether the same, as was proved above (Q. XIV, AA. 2, 4). Whereas to "speak" means chiefly the habitude to the word conceived; for "to speak" is nothing but to utter a word. But by means of the word it imports a habitude to the thing understood which in the word uttered is manifested to the one who understands. Thus, only the Person who utters the Word is "speaker" in God, although each Person understands and is understood, and consequently is spoken by the Word.

Reply Obj. 4. The term "word" is there taken figuratively, as the thing signified or effected by word is called word. For thus creatures are said to do the word of God, as executing any effect to which they are ordained by the word conceived of the divine wisdom; just as anyone is said to do the word of the king when he does the work to which he is appointed by the king's word.

Article 2. *Whether "Word" Is Proper Name of the Son?*

We proceed thus to the Second Article: It would seem that Word is not the proper name of the Son.

Objection 1. For the Son is a subsisting person in God. But word does not signify a subsisting thing, as appears in ourselves. Therefore word cannot be the proper name of the person of the Son.

Obj. 2. Further, the word proceeds from the speaker by being uttered. Therefore if the Son is properly the word, He proceeds from the Father by way only of utterance, which is the heresy of Valentine, as appears from Augustine (*De Hœres.* xi).[25]

Obj. 3. Further,every proper name of a person signifies some property of that person. Therefore, if the Word is the Son's proper name, it signifies some property of His; and thus there will be several more properties in God than those above mentioned.

Obj. 4. Further, Whoever understands conceives a word in the act of understanding. But the Son understands. Therefore some word belongs to the Son, and consequently to be Word is not proper to the Son.

Obj. 5. Further, it is said of the Son (Heb. 1. 3): *Bearing all things by the word of His power,* from which Basil infers (*Cont. Eunom.* V, II)[26] that the Holy Ghost is the Son's Word. Therefore to be Word is not proper to the Son.

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[25] PL 42, 28.
[26] PG 29, 732.

On the contrary, Augustine says (*De Trin.* vi. 2):[27] "By Word we understand the Son alone."

I answer that, Word, said of God in its proper sense, is used personally, and is the proper name of the person of the Son. For it signifies an emanation of the intellect: and the person Who proceeds in God, by way of emanation of the intellect is called the Son; and this procession is called generation, as we have shown above (Q. XXVII, A. 2). Hence it follows that the Son alone is properly called Word in God.

Reply Obj. 1. To be and to understand are not the same in us. Hence that which in us has intelligible being does not belong to our nature. But in God to be and to understand are one and the same; hence the Word of God is not an accident in Him, or an effect of His, but belongs to His very nature. And therefore it must be something subsistent, for whatever is in the nature of God subsusts; and so Damascene says (*De Fide Orthod.* i, 18)[28] that "the Word of God is substantial and has a hypostatic being; but other words [as our own] are powers of the soul."

Reply Obj. 2. The error of Valentine was condemned, not, as the Arians pretended, because he asserted that the Son was born by being uttered, as Hilary relates (*De Trin.* vi),[29] but on account of the different mode of utterance proposed by its author, as appears from Augustine (*De Hœres, loc, cit.*).

Reply Obj. 3. In the term Word the same property is signified as in the name Son. Hence Augustine says (*De Trin.* vii, 2):[30] "Word and Son express the same." For the Son's nativity, which is His personal property, is signified by different names which are attributed to the Son to express His perfection in various ways. To show that He is of the same nature as the Father, He is called the Son; to show that He is coeternal, He is called the Splendour; to show that He is altogether like, He is calledd the Image; to show that He is begotten immaterially, He is called the Word. All these truths cannot be expressed by only one name.

Reply Obj. 4. To be intelligent belongs to the Son in the same way as it belongs to Him to be God, since to understand is said of God essentially, as stated above, (A. 1, ANS. 2, 3). Now the Son is God begotten, and not God begetting; and hence He is intelligent not as producing a Word, but as the Word proceeding, because in God the Word proceeding does not differ really from the divine intellect, but is distinguished from the principle of the Word only by relation.

Reply Obj. 5. When it is said of the Son, "Bearing all things by the word of His power," *word* is taken figuratively for the effect of the Word. Hence a

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[27] PL 42, 925.
[28] Chap. 13 (PG 94, 857).
[29] PL 10, 162.
[30] PL 42, 936.

gloss says[31] that “word” is here taken to mean command, since by the effect of the power of the Word things are kept in being, as also by the effect of the power of the Word things are brought into being. Basil speaks improperly and figuratively in applying Word to the Holy Ghost, in the sense that everything that makes a person known may be called his word, and so in that way the Holy Ghost may be called the Son’s Word, because He manifests the Son.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 108, A 5, ANS and REP 1 555d-558b

Article 5. *Whether The Orders of the Angels Are Properly Named?*

We proceed thus to the Fifth Article: It would seem that the orders of the angels are not properly named.

Objection 1. For all the heavenly spirits are called Angels and Virtues heavenly powers.[32] But common names should not be appropriated to individuals. Therefore the orders of the Angels and Virtues are ineptly named.

Obj. 2. Further, it is proper to God alone to be Lord, according to the words, *Know ye that the Lord He is God* (Ps. 99. 3). Therefore one order of the heavenly spirits is not properly called Dominations.

Obj. 3. Further, the name Domination seems to imply government, and likewise the names Principalities and Powers. Therefore these three names do not seem to be properly applied to three orders.

Obj. 4. Further, archangels are as it were princes of the angels. Therefore this name ought not to be given to any other order than to the Principalities.

Obj. 5. Further, the name Seraphim is derived from ardour, which pertains to charity, and the name Cherubim from knowledge. But charity and knowledge are gifts common to all the angels. Therefore they ought not to be names of any particular orders.

Obj. 6. Further, Thrones are seats. But from the fact that God knows and loves the rational creature He is said to sit within it. Therefore there ought not to be any order of Thrones besides the Cherubim and Seraphim. Therefore it appears that the orders of angels are not properly named.

On the contrary, is the authority of Holy Scripture wherein they are so named. For the name Seraphim is found in Isaias 6. 2; the name Cherubim in Ezechiel I. (*cf.* 10. 15, 20); Thrones in Colossians 1. 16; Dominations, Virtues, Powers, and Principalities are mentioned in Ephesians 1. 21; the name Archangels in the canonical epistle of St. Jude (9), and the name Angels is found in many places of Scripture.

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[31] *Glossa interl.,* on Heb. 1. 3 (VI, 1341); *Glossa* Lombardi, on Heb. 1. 3 (PL 192, 406).
[32] Dionysius, *Cœl. Hier.,* 5 (PG 3, 196).

I answer that, As Dionysius says (*Cœl. Hier.* vii),[33] in the names of the angelic orders it is necessary to observe that “the proper name of each order expresses its property.” Now to see what is the property of each order, we must consider that in ordered things something may be found in a threefold manner: by way of property, by way of excess, and by way of participation. A thing is said to be in another by way of property if it is adequate and proportionate to its nature; by excess when an attribute is less than that to which it is attributed, but is possessed thereby in an eminent manner, as we have stated (Q XIII, A. 2) concerning all the names which are attributed to God; by participation, when an attribute is possessed by something not fully but partially—thus holy men are called gods by participation.
Therefore, if anything is to be called by a name designating its property, it ought not to be named from what it participates imperfectly, nor from that which it possesses in excess, but from that which is equal to it. For instance, when we wish properly to name a man, we should call him a rational substance, but not an intellectual substance, which is the proper name of an angel, because simple intelligence belongs to an angel as a property, and to man by participation. Nor do we call him a sensible substance, which is the proper name of a brute animal; because sense is less than the property of a man, and belongs to man in a more excellent way than to other animals.
So we must consider that in the angelic orders all spiritual perfections are common to all the angels, and that they are all more abundantly in the superior than in the inferior angels. Further, as in these perfections there are grades, the superior perfection belongs to the superior order as its property, but to the inferior by participation. And conversely the inferior perfection belongs to the inferior order as its property, and to the superior by way of excess. And thus the superior order is named from the superior perfection.
So in this way Dionysius (*Cœl. Hier*. vii)[34] explains the names of the orders accordingly as they befit the spiritual perfections they signify. Gregory, on the other hand, in expounding these names (*Hom*. xxxiv *in Evang*.)[35] seems to regard more the exterior ministrations. For he says that "angels are called so as announcing the least things; and the archangels in the greatest; by the virtues miracles are wrought; by the powers hostile powers are repulsed; and the principalities preside over the good spirits themselves."
Reply Obj. 1. Angel means messenger. So all the heavenly spirits, so far as they make known Divine things, are called angels. But the superior angels enjoy a certain excellence, as regards this manifestation, from which the

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[33] Sect. I (PG 3, 205).
[34] Sect. I (PG 3, 205). Cf. Also, Chap. VIII, I; IX, I (PG 2, 237, 257).
[35] PL 76, 1250.

superior orders are named. The lowest order of angels possess no excellence above the common manifestation, and therefore it is named from manifestation only; and thus the common name remains as it were proper to the lowest order, as Dionysius says (*Cœl. Hier*. v).[36] Or we may say that the lowest order can be specially called the order of Angels because they announce things to us immediately.

Virtue can be taken in two ways. First, commonly, considered as the medium between the essence and the operation, and in that sense all the heavenly spirits are called heavenly Virtues, as also "heavenly essences."[37] Secondly, as, meaning a certain excellence of strength; and thus it is the proper name of an angelic order. Hence Dionysius says (*Cœl*. *Hier*. viii)[38] that “the name 'virtues' signifies a certain virile and immovable strength,” first, in regard of all those Divine operations which befit them, secondly, in regard to receiving Divine gifts. Thus it signifies that they undertake fearlessly the Divine behests appointed to them; and this seems to imply strength of mind.

Reply Obj. 2. As Dionysius says (*Div. Nom*. xii):[39] “Dominion is attributed to God in a special manner, by way of excess: but the Divine word gives the more illustrious heavenly princes the name of Lord by participation, through whom the inferior angels receive the Divine gifts.” Hence Dionysius also states (*Cœl*. *Hier*. viii)[40] that “the name Domination means first a certain liberty, free from servile condition and common subjection, such as that of plebeians, and from tyrannical oppression, endured sometimes even by the great. Secondly, it signifies a certain rigid and inflexible supremacy which does not bend to any servile act, or to the act of those who are subject to or oppressed by tyrants. Thirdly, it signifies the desire and participation of the true dominion which belongs to God.” Likewise the name of each order signifies the participation of what belongs to God, as the name Virtues signifies the participation of the Divine virtue; and the same principle applies to the rest.

Reply Obj. 3. The names Domination, Power, and Principality belong to government in different ways. The place of a lord is only to prescribe what is to be done. So Gregory says (*In Evang*. II, hom. xxxiv),[41] that "some companies of the angels, because others are subject in obedience to them, are called dominations." The name Power points out a kind of order, according to what the Apostle says, *He that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordination of God* (Rom. 13. 2). And so Dionysius says (*Cœl*. *Hier*. viii)[42]

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[36] PG 3, 196.
[37] Dionysius, *Cœl. Hier.,* 5 (PG 3, 196).
[38] Sect. 1 (PG 3, 237).
[39] Sect. 2 (PG 3, 969;) sect. 4 (PG 3, 972).
[40] Sect. 1 (PG 3, 237).
[41] PL 76, 1251.
[42] Sect. 1 (PG 3, 240).

that the name Power signifies a kind of ordination both as regards the reception of Divine things, and as regards the Divine actions performed by superiors towards inferiors by leading them to things above. Therefore, to the order of Powers it belongs to regulate what is to be done by those who are subject to them. "To preside (*principari*)," as Gregory says (*loc. cit.*) "is to be first among others," as being first in carrying out what is ordered to be done. And so Dionysius says (*Cœl. Hier.* ix)[43] that the name of Principalities signifies one who leads in a sacred order. For those who lead others, being first among them, are properly called princes, according to the words, *Princes went before joined with singers* (Ps. 67. 26).

Reply Obj. 4. The Archangels, according to Dionysius (*Cœl. Hier.* ix),[44] are between the Principalities and the Angels. A medium compared to one extreme seems like the other, as participating in the nature of both extremes; thus tepid seems cold compared to hot, and hot compared to cold. So the Archangels are called the angel princes, because they are princes as regards the Angels, and angels as regards the Principalities. But according to Gregory (*loc. cit.*) they are called "Archangels, because they preside over the one order of the Angels, announcing as it were, greater things. And the Principalities are called so as presiding over all the heavenly Virtues who fulfil the Divine commands."

Reply Obj. 5. The name Seraphim does not come from charity only, but from the excess of charity, expressed by the word ardor or fire. Hence Dionysius (*Cœl. Hier.* vii)[45] expounds the name Seraphim according to the properties of fire, containing an excess of heat. Now in fire we may consider three things. First, the movement which is upwards and continuous. This signifies that they are borne inflexibly towards God. Secondly, the active force which is heat, which is not found in fire absolutely, but exists with a certain acuity, as being of most penetrating action, and reaching even to the smallest things, and as it were, with superabundant fervour. And by this is signified the action of these angels, exercised powerfully upon those who are subject to them, rousing them to a like fervour, and cleansing them wholly by their heat. Thirdly, we consider in fire its brightness, which signifies that these angels have in themselves an inextinguishable light, and that they also perfectly enlighten others.

In the same way the name Cherubim comes from a certain excess of knowledge; hence it is interpreted fulness of knowledge. Dionysius (*Cœl. Hier.* vii)[46] expounds this in regard to four things: the perfect vision of God; the full reception of the Divine Light; their contemplation in God of the

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[43] Sect. 1 (PG 3, 257).
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] Sect. 1 (PG 3, 205).
[46] *Ibid.*

beauty of the Divine order; and in regard to the fact that possessing this knowledge fully, they pour it forth copiously upon others.
Reply Obj. 6. The order of the Thrones excels the inferior orders as having an immediate knowledge of the types of the Divine works. But the Cherubim have the excellence of knowledge and the Seraphim the excellence of ardour. And although these two excellent attributes include the third, yet the gift belonging to the Thrones does not include the other two; and so the order of the Thrones is distinguished from the orders of the Cherubim and the Seraphim. For it is a common rule in all things that the excellence of the inferior is contained in the superior, but not conversely. But Dionysius (*ibid.*) explains the name Thrones by its relation to material seats, in which we may consider four things. First, the site; because seats are raised above the earth, and so the angels who are called Thrones are raised up to the immediate knowledge of the types of things in God. Secondly, because in material seats is displayed strength, since a person sits firmly on them. But here the reverse is the case, for the angels themselves are made firm by God. Thirdly, because the seat receives him who sits there, and he can be carried upon it; and so the angels receive God in themselves, and in a certain way bear Him to the inferior creatures. Fourthly, because in its shape, a seat is open on one side to receive the sitter; and thus are the angels promptly open to receive God and to serve Him.

20 AQUINAS: *Summa Theologica,* PART II-II, Q 9, A 2, ANS 424b-425a

Article 2. *Whether the Gift of Knowledge Is About Divine Things?*
We proceed thus to the Second Article: It seems that the gift of knowledge is about Divine things.
Objection 1. For Augustine says (*De Trin.* xiv, I)[47] that "knowledge begets, nourishes and strengthens faith." Now faith is about Divine things, because its object is the First Truth, as stated above (Q. I, A. 1). Therefore the gift of knowledge also is about Divine things.
Obj. 2. Further, The gift of knowledge is more excellent than acquired knowledge. But there is an acquired knowledge about Divine things, for instance, the science of metaphysics. Much more therefore is the gift of knowledge about Divine things.
Obj. 3. Further, According to Rom. 1. 20, *the invisible things of God ... are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.* If therefore there is knowledge about created things, it seems that there is also knowledge of Divine things.

[47] PL 42, 1037.

On the contrary, Augustine says[48]: "The knowledge of Divine things may be properly called wisdom, and the knowledge of human affairs may properly receive the name of knowledge."

I answer that, A sure judgment about a thing is formed chiefly from its cause, and so the order of judgments should be according to the order of causes. For just as the first cause is the cause of the second, so ought the judgment about a second cause be formed through the first cause. Nor is it possible to judge of the first cause through any other cause. Therefore the judgment which is formed through the first cause is the first and most perfect judgment.

Now in those things where we find something most perfect, the common name of the genus is appropriated for those things which fall short of the most perfect, and some special name is adapted to the most perfect thing, as is the case in Logic. For in the genus of convertible terms, that which signifies "what a thing is," is given the special name of "definition," but the convertible terms which fall short of this, retain the common name, and are called "proper" terms.

Accordingly, since the word knowledge implies certitude of judgment, as stated above (A. 1, Reply 1), if this certitude of the judgment is derived from the highest cause, the knowledge has a special name, which is wisdom. For a wise man in any branch of knowledge is one who knows the highest cause of that kind of knowledge, and is able to judge of all matters by that cause; and a wise man absolutely, is one who knows the cause which is absolutely highest, namely God. Hence the knowledge of Divine things is called wisdom, while the knowledge of human things is called knowledge (*scientia*), this being the common name denoting certitude of judgment, and appropriated to the judgment which is formed through second causes. Accordingly, if we take knowledge in this way, it is a distinct gift from the gift of wisdom, so that the gift of knowledge is only about human or created things.

Reply Obj. 1. Although matters of faith are Divine and eternal, yet faith itself is something temporal in the mind of the believer. Hence to know what one ought to believe, pertains to the gift of knowledge, but to know in themselves the very things we believe, by a kind of union with them, pertains to the gift of wisdom. Therefore the gift of wisdom corresponds more to charity which unites man's mind to God.

Reply Obj. 2. This argument takes knowledge in the generic acceptation of the term. It is not thus that knowledge is a special gift, but according as it is restricted to judgments formed through created things.

Reply Obj. 3. As stated above (Q. I, A. 1), every cognitive habit regards formally the means through which things are known, and materially, the

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[48] *Ibid.*

things that are known through the means. And since that which is formal is of most account, it follows that those sciences which draw conclusions about physical matter (*materia naturalis*) from mathematical principles, are counted rather among the mathematical sciences as being more like to them, though as to their matter they have more in common with the natural sciences; and for this reason it is stated in the *Pphysics*[49] that they are "more akin to physics (*magis naturales*)." Accordingly, since man knows God through His creatures, this seems to pertain to knowledge, to which it belongs formally, rather than to wisdom, to which it belongs materially; and, conversely, when we judge of creatures according to Divine things, this pertains to wisdom rather than to knowledge.

22 CHAUCER: *Second Nun's Prologue* [15,553-587] 462b-463a

Or elles Cecile, as I writen finde,
Is joyned, by a maner conjoininge
Of "hevene" and "Lia"; and heer, in figuringe,
The "heven" is set for thought of holinesse,
And "Lia" for hir lasting bisinesse.

Cecile may eek be seyd in this manere,
"Wanting of blindnesse," for hir grete light
Of sapience, and for hir thewes clere;
Or elles, lo! this maydens name bright
Of "hevene" and "leos" comth, for which by right
Men mighte hir wel "the heven of peple" calle,
Ensample of gode and wyse werkes alle.

For "leos" "peple" in English is to seye,
And right as men may in the hevene see
The sonne and mone and sterres every weye,
Right so men gostly, in this mayden free,
Seyen of feith the magnanimitee,
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkes, brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres wryte
That heven is swift and round and eek brenninge,
Right so was fayre Cecilie the whyte
Ful swift and bisy ever in good werkinge,
And round and hool in good perseveringe,
And brenning ever in charitee ful brighte;

[49] Aristotle, II, 2 (194ª7).

Now have I yow declared what she highte.

23 HOBBES: *Leviathan*, PART I, 55b-c

To these uses, there are also four correspondent abuses. First, when men register their thoughts wrong by the inconstancy of the signification of their words; by which they register for their conceptions that which they never conceived, and so deceive themselves. Secondly, when they use words metaphorically; that is, in other sense than that they are ordained for, and thereby deceive others. Thirdly, when by words they declare that to be their will which is not. Fourthly, when they use them to grieve one another: for seeing nature hath armed living creatures, some with teeth, some with horns, and some with hands, to grieve an enemy, it is but an abuse of speech to grieve him with the tongue, unless it be one whom we are obliged to govern; and then it is not to grieve, but to correct and amend.
The manner how speech serveth to the remembrance of the consequence of causes and effects consisteth in the imposing of *names*, and the connexion of them.
Of names, some are *proper*, and singular to one only thing; as Peter, John, this man, this tree: and some are *common* to many things; as man, horse, tree; every of which, though but one name, is nevertheless the name of diverse particular things; in respect of all which together, it is called an *universal*, there being nothing in the world universal but names; for the things named are every one of them individual and singular.
One universal name is imposed on many things for their similitude in some quality, or other accident: and whereas a proper name bringeth to mind one thing only, universals recall any one of those many.
And of names universal, some are of more and some of less extent, the larger comprehending the less large; and some again of equal extent, comprehending each other reciprocally. As for example, the name *body* is of larger signification than the word *man*, and comprehendeth it; and the names *man* and *rational* are of equal extent, comprehending mutually one another. But here we must take notice that by a name is not always understood, as in grammar, one only word, but sometimes by circumlocution many words together. For all these words, *He that in his actions observeth the laws of his country,* make but one name, equivalent to this one word, *just*.

35 LOCKE: *Human Understanding*, BK I, CH I, SECT 15 98d-99a; BK II, CH XI, SECT 9 145b-c; BK III, CH I, SECT 3 251d-252a; CH III, SECT 1-9 254d-256c; SECT 11-12 257a-c; CH VI, SECT 42 280b-c

Human Understanding, BK I, CH I, SECT 15 98d-99a

15. *The steps by which the mind attains several truths.* The senses at first let in *particular* ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet, and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them. Afterwards, the mind proceeding further, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names. In this manner the mind comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the *materials* about which to exercise its discursive faculty. And the use of reason becomes daily more visible, as these materials that give it employment increase. But though the having of general ideas and the use of general words and reason usually grow together, yet I see not how this any way proves them innate. The knowledge of some truths, I confess, is very early in the mind but in a way that shows them not to be innate. For, if we will observe, we shall find it still to be about ideas, not innate, but acquired; it being about those first which are imprinted by external things, with which infants have earliest to do, which make the most frequent impressions on their senses. In ideas thus got, the mind discovers that some agree and others differ, probably as soon as it has any use of memory; as soon as it is able to retain and perceive distinct ideas. But whether it be then or no, this is certain, it does so long before it has the use of words; or comes to that which we commonly call "the use of reason." For a child knows as certainly before it can speak the difference between the ideas of sweet and bitter (i.e. that sweet is not bitter), as it knows afterwards (when it comes to speak) that wormwood and sugarplums are not the same thing.

Human Understanding, BK II, CH XI, SECT 9 145b-c

9. *Abstraction.* The use of words then being to stand as outward marks of our internal ideas, and those ideas being taken from particular things, if every particular idea that we take in should have a distinct name, names must be endless. To prevent this, the mind makes the particular ideas received from particular objects to become general; which is done by considering them as they are in the mind such appearances,— separate from all other existences, and the circumstances of real existence, as time, place, or any other concomitant ideas.[50] This is called ABSTRACTION,[51] whereby ideas taken from particular beings become general representatives of all of the same kind; and their names general names, applicable to whatever exists conformable to such abstract ideas. Such precise, naked

[50] Cf. Bk. IV. ch. xvii. § 8.
[51] Cf. Bk. III. ch. iii. § 6; Bk. IV. ch. vii. § 9.

appearances in the mind, without considering how, whence, or with what others they came there, the understanding lays up (with names commonly annexed to them) as the standards to rank real existences into sorts, as they agree with these patterns, and to denominate them accordingly. Thus the same colour being observed to-day in chalk or snow, which the mind yesterday received from milk, it considers that appearance alone, makes it a representative of all of that kind; and having given it the name *whiteness*, it by that sound signifies the same quality wheresoever to be imagined or met with; and thus universals, whether ideas or terms, are made.

Human Understanding, BK III, CH I, SECT 3 251d-252a

3. *To make them general signs*. But neither was this sufficient to make words so useful as they ought to be. It is not enough for the perfection of language, that sounds can be made signs of ideas, unless those signs can be so made use of as to comprehend several particular things: for the multiplication of words would have perplexed their use, had every particular thing need of a distinct name to be signified by. To remedy this inconvenience, language had yet a further improvement in the use of *general terms*, whereby one word was made to mark a multitude of particular existences: which advantageous use of sounds was obtained only by the difference of the ideas they were made signs of: those names becoming general, which are made to stand for *general ideas*, and those remaining particular, where the *ideas* they are used for are *particular*.

Human Understanding, BK III, CH III, SECT 1-9 254d-256c

1. *The greatest part of words are general terms*. All things that exist being particulars, it may perhaps be thought reasonable that words, which ought to be conformed to things, should be so too,- I mean in their signification: but yet we find quite the contrary. The far greatest part of words that make all languages are general terms: which has not been the effect of neglect or chance, but of reason and necessity.

2. *That every particular thing should have a name for itself is impossible.* First, It is impossible that every particular thing should have a distinct peculiar name. For, the signification and use of words depending on that connexion which the mind makes between its ideas and the sounds it uses as signs of them, it is necessary, in the application of names to things, that the mind should have distinct ideas of the things, and retain also the particular name that belongs to every one, with its peculiar appropriation to that idea. But it is beyond the power of human capacity to frame and retain distinct ideas of all the particular things we meet with: every bird and beast men saw; every tree and plant that affected the senses, could not find a place in the most capacious understanding. If it be looked on as an instance of a prodigious memory, that some generals have been able to call

every soldier in their army by his proper name, we may easily find a reason why men have never attempted to give names to each sheep in their flock, or crow that flies over their heads; much less to call every leaf of plants, or grain of sand that came in their way, by a peculiar name.

3. *And would be useless, if it were possible.* Secondly, If it were possible, it would yet be useless; because it would not serve to the chief end of language. Men would in vain heap up names of particular things, that would not serve them to communicate their thoughts. Men learn names, and use them in talk with others, only that they may be understood: which is then only done when, by use or consent, the sound I make by the organs of speech, excites in another man's mind who hears it, the idea I apply it to in mine, when I speak it. This cannot be done by names applied to particular things; whereof I alone having the ideas in my mind, the names of them could not be significant or intelligible to another, who was not acquainted with all those very particular things which had fallen under my notice.

4. *A distinct name for every particular thing, not fitted for enlargement of knowledge*. Thirdly, But yet, granting this also feasible, (which I think is not), yet a distinct name for every particular thing would not be of any great use for the improvement of knowledge: which, though founded in particular things, enlarges itself by general views; to which things reduced into sorts, under general names, are properly subservient. These, with the names belonging to them, come within some compass, and do not multiply every moment, beyond what either the mind can contain, or use requires. And therefore, in these, men have for the most part stopped: but yet not so as to hinder themselves from distinguishing particular things by appropriated names, where convenience demands it. And therefore in their own species, which they have most to do with, and wherein they have often occasion to mention particular persons, they make use of proper names; and there distinct individuals have distinct denominations.

5. *What things have proper names, and why.* Besides persons, countries also, cities, rivers, mountains, and other the like distinctions of place have usually found peculiar names, and that for the same reason; they being such as men have often an occasion to mark particularly, and, as it were, set before others in their discourses with them. And I doubt not but, if we had reason to mention particular horses as often as we have to mention particular men, we should have proper names for the one, as familiar as for the other, and Bucephalus would be a word as much in use as Alexander. And therefore we see that, amongst jockeys, horses have their proper names to be known and distinguished by, as commonly as their servants: because, amongst them, there is often occasion to mention this or that particular horse when he is out of sight.

6. *How general words are made.* The next thing to be considered is, — How general words come to be made. For, since all things that exist are only

particulars,[52] how come we by general terms; or where find we those general natures they are supposed to stand for? WoWords become general by being made the signs of general ideas: and ideas become general, by separating from them the circumstances of time and place, and any other ideas that may determine them to this or that particular existence. By this way of abstraction they are made capable of representing more individuals than one; each of which having in it a conformity to that abstract idea,[53] is (as we call it) of that sort.

7. *Show by the way we enlarge our complex ideas from infancy.* But, to deduce this a little more distinctly, it will not perhaps be amiss to trace our notions and names from their beginning, and observe by what degrees we proceed, and by what steps we enlarge our ideas from our first infancy. There is nothing more evident, than that the ideas of the persons children converse with (to instance in them alone) are, like the persons themselves, only particular. The ideas of the nurse and the mother are well framed in their minds; and, like pictures of them there, represent only those individuals. The names they first gave to them are confined to these individuals; and the names of *nurse* and *mamma,* the child uses, determine themselves to those persons. Afterwards, when time and a larger acquaintance have made them observe that there are a great many other things in the world, that in some common agreements of shape, and several other qualities, resemble their father and mother, and those persons they have been used to, they frame an idea, which they find those many particulars do partake in; and to that they give, with others, the name *man*, for example. And thus they come to have a general name, and a general idea. Wherein they make nothing new; but only leave out of the complex idea they had of Peter and James, Mary and Jane, that which is peculiar to each, and retain only what is common to them all.

8. *And further enlarge our complex ideas, by still leaving out properties contained in them.* By the same way that they come by the general name and idea of *man,* they easily advance to more general names and notions. For, observing that several things that differ from their idea of man, and cannot therefore be comprehended under that name, have yet certain qualities wherein they agree with man, by retaining only those qualities, and uniting them into one idea, they have again another and more general idea;to which having given a name they make a term of a more comprehensive extension: which new idea is made, not by any new addition, but only as before, by leaving out the shape, and some other properties signified by the name man, and retaining only a body, with life, sense, and spontaneous motion, comprehended under the name animal.

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[52] Bk. II. ch. xi. §§ 10, 11; Bk. IV. ch. vii. § 9.

[53] Cf. Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge,* Introd. § 16. Also cf. Bk. II. ch. xi. §§ 9, 10.

9. *General natures are nothing but abstract and partial ideas of more complex ones.* That this is the way whereby men first formed general ideas, and general names to them, I think is so evident, that there needs no other proof of it but the considering of a man's self, or others, and the ordinary proceedings of their minds in knowledge. And he that thinks *general natures* or *notions* are anything else but such abstract and partial ideas of more complex ones, taken at first from particular existences, will, I fear, be at a loss where to find them. For let any one effect, and then tell me, wherein does his idea of *man* differ from that of *Peter* and *Paul*, or his idea of *horse* from that of *Bucephalus*, but in the leaving out something that is peculiar to each individual, and retaining so much of those particular complex ideas of several particular existences as they are found to agree in? Of the complex ideas signified by the names *man* and *horse*, leaving out but those particulars wherein they differ, and retaining only those wherein they agree, and of those making a new distinct complex idea, and giving the name *animal* to it, one has a more general term, that comprehends with man several other creatures. Leave out of the idea of *animal*, sense and spontaneous motion, and the remaining complex idea, made up of the remaining simple ones of body, life, and nourishment, becomes a more general one, under the more comprehensive term, *vivens*. And, not to dwell longer upon this particular, so evident in itself; by the same way the mind proceeds to *body*, *substance*, and at last to *being*, *thing*, and such universal terms, which stand for any of our ideas whatsoever. To conclude: this whole mystery of genera and species, which make such a noise in the schools, and are with justice so little regarded out of them, is nothing else but *abstract ideas,* more or less comprehensive, with names annexed to them. In all which this is constant and unvariable, That every more general term stands for such an idea, and is but a part of any of those contained under it.

Human Understanding, BK III, CH III, SECT 11-12 257a-c

11. *General and universal are creatures of the understanding, and belong not to the real existence of things.* To return to general words: it is plain, by what has been said, that general and universal belong not to the real existence of things; but are the inventions and creatures of the understanding, made by it for its own use, and concern only signs, whether words or ideas.[54] Words are general, as has been said, when used for signs of general ideas, and so are applicable indifferently to many particular things; and ideas are general when they are set up as the representatives of many particular things: but universality belongs not to things themselves, which are all of them particular in their existence,[55] even those words and

[54] Cf. Bk. IV. ch. xxi. § 4.
[55] Cf. § 13.

ideas which in their signification are general. When therefore we quit particulars, the generals that rest are only creatures of our own making; their general nature being nothing but the capacity they are put into, by the understanding, of signifying or representing many particulars. For the signification they have is nothing but a relation that, by the mind of man, is added to them.

12. *Abstract ideas are the essences of genera and species.* The next thing therefore to be considered is, What kind of signification it is that general words have. For, as it is evident that they do not signify barely one particular thing; for then they would not be general terms, but proper names, so, on the other side, it is as evident they do not signify a plurality; for *man* and *men* would then signify the same;and the distinction of numbers (as the grammarians call them) would be superfluous and useless. That then which general wordssignify is a *sort* of things; and each of them does that, by being a sign of an abstract idea in the mind; to which idea, as things existing are found to agree, so they come to be ranked under that name, or, which is all one, be of that sort. Whereby it is evident that the *essences* of the sorts, or, if the Latin word pleases better, *species* of things, are nothing else but these abstract ideas. For the having the essence of any species, being that which makes anything to be of that species; and the conformity to the idea to which the name is annexed being that which gives a right to that name; the having the essence, and the having that conformity, must needs be the same thing: since to be of any species, and to have a right to the name of that species, is all one. As, for example, to be a *man,* or of the *species* man, and to have right to the *name* man, is the same thing. Again, to be a man, or of the species man, and have the *essence* of a man, is the same thing. Now, since nothing can be a man, or have a right to the name man, but what has a conformity to the abstract idea the name man stands for, nor anything be a man, or have a right to the species man, but what has the essence of that species; it follows, that the abstract idea for which the name stands, and the essence of the species, is one and the same. From whence it is easy to observe, that the essences of the sorts of things, and, consequently, the sorting of things, is the workmanship of the understanding that abstracts and makes those general ideas.

Human Understanding, BK III, CH VI, SECT 42 280b-c

42. *Substances alone, of all our several sorts of ideas, have proper names.* This is further to be observed concerning substances, that they alone of all our several sorts of ideas have particular or proper names, whereby one only particular thing is signified. Because in simple ideas, modes, and relations, it seldom happens that men have occasion to mention often this or that particular when it is absent. Besides, the greatest part of mixed

modes, being actions which perish in their birth, are not capable of a lasting duration, as substances which are the actors; and wherein the simple ideas that make up the complex ideas designed by the name have a lasting union.

35 BERKELEY: *Human Knowledge*, INTRO, SECT 11-12 407b-408b; SECT 15 409a-b; SECT 18-19 410a-c; SECT 122 437b-c

Human Knowledge, INTRO, SECT 11-12 407b-408b

11. I proceed to examine what can be alleged in defence of the doctrine of abstraction, and try if I can discover what it is that inclines the men of speculation to embrace an opinion so remote from common sense as that seems to be. There has been a late deservedly esteemed philosopher who, no doubt, has given it very much countenance, by seeming to think the having abstract general ideas is what puts the widest difference in point of understanding betwixt man and beast. "The having of general ideas," saith he, "is that which puts a perfect distinction betwixt man and brutes, and is an excellency which the faculties of brutes do by no means attain unto. For, it is evident we observe no foot-steps in them of making use of general signs for universal ideas; from which we have reason to imagine that they have not the faculty of abstracting, or making general ideas, since they have no use of words or any other general signs." And a little after: "Therefore, I think, we may suppose that it is in this that the species of brutes are discriminated from men, and it is that proper difference wherein they are wholly separated, and which at last widens to so wide a distance. For, if they have any ideas at all, and are not bare machines (as some would have them), we cannot deny them to have some reason. It seems as evident to me that they do, some of them, in certain instances reason as that they have sense; but it is only in particular ideas, just as they receive them from their senses. They are the best of them tied up within those narrow bounds, and have not (as I think) the faculty to enlarge them by any kind of abstraction." — *Essay on Human Understanding*, II. ii. 10 and 11. I readily agree with this learned author, that the faculties of brutes can by no means attain to abstraction. But then if this be made the distinguishing property of that sort of animals, I fear a great many of those that pass for men must be reckoned into their number. The reason that is here assigned why we have no grounds to think brutes have abstract general ideas is, that we observe in them no use of words or any other general signs; which is built on this supposition — that the making use of words implies the having general ideas. From which it follows that men who use language are able to abstract or generalize their ideas. That this is the sense and arguing of the author will further appear by his answering the question he in another place puts: "Since all things that exist are only particulars, how come we by

general terms?" His answer is: "Words become general by being made the signs of general ideas." — *Essay on Human Understanding*, IV. iii. 6. But it seems that a word becomes general by being made the sign, not of an abstract general idea, but of several particular ideas, any one of which it indifferently suggests to the mind. For example, when it is said "the change of motion is proportional to the impressed force," or that "whatever has extension is divisible," these propositions are to be understood of motion and extension in general; and nevertheless it will not follow that they suggest to my thoughts an idea of motion without a body moved, or any determinate direction and velocity, or that I must conceive an abstract general idea of extension, which is neither line, surface, nor solid, neither great nor small, black, white, nor red, nor of any other determinate colour. It is only implied that whatever particular motion I consider, whether it be swift or slow, perpendicular, horizontal, or oblique, or in whatever object, the axiom concerning it holds equally true. As does the other of every particular extension, it matters not whether line, surface, or solid, whether of this or that magnitude or figure.

12. By observing how ideas become general we may the better judge how words are made so. And here it is to be noted that I do not deny absolutely there are general ideas, but only that there are any *abstract* general ideas; for, in the passages we have quoted wherein there is mention of general ideas, it is always supposed that they are formed by abstraction, after the manner set forth in sections 8 and 9. Now, if we will annex a meaning to our words, and speak only of what we can conceive, I believe we shall acknowledge that an idea which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the same sort. To make this plain by an example, suppose a geometrician is demonstrating the method of cutting a line in two equal parts. He draws, for instance, a black line of an inch in length: this, which in itself is a particular line, is nevertheless with regard to its signification general, since, as it is there used, it represents all particular lines whatsoever; so that what is demonstrated of it is demonstrated of all lines, or, in other words, of a line in general. And, as that *particular* line becomes general by being made a sign, so the *name* "line," which taken absolutely is particular, by being a sign is made general. And as the former owes its generality not to its being the sign of an abstract or general line, but of all particular right lines that may possibly exist, so the latter must be thought to derive its generality from the same cause, namely, the various particular lines which it indifferently denotes.

Human Knowledge, INTRO, SECT 15 409a-b

15. Nor do I think them a whit more needful for the *enlargement of knowledge* than for *communication.* It is, I know, a point much insisted on,

that all knowledge and demonstration are about universal notions, to which I fully agree: but then it doth not appear to me that those notions are formed by abstraction in the manner premised — *universality*, so far as I can comprehend, not consisting in the absolute, positive nature or conception of anything, but in the relation it bears to the particulars signified or represented by it; by virtue whereof it is that things, names, or notions, being in their own nature *particular*, are rendered *universal*. Thus, when I demonstrate any proposition concerning triangles, it is to be supposed that I have in view the universal idea of a triangle; which ought not to be understood as if I could frame an idea of a triangle which was neither equilateral, nor scalenon, nor equicrural; but only that the particular triangle I consider, whether of this or that sort it matters not, doth equally stand for and represent all rectilinear triangles whatsoever, and is in that sense *universal*. All which seems very plain and not to include any difficulty in it.

Human Knowledge, INTRO, SECT 18-19 410a-c

18. I come now to consider the *source* of this prevailing notion, and that seems to me to be language. And surely nothing of less extent than reason itself could have been the source of an opinion so universally received. The truth of this appears as from other reasons so also from the plain confession of the ablest patrons of abstract ideas, who acknowledge that they are made in order to naming; from which it is a clear consequence that if there had been no such things as speech or universal signs there never had been any thought of abstraction. See III. vi. 39, and elsewhere of the *Essay on Human Understanding*. Let us examine the manner wherein words have contributed to the origin of that mistake.— First then, it is thought that every name has, or ought to have, one only precise and settled signification, which inclines men to think there are certain abstract, determinate ideas that constitute the true and only immediate signification of each general name; and that it is by the mediation of these abstract ideas that a general name comes to signify any particular thing. Whereas, in truth, there is no such thing as one precise and definite signification annexed to any general name, they all signifying indifferently a great number of particular ideas. All which doth evidently follow from what has been already said, and will clearly appear to anyone by a little reflexion. To this it will be objected that every name that has a definition is thereby restrained to one certain signification. For example, a triangle is defined to be "a plain surface comprehended by three right lines," by which that name is limited to denote one certain idea and no other. To which I answer, that in the definition it is not said whether the surface be great or small, black or white, nor whether the sides are long or short, equal or unequal, nor with what angles they are inclined to each other; in all which there may be

great variety, and consequently there is no one settled idea which limits the signification of the word triangle. It is one thing for to keep a name constantly to the same definition, and another to make it stand everywhere for the same idea; the one is necessary, the other useless and impracticable.

19. But, to give a farther account how words came to produce the doctrine of abstract ideas, it must be observed that it is a received opinion that language has no other end but the communicating our ideas, and that every significant name stands for an idea. This being so, and it being withal certain that names which yet are not thought altogether insignificant do not always mark out particular conceivable ideas, it is straightway concluded that they stand for abstract notions. That there are many names in use amongst speculative men which do not always suggest to others determinate, particular ideas, or in truth anything at all, is what nobody will deny. And a little attention will discover that it is not necessary (even in the strictest reasonings) significant names which stand for ideas should, every time they are used, excite in the understanding the ideas they are made to stand for— in reading and discoursing, names being for the most part used as letters are in Algebra, in which, though a particular quantity be marked by each letter, yet to proceed right it is not requisite that in every step each letter suggest to your thoughts that particular quantity it was appointed to stand for.

Human Knowledge, INTRO, SECT 122 437b-c

122. In Arithmetic, therefore, we regard not the *things,* but the *signs,* which nevertheless are not regarded for their own sake, but because they direct us how to act with relation to things, and dispose rightly of them. Now, agreeably to what we have before observed of words in general (sect. 19, Introd.) it happens here likewise that abstract ideas are thought to be signified by numeral names or characters, while they do not suggest ideas of particular things to our minds. I shall not at present enter into a more particular dissertation on this subject, but only observe that it is evident from what has been said, those things which pass for abstract truths and theorems concerning numbers, are in reality conversant about no object distinct from particular numeral things, except only names and characters, which originally came to be considered on no other account but their being signs, or capable to represent aptly whatever particular things men had need to compute. Whence it follows that to study them for their own sake would be just as wise, and to as good purpose as if a man, neglecting the true use or original intention and subserviency of language, should spend his time in impertinent criticisms upon words, or reasonings and controversies purely verbal.

35 HUME: *Human Understanding*, SECT XII, DIV 125, 507b [fn I]

[1]It seems to me not impossible to avoid these absurdities and contradictions, if it be admitted, that there is no such thing as abstract or general ideas, properly speaking; but that all general ideas are, in reality, particular ones, attached to a general term, which recalls, upon occasion, other particular ones, that resemble, in certain circumstances, the idea, present to the mind. Thus when the term Horse is pronounced, we immediately figure to ourselves the idea of a black or a white animal, of a particular size or figure: But as that term is also usually applied to animals of other colours, figures and sizes, these ideas, though not actually present to the imagination, are easily recalled; and our reasoning and conclusion proceed in the same way, as if they were actually present. If this be admitted (as seems reasonable) it follows that all the ideas of quantity, upon which mathematicians reason, are nothing but particular, and such as are suggested by the senses and imagination, and consequently, cannot be infinitely divisible. It is sufficient to have dropped this hint at present, without prosecuting it any father. It certainly concerns all lovers of science not to expose themselves to the ridicule and contempt of the ignorant by their conclusions; and this seems the readiest solution of these difficulties.

36 STERNE: *Tristram Shandy*, 217b-221a; 351a-353b

Tristram Shandy, 217b-221a

Chapter 19

I would sooner undertake to explain the hardest problem in geometry, that pretend to account for it, that a gentleman of my father’s great good sense,—knowing, as the reader must have observed him, and curious too in philosophy,—wise also in political reasoning,—and in polemical (as he will find) no way ignorant,—could be capable of entertaining a notion in his head, so out of the common track,—that I fear the reader, when I come to mention it to him, if he is the least of a choleric temper, will immediately throw the book by; if mercurial, he will laugh most heartily at it;—and if he is of a grave and saturnine cast, he will, at first sight, absolutely condemn as fanciful and extravagant; and that was in respect to the choice and imposition of christian names, on which he thought a great deal more depended than what superficial minds were capable of conceiving.

His opinion, in this matter, was, That there was a strange kind of magic bias, which good or bad names, as he called them, irresistibly impressed upon our characters and conduct.

The hero of Cervantes argued not the point with more seriousness,—nor had he more faith,—or more to say on the powers of necromancy in dishonouring his deeds,—or on Dulcinea's name, in shedding lustre upon

them, than my father had on those of Trismegistus or Archimedes, on the one hand—or of Nyky and Simkin on the other. How many Caesars and Pompeys, he would say, by mere inspiration of the names, have been rendered worthy of them? And how many, he would add, are there, who might have done exceeding well in the world, had not their characters and spirits been totally depressed and Nicodemused into nothing?

I see plainly, Sir, by your looks, (or as the case happened) my father would say—that you do not heartily subscribe to this opinion of mine,—which, to those, he would add, who have not carefully sifted it to the bottom,—I own has an air more of fancy than of solid reasoning in it;—and yet, my dear Sir, if I may presume to know your character, I am morally assured, I should hazard little in stating a case to you,—not as a party in the dispute,—but as a judge, and trusting my appeal upon it to your own good sense and candid disquisition in this matter;—you are a person free from any narrow prejudices of education as most men;—and, if I may presume to penetrate farther into you,—of a liberality of genius above bearing down an opinion, merely because it wants friends. Your son,—your dear son,—from whose sweet and open temper you have so much to expect.—Your Billy, Sir!—would you, for the world, have called him Judas?—Would you, my dear Sir, he would say, laying his hand upon your breast, with the genteelest address,—and in that soft and irresistible piano of voice, which the nature of the *argumentum ad hominem* absolutely requires,—Would you, Sir, if a Jew of a godfather had proposed the name for your child, and offered you his purse along with it, would you have consented to such a desecration of him?——O my God! he would say, looking up, if I know your temper right, Sir,—you are incapable of it;—you would have trampled upon the offer; you would have thrown the temptation at the tempter's head with abhorrence. Your greatness of mind in this action, which I admire, with that generous contempt of money, which you shew me in the whole transaction, is really noble;—and what renders it more so, is the principle of it;—the workings of a parent's love upon the truth and conviction of this very hypothesis, namely, That was your son called Judas,—the sordid and treacherous idea, so inseparable from the name, would have accompanied him through life like his shadow, and, in the end, made a miser and a rascal of him, in spite, Sir, of your example.

I never knew a man able to answer this argument.—But, indeed, to speak of my father as he was;—he was certainly irresistible; both in his orations and disputations;—he was born an orator;—Θεοσίσακτος.—Persuasion hung upon his lips, and the elements of Logic and Rhetoric were so blended up in him,—and, withal, he had so shrewd a guess at the weaknesses and passions of his respondent,—that Nature might have stood up and said,—“This man is eloquent.”—In short, whether he was on the weak or the strong side of the question, 'twas hazardous in either case to attack

him.—And yet, 'tis strange he had never read Cicero, nor Quintilian *de Oratore*, nor Isocrates, nor Aristotle, nor Longinus amongst the antients;—nor Vossius, nor Skioppius, nor Ramus, nor Farnaby amongst the moderns;—and what is more astonishing, he had never in his whole life the least light or spark of subtlety struck into his mind, by one single lecture upon Crackenthorp or Burgersdicius, or any Dutch logician or commentator;—he knew not so much as in what the difference of an argument *ad ignorantiam* and an argument *ad hominem* consisted; so that I well remember, when he went up along with me to enter my name at Jesus College in ****,—it was a matter of just wonder with my worthy tutor, and two or three fellows of that learned society,—that a man who knew not so much as the names of his tools, should be able to work after that fashion with them.

To work with them in the best manner he could, was what my father was, however, perpetually forced upon;—for he had a thousand little sceptical notions of the comic kind to defend—most of which notions, I verily believe, at first entered upon the footing of mere whims, and of a *vive la Bagatelle;* and as such he would make merry with them for half an hour or so, and having sharpened his wit upon them, dismiss them till another day.

I mention this, not only as matter of hypothesis or conjecture upon the progress and establishment of my father's many odd opinions,—but as a warning to the learned reader against the indiscreet reception of such guests, who, after a free and undisturbed entrance, for some years, into our brains,—at length claim a kind of settlement there,—working sometimes like yeast;—but more generally after the manner of the gentle passion, beginning in jest,—but ending in downright earnest.

Whether this was the case of the singularity of my father's notions—or that his judgment, at length, became the dupe of his wit;—or how far, in many of his notions, he might, though odd, be absolutely right;—the reader, as he comes at them, shall decide. All that I maintain here, is, that in this one, of the influence of christian names, however it gained footing, he was serious;—he was all uniformity;—he was systematical, and, like all systematic reasoners, he would move both heaven and earth, and twist and torture every thing in nature, to support his hypothesis. In a word, I repeat it over again;—he was serious; and, in consequence of it, he would lose all kind of patience whenever he saw people, especially of condition, who should have known better,—as careless and as indifferent about the name they imposed upon their child,—or more so, than in the choice of Ponto or Cupid for their puppy-dog.

This, he would say, looked ill;—and had, moreover, this particular aggravation in it, viz., That when once a vile name was wrongfully or injudiciously given, 'twas not like the case of a man's character, which, when wronged, might hereafter be cleared;—and, possibly, some time or

other, if not in the man's life, at least after his death,—be, somehow or other, set to rights with the world: But the injury of this, he would say, could never be undone;—nay, he doubted even whether an act of parliament could reach it:—He knew as well as you, that the legislature assumed a power over surnames;—but for very strong reasons, which he could give, it had never yet adventured, he would say, to go a step farther.
It was observable, that tho' my father, in consequence of this opinion, had, as I have told you, the strongest likings and dislikings towards certain names;—that there were still numbers of names which hung so equally in the balance before him, that they were absolutely indifferent to him. Jack, Dick, and Tom were of this class: These my father called neutral names;—affirming of them, without a satire, That there had been as many knaves and fools, at least, as wise and good men, since the world began, who had indifferently borne them;—so that, like equal forces acting against each other in contrary directions, he thought they mutually destroyed each other's effects; for which reason, he would often declare, He would not give a cherry-stone to choose amongst them. Bob, which was my brother's name, was another of these neutral kinds of christian names, which operated very little either way; and as my father happened to be at Epsom, when it was given him,—he would ofttimes thank Heaven it was no worse. Andrew was something like a negative quantity in Algebra with him;—'twas worse, he said, than nothing.—William stood pretty high:—Numps again was low with him:—and Nick, he said, was the Devil.
But, of all names in the universe, he had the most unconquerable aversion for Tristram;—he had the lowest and most contemptible opinion of it of any thing in the world,—thinking it could possibly produce nothing in *rerum naturâ*, but what was extremely mean and pitiful: So that in the midst of a dispute on the subject, in which, by the bye, he was frequently involved,—he would sometimes break off in a sudden and spirited Epiphonema, or rather Erotesis, raised a third, and sometimes a full fifth above the key of the discourse,—and demand it categorically of his antagonist, Whether he would take upon him to say, he had ever remembered,—whether he had ever read,—or even whether he had ever heard tell of a man, called Tristram, performing any thing great or worth recording?—No,—he would say,—Tristram!—The thing is impossible.
What could be wanting in my father but to have wrote a book to publish this notion of his to the world? Little boots it to the subtle speculatist to stand single in his opinions,—unless he gives them proper vent:—It was the identical thing which my father did:—for in the year sixteen, which was two years before I was born, he was at the pains of writing an express Dissertation simply upon the word Tristram,—shewing the world, with great candour and modesty, the grounds of his great abhorrence to the name.

When this story is compared with the title-page,—Will not the gentle reader pity my father from his soul?—to see an orderly and well-disposed gentleman, who tho' singular,—yet inoffensive in his notions,—so played upon in them by cross purposes;—to look down upon the stage, and see him baffled and overthrown in all his little systems and wishes; to behold a train of events perpetually falling out against him, and in so critical and cruel a way, as if they had purposedly been planned and pointed against him, merely to insult his speculations.—In a word, to behold such a one, in his old age, ill-fitted for troubles, ten times in a day suffering sorrow;—ten times in a day calling the child of his prayers Tristram!—Melancholy dissyllable of sound! which, to his ears, was unison to Nincompoop, and every name vituperative under heaven.—By his ashes! I swear it,—if ever malignant spirit took pleasure, or busied itself in traversing the purposes of mortal man,—it must have been here:—and if it was not necessary I should be born before I was christened, I would this moment give the reader an account of it.

Tristram Shandy, 351a-353b

Chapter 18

Your honour, said Trim, shutting the parlour-door before he began to speak, has heard, I imagine, of this unlucky accident—O yes, Trim, said my uncle Toby, and it gives me great concern.—I am heartily concerned too, but I hope your honour, replied Trim, will do me the justice to believe, that it was not in the least owing to me.—To thee—Trim?—cried my uncle Toby, looking kindly in his face—'twas Susannah's and the curate's folly betwixt them.—What business could they have together, an' please your honour, in the garden?—In the gallery thou meanest, replied my uncle Toby.

Trim found he was upon a wrong scent, and stopped short with a low bow—Two misfortunes, quoth the corporal to himself, are twice as many at least as are needful to be talked over at one time;—the mischief the cow has done in breaking into the fortifications, may be told his honour hereafter.—Trim's casuistry and address, under the cover of his low bow, prevented all suspicion in my uncle Toby, so he went on with what he had to say to Trim as follows:

—For my own part, Trim, though I can see little or no difference betwixt my nephew's being called Tristram or Trismegistus—yet as the thing sits so near my brother's heart, Trim—I would freely have given a hundred pounds rather than it should have happened.—A hundred pounds, an' please your honour! replied Trim,—I would not give a cherry-stone to boot.—Nor would I, Trim, upon my own account, quoth my uncle Toby—but my brother, whom there is no arguing with in this case—maintains that a great deal more depends, Trim, upon christian-names, than what ignorant people imagine—for he says there never was a great or heroic action performed

since the world began by one called Tristram—nay, he will have it, Trim, that a man can neither be learned, or wise, or brave.—'Tis all fancy, an' please your honour—I fought just as well, replied the corporal, when the regiment called me Trim, as when they called me James Butler.—And for my own part, said my uncle Toby, though I should blush to boast of myself, Trim—yet had my name been Alexander, I could have done no more at Namur than my duty.—Bless your honour! cried Trim, advancing three steps as he spoke, does a man think of his christian-name when he goes upon the attack?—Or when he stands in the trench, Trim? cried my uncle Toby, looking firm.—Or when he enters a breach? said Trim, pushing in between two chairs.—Or forces the lines? cried my uncle, rising up, and pushing his crutch like a pike.—Or facing a platoon? cried Trim, presenting his stick like a firelock.—Or when he marches up the glacis? cried my uncle Toby, looking warm and setting his foot upon his stool.—

Chapter 19

My father was returned from his walk to the fish-pond—and opened the parlour-door in the very height of the attack, just as my uncle Toby was marching up the glacis—Trim recovered his arms—never was my uncle Toby caught in riding at such a desperate rate in his life! Alas! my uncle Toby! had not a weightier matter called forth all the ready eloquence of my father—how hadst thou then and thy poor Hobby-Horse too been insulted! My father hung up his hat with the same air he took it down; and after giving a slight look at the disorder of the room, he took hold of one of the chairs which had formed the corporal's breach, and placing it over-against my uncle Toby, he sat down in it, and as soon as the tea-things were taken away, and the door shut, he broke out in a lamentation as follows.

My Father's Lamentation.

It is in vain longer, said my father, addressing himself as much to Ernulphus's curse, which was laid upon the corner of the chimney-piece—as to my uncle Toby, who sat under it—it is in vain longer, said my father, in the most querulous monotony imaginable, to struggle as I have done against this most uncomfortable of human persuasions—I see it plainly, that either for my own sins, brother Toby, or the sins and follies of the Shandy family, Heaven has thought fit to draw forth the heaviest of its artillery against me; and that the prosperity of my child is the point upon which the whole force of it is directed to play.—Such a thing would batter the whole universe about our ears, brother Shandy, said my uncle Toby—if it was so—Unhappy Tristram! child of wrath! child of decrepitude! interruption! mistake! and discontent! What one misfortune or disaster in the book of embryotic evils, that could unmechanize thy frame, or entangle thy filaments! which has not fallen upon thy head, or ever thou camest into the world—what evils in thy passage into it!—what evils since!—produced into being, in the decline of thy father's days—when the powers of his

imagination and of his body were waxing feeble—when radical heat and radical moisture, the elements which should have tempered thine, were drying up; and nothing left to found thy stamina in, but negations—'tis pitiful—brother Toby, at the best, and called out for all the little helps that care and attention on both sides could give it. But how were we defeated! You know the event, brother Toby—'tis too melancholy a one to be repeated now—when the few animal spirits I was worth in the world, and with which memory, fancy, and quick parts should have been conveyed—were all dispersed, confused, confounded, scattered, and sent to the devil.—
Here then was the time to have put a stop to this persecution against him;—and tried an experiment at least—whether calmness and serenity of mind in your sister, with a due attention, brother Toby, to her evacuations and repletions—and the rest of her non-naturals, might not, in a course of nine months' gestation, have set all things to rights.—My child was bereft of these!—What a teazing life did she lead herself, and consequently her foetus too, with that nonsensical anxiety of hers about lying-in in town? I thought my sister submitted with the greatest patience, replied my uncle Toby—I never heard her utter one fretful word about it.—She fumed inwardly, cried my father; and that, let me tell you, brother, was ten times worse for the child—and then! what battles did she fight with me, and what perpetual storms about the midwife.—There she gave vent, said my uncle Toby.—Vent! cried my father, looking up.
But what was all this, my dear Toby, to the injuries done us by my child's coming head foremost into the world, when all I wished, in this general wreck of his frame, was to have saved this little casket unbroke, unrifled.—With all my precautions, how was my system turned topside-turvy in the womb with my child! his head exposed to the hand of violence, and a pressure of 470 pounds avoirdupois weight acting so perpendicularly upon its apex—that at this hour 'tis ninety per cent. insurance, that the fine net-work of the intellectual web be not rent and torn to a thousand tatters.—Still we could have done.—Fool, coxcomb, puppy—give him but a Nose—Cripple, Dwarf, Driveller, Goosecap—(shape him as you will) the door of fortune stands open—O Licetus! Licetus! had I been blest with a foetus five inches long and a half, like thee—Fate might have done her worst.
Still, brother Toby, there was one cast of the die left for our child after all—O Tristram! Tristram! Tristram!
We will send for Mr. Yorick, said my uncle Toby.
—You may send for whom you will, replied my father.

38 ROUSSEAU: *Inequality*, 341b-342b

It is reasonable to suppose that the words first made use of by mankind had a much more extensive signification than those used in languages

already formed, and that ignorant as they were of the division of discourse into its constituent parts, they at first gave every single word the sense of a whole proposition. When they began to distinguish subject and attribute, and noun and verb, which was itself no common effort of genius, substantives were first only so many proper names; the present infinitive was the only tense of verbs; and the very idea of adjectives must have been developed with great difficulty; for every adjective is an abstract idea, and abstractions are painful and unnatural operations.

Every object at first received a particular name without regard to genus or species, which these primitive originators were not in a position to distinguish; every individual presented itself to their minds in isolation, as they are in the picture of nature. If one oak was called A, another was called B; for the primitive idea of two things is that they are not the same, and it often takes a long time for what they have in common to be seen: so that, the narrower the limits of their knowledge of things, the more copious their dictionary must have been. The difficulty of using such a vocabulary could not be easily removed; for, to arrange beings under common and generic denominations, it became necessary to know their distinguishing properties: the need arose for observation and definition, that is to say, for natural history and metaphysics of a far more developed kind than men can at that time have possessed.

Add to this, that general ideas cannot be introduced into the mind without the assistance of words, nor can the understanding seize them except by means of propositions. This is one of the reasons why animals cannot form such ideas, or ever acquire that capacity for self-improvement which depends on them. When a monkey goes from one nut to another, are we to conceive that he entertains any general idea of that kind of fruit, and compares its archetype with the two individual nuts? Assuredly he does not; but the sight of one of these nuts recalls to his memory the sensations which he received from the other, and his eyes, being modified after a certain manner, give information to the palate of the modification it is about to receive. Every general idea is purely intellectual; if the imagination meddles with it ever so little, the idea immediately becomes particular. If you endeavour to trace in your mind the image of a tree in general, you never attain to your end. In spite of all you can do, you will have to see it as great or little, bare or leafy, light or dark, and were you capable of seeing nothing in it but what is common to all trees, it would no longer be like a tree at all. Purely abstract beings are perceivable in the same manner, or are only conceivable by the help of language. The definition of a triangle alone gives you a true idea of it: the moment you imagine a triangle in your mind, it is some particular triangle and not another, and you cannot avoid giving it sensible lines and a coloured area. We must then make use of propositions and of language in order to form general ideas. For no sooner

does the imagination cease to operate than the understanding proceeds only by the help of words. If then the first inventors of speech could give names only to ideas they already had, it follows that the first substantives could be nothing more than proper names.
But when our new grammarians, by means of which I have no conception, began to extend their ideas and generalise their terms, the ignorance of the inventors must have confined this method within very narrow limits; and, as they had at first gone too far in multiplying the names of individuals, from ignorance of their genus and species, they made afterwards too few of these, from not having considered beings in all their specific differences. It would indeed have needed more knowledge and experience than they could have, and more pains and inquiry than they would have bestowed, to carry these distinctions to their proper length. If, even to-day, we are continually discovering new species, which have hitherto escaped observation, let us reflect how many of them must have escaped men who judged things merely from their first appearance! It is superfluous to add that the primitive classes and the most general notions must necessarily have escaped their notice also. How, for instance, could they have understood or thought of the words matter, spirit, substance, mode, figure, motion, when even our philosophers, who have so long been making use of them, have themselves the greatest difficulty in understanding them; and when, the ideas attached to them being purely metaphysical, there are no models of them to be found in nature?

45 LAVOISIER: *Elements of Chemistry*, PREF, 4b-c

To those bodies which are formed by the union of several simple substances we gave new names, compounded in such a manner as the nature of the substances directed; but, as the number of double combinations is already very considerable, the only method by which we could avoid confusion was to divide them into classes. In the natural order of ideas, the name of the class or genus is that which expresses a quality common to a great number of individuals: the name of the species, on the contrary, expresses a quality peculiar to certain individuals only.
These distinctions are not, as some may imagine, merely metaphysical, but are established by nature. "A child," says the Abbé de Condillac, "is taught to give the name *tree* to the first one which is pointed out to him. The next one he sees presents the same idea, and he gives it the same name. This he does likewise to a third and a fourth, till at last the word *tree*, which he first applied to an individual, comes to be employed by him as the name of a class or a genus, an abstract idea, which comprehends all trees in general. But, when he learns that all trees serve not the same purpose, that they do not all produce the same kind of fruit, he will soon learn to

distinguish them by specific and particular names." This is the logic of all the sciences and is naturally applied to chemistry.

53 JAMES: *Psychology*, 310a-311a; 447b-448a

Psychology, 310a-311a

The nominalists, on their side, admit a *quasi*-universal, something which we think *as if it were* universal, though it is not; and in all that they say about this something, which they explain to be 'an indefinite number of particular ideas,' the same vacillation between the subjective and the objective points of view appears. The reader never can tell whether an 'idea' spoken of is supposed to be a knower or a known. The authors themselves do not distinguish. They want to get something in the mind which shall *resemble* what is out of the mind, however vaguely, and they think that when that fact is accomplished, no farther questions will be asked. James Mill writes:[56]

"The word, man, we shall say, is first applied to an individual; it is first associated with the idea of that individual, and acquires the power of calling up the idea of him; it is next applied to another individual and acquires the power of calling up the idea of him; so of another and another, till it has become associated with an indefinite number, and has acquired the power of calling up an indefinite number of those ideas indifferently. What happens? It does call up an indefinite number of the ideas of individuals as often as it occurs; and calling them in close connection, it forms a species of complex idea of them.... It is also a fact, that when an idea becomes to a certain extent complex, from the multiplicity of the ideas it *comprehends*, it is of necessity indistinct;... and this indistinctness has, doubtless, been a main cause of the mystery which has appeared to belong to it.... It thus appears that the word *man* is not a word having a very simple idea, as was the opinion of the realists; nor a word having no idea at all, as was that of the [earlier] nominalists; but a word calling up an indefinite number of ideas, by the irresistible laws of association, and forming them into one very complex and indistinct, but not therefore unintelligible, idea."

Berkeley had already said:[57]

A word becomes general by being made the sign, not of an abstract general idea, but of many several particular ideas, any one of which it indifferently suggests to the mind. An idea which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the same sort.

'Stand for,' not *know*; 'becomes general,' not becomes *aware of something* general; 'particular ideas,' not particular *things*—everywhere the same timidity about begging the fact of knowing, and the pitifully impotent

[56] Analysis, chap. viii.
[57] Principles of Human Knowledge, Introduction, §§ 11, 12.

attempt to foist it in the shape of a mode of *being* of 'ideas.' If the fact to be conceived be the indefinitely numerous actual and possible members of a class, then it is assumed that if we can only get enough ideas to huddle together for a moment in the mind, the *being* of each several one of them there will be an equivalent for the *knowing*, or *meaning*, of *one* member of the class in question; and their number will be so large as to confuse our tally and leave it doubtful whether all the possible members of the class have thus been satisfactorily told off or not.

Of course this is nonsense. An idea neither is what it knows, nor knows what it is; nor will swarms of copies of the same 'idea,' recurring in stereotyped form, or 'by the irresistible laws of association formed into one idea,' ever be the same thing as a thought of '*all the possible members*' of a class. We must mean *that* by an altogether special bit of consciousness *ad hoc*. But it is easy to translate Berkeley's, Hume's, and Mill's notion of a swarm of ideas into cerebral terms, and so to make them stand for something real; and, in this sense, I think the doctrine of these authors less hollow than the opposite one which makes the vehicle of universal conceptions to be an *actus purus* of the soul. If each 'idea' stand for some special nascent nerve-process, then the aggregate of these nascent processes might have for its conscious correlate a psychic 'fringe,' which should be just that universal meaning, or intention that the name or mental picture employed should mean all the possible individuals of the class. Every peculiar complication of brain-processes must have some peculiar correlate in the soul. To one set of processes will correspond the thought of an indefinite taking of the extent of a word like *man*; to another set that of a particular taking; and to a third set that of a universal taking, of the extent of the same word. The thought corresponding to either set of processes, is always itself a unique and singular event, whose dependence

on its peculiar nerve-process I of course am far from professing to explain.[58]

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[58] It may add to the effect of the text to quote a passage from the essay in 'Mind,' January, 1884.

"Why may we not side with the conceptualists in saying that the universal sense of a word does correspond to a mental fact of *some* kind, but at the same time, agreeing with the nominalists that all mental facts are modifications of subjective sensibility, why may we not call that fact a 'feeling'? *Man* meant for *mankind* is in short a different feeling from *man* as a mere noise, or from *man* meant for *that* man, to wit, John Smith alone. Not that the difference consists simply in the fact that, when taken universally, the word has one of Mr. Galton's 'blended' images of man associated with it. Many persons have seemed to think that these blended or, as Prof. Huxley calls them, 'generic' images are equivalent to concepts. But, in itself, a blurred thing is just as particular as a sharp thing; and the generic character of either sharp image or blurred image depends on its being felt *with its representative function*. This function is the mysterious *plus*, the understood meaning. But it is nothing applied to the image from above, no pure act of reason inhabiting a supersensible and semi-supernatural plane. It can be diagrammatized as continuous with all the other segments of the subjective stream. It is just that staining, fringe, or halo of obscurely felt relation to masses of other imagery about to come, but not yet distinctly in focus, which we have so abundantly set forth [in Chapter IX of this book].

"If the image come unfringed, it reveals but a simple quality, thing, or event; if it come fringed, it may reveal something expressly taken universally or in a scheme of relations. The difference between thought and feeling thus reduces itself, in the last subjective analysis, to the presence or absence of 'fringe.' And this in turn reduces itself, with much probability, in the last physiological analysis, to the absence or presence of sub-excitements in other convolutions of the brain than those whose discharges underlie the more definite nucleus, the substantive ingredient, of the thought,—in this instance, the word or image it may happen to arouse.

"The contrast is not, then, as the Platonists would have it, between certain subjective facts called images and sensations, and others called acts of relating intelligence; the former being blind perishing things, knowing not even their own existence as such, whilst the latter combine the poles in the mysterious synthesis of their cognitive sweep. The contrast is really between two *aspects*, in which all mental facts without exception may be taken; their structural aspect, as being subjective, and their functional aspect, as being cognitions. In the former aspect, the highest as well as the lowest is a feeling, a peculiarly tinged segment of the stream. This tingeing is its sensitive body, the *wie ihm zu Muthe ist*, the way it feels whilst passing. In the latter aspect, the lowest mental fact as well as the highest may grasp some bit of truth as its content, even though that truth were as relationless a matter as a bare unlocalized and undated quality of pain. From the cognitive

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When memory begins to decay, proper names are what go first, and at all times proper names are harder to recollect than those of general properties and classes of things.

This seems due to the fact that common qualities and names have contracted an infinitely greater number of associations in our mind than the names of most of the persons whom we know. Their memory is better organized. Proper names as well organized as those of our family and friends are recollected as well as those of any other objects. [59]

"Organization" means numerous associations; and the more numerous the associations, the greater the number of paths of recall. For the same reason adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions, and the cardinal verbs, those words, in short, which form the grammatical framework of all our speech,

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point of view, all mental facts are intellections. From the subjective point of view all are feelings. Once admit that the passing and evanescent are as real parts of the stream as the distinct and comparatively abiding; once allow that fringes and halos, inarticulate perceptions, whereof the objects are as yet unnamed, mere nascencies of cognition, premonitions, awarenesses of direction, are thoughts *sui generis*, as much as articulate imaginings and propositions are; once restore, I say, the *vague* to its psychological rights, and the matter presents no further difficulty.

"And then we see that the current opposition of Feeling to Knowledge is quite a false issue. If every feeling is at the same time a bit of knowledge, we ought no longer to talk of mental states differing by having more or less of the cognitive quality; they only differ in knowing more or less, in having much fact or little fact for their object. The feeling of a broad scheme of relations is a feeling that knows much; the feeling of a simple quality is a feeling that knows little. But the knowing itself, whether of much or of little, has the same essence, and is as good knowing in the one case as in the other. Concept and image, thus discriminated through their objects, are consubstantial in their inward nature, as modes of feeling. The one, as particular, will no longer be held to be a relatively base sort of entity, to be taken as a matter of course, whilst the other, as universal, is celebrated as a sort of standing miracle, to be adored but not explained. Both concept and image, *quâ* subjective, are singular and particular. Both are moments of the stream, which come and in an instant are no more. The word universality has no meaning as applied to their psychic body or structure, which is always finite. It only has a meaning when applied to their use, import, or reference to the kind of object they may reveal. The representation, as such, of the universal object is as particular as that of an object about which we know so little that the interjection 'Ha!' is all it can evoke from us in the way of speech. Both should be weighed in the same scales, and have the same measure meted out to them whether of worship or of contempt." (Mind, ix, pp. 18-19.)

[59] *Cf.* A. Maury: *Le Sommeil et les rêves,* p. 442.

are the very last to decay. Kussmaul[60] makes the following acute remark on this subject:

The concreter a conception is, the sooner is its name forgotten. This is because our ideas of persons and things are less strongly bound up with their names than with such abstractions as their business, their circumstances, their qualities. We easily can imagine persons and things without their names, the sensorial image of them being more important than that other symbolic image, their name. Abstract conception, on the other hand, are only acquired by means of the words which alone serve to confer stability upon them. This is why verbs, adjectives, pronouns, and still more adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions are more intimately connected with our thinking than are substantives.

[60] *Störungen der Sprache,* quoted by Ribot: *Les Maladies de la mémoire,* p. 133.