

3c. The types of equivocation

3c(3) The same word used to signify an attribute and its cause of effect

8 ARISTOTLE: Topics, BK I, CH 15 [106a1-9] 149d; [106b33-107a8] 150d-151a; BK V, CH 2 [129b30-130a1] 180a / Metaphysics, BK IV, CH 2 [1003a33-b11] 522b; BK VII, CH 4 [1030a31-b3] 553a-b; BK XI, CH 3 [1060b36-1061a7] 589a-b

19 AQUINAS: Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 5, ANS 66b-67d; A 6, ANS and REP 3 67d-68c; A 10, ANS 72c-73c; Q 16, A 6, ANS 98b-d; PART I-II, Q 20, A 3, REP 3 713c-714c

20 AQUINAS: Summa Theologica, PART III, Q 60, A 1, ANS 847b-848a

8 ARISTOTLE: *Topics*, BK I, CH 15 [106^a1-9] 149d; [106^b33-107^a8] 150d-151a; BK V, CH 2 [129^b30-130^a1] 180a / *Metaphysics*, BK IV, CH 2 [1003^a33-^b11] 522b; BK VII, CH 4 [1030^a31-^b3] 553a-b; BK XI, CH 3 [1060^b36-1061^a7] 589a-b

Topics, BK I, CH 15 [106^a1-9] 149d

106^a On the formation, then, of propositions, the above remarks are enough. As regards the number of senses a term bears, we must not only treat of those terms which bear different senses, but we must also try to render their definitions; e. g. we must not merely say that justice and courage are called 'good' in one sense, and that what conduces to vigour and what conduces to health are called so in another, but also that the former are so called because of a certain intrinsic quality they themselves have, the latter because they are productive of a certain result and not because of any intrinsic quality in themselves. Similarly also in other cases.

Topics, BK I, CH 15 [106^b33-107^a8] 150d-151a

e.g. if the word 'justly' be used of judging according to one's own opinion, and also of judging as one ought, then 'just' also will be used in like manner. In the same way also, if 'healthy' has more than one meaning, then 'healthily' also will be used with more than one meaning: e.g. if 'healthy' describes both what produces health and what preserves health and what betokens health, then 'healthily' also will be used to mean 'in such a way as to produce' or 'preserve' or 'betoken' health. Likewise also in other cases, whenever the original term bears more than one meaning, **107^a** the inflexion also that is formed from it will be used with more than one meaning, and vice versa.

Look also at the classes of the predicates signified by the term, and see if they are the same in all cases. For if they are not the same, then clearly the term is ambiguous: e.g. 'good' in the case of food means 'productive of pleasure', and in the case of medicine 'productive of health', whereas as applied to the soul it means to be of a certain quality, e.g. temperate or courageous or just: and likewise also, as applied to 'man'.

Topics, BK V, CH 2 [129^b30-130^a1] 180a

Next, for destructive purposes, see whether any of the terms rendered in the property is used in more than one sense, or whether the whole expression too signifies more than one thing. For then the property will not have been correctly stated. Thus (e.g.) seeing that to 'be sentient' signifies more than one thing, viz. (1) to possess sensation, (2) to use one's sensation, 'being naturally sentient' could not be a **130^a** correct statement of a property of 'animal'.

Metaphysics, BK IV, CH 2 [1003^a33-^b11] 522b

There are many senses in which a thing may be said to 'be', but all that 'is' is related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and is not said to 'be' by a mere ambiguity. Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves health, another in the sense that it produces it, another in the sense that it is a symptom of health, another because it is capable of it. And that 1003^b which is medical is relative to the medical art, one thing being called medical because it possesses it, another because it is naturally adapted to it, another because it is a function of the medical art. And we shall find other words used similarly to these. So, too, there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one starting-point; some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substance, others because they are a process towards substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of one of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say even of non-being that it *is* non-being.

Metaphysics, BK VII, CH 4 [1030^a31-^b3] 553a-b

For it must be either by an equivocation that we say these *are*, or by adding to and taking from the meaning of 'are' (in the way in which that which is not known may be said to be known),—the truth being that we use the word neither ambiguously nor in the same sense, but just as we apply the word 'medical' by virtue of a *reference* to one and the same thing, not *meaning* one and the same 1030^b thing, nor yet speaking ambiguously; for a patient and an operation and an instrument are called medical neither by an ambiguity nor with a single meaning, but with reference to a common end.

Metaphysics, BK XI, CH 3 [1060^b36-1061^a7] 589a-b

The term seems to be used in the way we have mentioned, like 'medical' and 'healthy'. For each of these also we use in many senses. Terms are 1061^a used in this way by virtue of some kind of reference, in the one case to medical science, in the other to health, in others to something else, but in each case to one identical concept. For a discussion and a knife are called medical because the former proceeds from medical science, and the latter is useful to it. And a thing is called healthy in a similar way; one thing because it is indicative of health, another because it is productive of it. And the same is true in the other cases.

19 AQUINAS: *Summa Theologica*, PART I, Q 13, A 5, ANS 66b-67d; A 6, ANS and REP 3 67d-68c; A 10, ANS 72c-73c; Q 16, A 6, ANS 98b-d; PART I-II, Q 20, A 3, REP 3 713c-714c

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 5, ANS 66b-67d

Article 5. Whether What Is Said of God and of Creatures Is Univocally Predicated of Them?

We proceed thus to the Fifth Article: It seems that what is said of God and creatures is said of them univocally.

Objection 1. For every equivocal term is reduced to the univocal, as many are reduced to one; for if the name dog be said equivocally of the barking dog, and of the dogfish, it must be said of some univocally — namely, of all barking dogs; otherwise we proceed to infinity. Now there are some univocal agents which agree with their effects in name and definition, as man generates man; and there are some agents which are equivocal, as the sun which causes heat, although the sun is hot only in an equivocal sense. Therefore it seems that the first agent to which all other agents are reduced is an univocal agent; and thus what is said of God and creatures is predicated univocally.

Obj. 2. Further, there is no likeness among equivocal things. Therefore as creatures have a certain likeness to God, according to the word of Genesis (1. 26), *Let us make man to our image and likeness*, it seems that something can be said of God and creatures univocally.

Obj. 3. Further, “measure is homogeneous” with the thing measured as is said in the *Metaphysics*.¹ But God is the first measure of all beings, as it says in the same place. Therefore God is homogeneous with creatures, and thus a word may be applied univocally to God and to creatures.

On the contrary, Whatever is predicated of various things under the same name but not in the same meaning is predicated equivocally. But no name belongs to God in the same meaning that it belongs to creatures; for instance, wisdom in creatures is a quality, but not in God. Now a different genus changes a nature, since the genus is part of the definition; and the same applies to other things. Therefore whatever is said of God and of creatures is predicated equivocally.

2. Further, God is more distant from creatures than any creatures are from each other. But the distance of some creatures makes any univocal predication of them impossible, as in the case of those things which are not in the same genus. Therefore much less can anything be predicated univocally of God and creatures. And so only equivocal predication can be applied to them.

¹ Aristotle, X, I (1053^a24).

I answer that, Univocal predication is impossible between God and creatures. The reason of this is that every effect which is not an adequate result of the power of the efficient cause receives the likeness of the agent not in its full degree, but in a measure that falls short, so that what is divided and multiplied in the effects resides in the agent simply, and in the same manner; as for example the sun by the exercise of its one power produces manifold and various forms in all inferior things. In the same way, as said in the preceding article, all perfections of things which exist in creatures divided and multiplied pre-exist in God unitedly. Thus, when any term expressing perfection is applied to a creature, it signifies that perfection distinct in idea from other perfections; as, for instance, by this term wise applied to a man, we signify some perfection distinct from a man's essence, and distinct from his power and being, and from all similar things; whereas when we apply it to God, we do not mean to signify anything distinct from His essence, or power, or being. Thus also this term wise applied to man in some degree circumscribes and comprehends the thing signified; but this is not the case when it is applied to God, but it leaves the thing signified as incomprehended, and as exceeding the signification of the name. Hence it is evident that this term wise is not applied in the same aspect to God and to man. The same rule applies to other terms. Hence no name is predicated univocally of God and of creatures.

Neither, on the other hand, are names applied to God and creatures in a purely equivocal sense, as some have said.² Because if that were so, it follows that from creatures nothing could be known or demonstrated about God at all, for the reasoning would always fall into the fallacy of equivocation. Such a view is as much against philosophy which proves many things about God as it is against what the Apostle says: *The invisible things of God are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made* (Rom. 1. 20).

Therefore it must be said that these names are said of God and creatures according to analogy, that is, according to proportion. Now names are thus used in two ways: either according as many things are proportionate to one, as for example healthy is predicated of medicine and urine in so far as each has an order and proportion to the health of the animal, of which the latter is the sign and the former the cause, or according as one thing is proportionate to another; thus healthy is said of medicine and animal, since medicine is the cause of health in the animal. And in this way some things are said of God and creatures analogically, and not in a purely equivocal nor in a purely univocal sense. For we can name God only from creatures (A. 1). Thus whatever is said of God and creatures, is said according to the relation

² Maimonides, *Guide*, I, 59 (FR 84); Averroes, *In Meta.*, XII, comm. 51 (VIII, 337B).

of a creature to God as its principle and cause, wherein all perfections of things pre-exist excellently.

Now this mode of community is a mean between pure equivocation and simple univocation. For in those things which are spoken of analogically neither is there one notion, as there is in univocal things, nor totally diverse notions as in equivocal things; but a term which is thus used in a multiple sense signifies different proportions to some one thing; thus healthy applied to urine signifies the sign of animal health, and applied to medicine signifies the cause of the same health.

Reply Obj. 1. Although in predication the equivocal must be reduced to the univocal, still in actions the non-univocal agent must precede the univocal agent. For the non-univocal agent is the universal cause of the whole species, as for instance the sun is the cause of the generation of all men. But the univocal agent is not the universal efficient cause of the whole species (otherwise it would be the cause of itself, since it is contained in the species), but is a particular cause of this individual which it places under the species by way of participation. Therefore the universal cause of the whole species is not an univocal agent, and the universal cause comes before the particular cause. But this universal agent while it is not univocal, nevertheless is not altogether equivocal, otherwise it could not produce its own likeness; but it can be called an analogical agent, just as in predications all univocal terms are reduced to one first non-univocal analogical term, which is being.

Reply Obj. 2. The likeness of the creature to God is imperfect, for it does not represent one and the same generic thing (Q. IV, A. 3).

Reply Obj. 3. God is not the measure proportioned to things measured; hence it is not necessary that God and creatures should be in the same genus.

The arguments adduced *in the contrary*, prove indeed that these names are not predicated univocally of God and creatures, yet they do not prove that they are predicated equivocally.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 6, ANS and REP 3 67d-68c

Article 6. Whether Names Are Predicated Primarily of Creatures Rather Than of God?

We proceed thus to the Sixth Article: It seems that names are predicated primarily of creatures rather than of God.

Objection 1. For we name anything accordingly as we know it, since names, as the Philosopher says,³ are signs of ideas. But we know creatures before we know God. Therefore the names imposed by us are predicated primarily of creatures rather than of God.

³ *Interpretation*, I (16^a3).

Obj. 2. Further, Dionysius says (*Div. Nom. i*)⁴ that we name God from creatures. But names transferred from creatures to God are said primarily of creatures rather than of God, as lion, stone, and the like. Therefore all names applied to God and creatures are applied primarily to creatures rather than to God.

Obj. 3. Further, all names applied in common to God and creatures, “are applied to God as the cause of all things,” as Dionysius says (*De Myst. Theol.*)⁵ But what is said of anything through its cause is applied to it secondarily; for “healthy” is primarily said of animal rather than of medicine, which is the cause of health. therefore these names are said primarily of creatures rather than of God.

On the contrary, It is written, *I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named* (Eph. 3. 14, 15); and the same applies to the other names applied to God and creatures. Therefore these names are applied primarily to God rather than to creatures.

I answer that, In all names which are said of many in an analogical sense, they must all be said with reference to one thing, and therefore this one thing must be placed in the definition of them all. And since “the nature expressed by the name is the definition,” as the Philosopher says,⁶ such a name must be said primarily of that which is put in the definition of such other things, and secondarily to these others according to the order in which they approach more or less to that first. Thus, for instance, healthy applied to animals comes into the definition of healthy applied to medicine, which is called healthy as being the cause of health in the animal, and also into the definition of healthy which is applied to urine, which is called healthy in so far as it is the sign of the animal's health.

Thus, all names which are said metaphorically of God, are said of creatures primarily rather than of God, because when said of God they mean only likenesses to such creatures. For as smiling said of a field means only that the field in the beauty of its flowering is like to the beauty of the human smile according to the likeness of proportion, so the name of lion said of God means only that God manifests strength in His works, as a lion in his. Thus it is clear that as they are said of God the signification of names can be defined only from what is said of creatures.

But to other names not said of God in a metaphorical sense, the same rule would apply if they were spoken of God as the cause only, as some have supposed.⁷ For when it is said, “God is good,” it would then only mean, “God is the cause of the creature's goodness”; thus the term good applied to God

⁴ Sect. 6 (PG 3, 596).

⁵ 1, 2 (PG 3, 1000).

⁶ *Metaphysics*, IV, 7(1012^a23).

⁷ Alan of Lille, *Theol. Reg.*, REG. 21, 26 (PL 210, 631, 633).

would included in its meaning the creature's goodness. Hence good would apply primarily to creatures rather than God. But as was shown above (A. 2), these names are applied to God not as the cause only, but also essentially. For the words, "God is good," or "wise," signify not only that He is the cause of wisdom or goodness, but that these pre-exist in Him in a more excellent way. Hence as regards the things which the name signifies, these names are applied primarily to God rather than to creatures, because these perfections flow from God to creatures; but as regards the imposition of the names, they are primarily applied by us to creatures, which we know first. Hence they have a mode of signification which belongs to creatures, as said above (A. 3).

Reply Obj. 1. This objection refers to the imposition of the name.

Reply Obj. 2. The same rule does not apply to metaphorical and to other names, as said above.

Reply Obj. 3. This objection would be valid if these names were said of God only as cause, and not also essentially, for instance as healthy is applied to medicine.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 10, ANS 72c-73c

Article 10. Whether This Name God Is Applied to God Univocally, by Nature, by Participation, and According to Opinion?

We proceed thus to the Tenth Article: It seems that this name God is applied to God univocally by nature, by participation, and according to opinion.

Objection 1. For where a diverse signification exists, there is no contradiction of affirmation and negation; for equivocation prevents contradiction. But a Catholic who says: "An idol is not God," contradicts a pagan who says: "An idol is God." Therefore God in both senses is spoken of univocally.

Obj. 2. Further, as an idol is God in opinion, and not in truth, so the enjoyment of carnal pleasures is called happiness in opinion, and not in truth. But this name happiness is applied univocally to this supposed happiness, and also to true happiness. Therefore also this name God is applied univocally to the true God, and to God also in opinion.

Obj. 3. Further, names are called univocal because they contain one idea. Now when a Catholic says: "There is one God," he understands by the name God an omnipotent being, and one venerated above all; while the heathen understands the same when he says: "An idol is God." Therefore this name God is applied univocally to both.

On the contrary, That which is in the intellect is the likeness of what is in the thing as is said in *Interpretation*.⁸ But the word animal applied to a true

⁸ Aristotle, I (16^a5).

animal and to a picture of one is equivocal. Therefore this name God applied to the true God and to God in opinion is applied equivocally. *Further*, No one can signify what he does not know. But the heathen does not know the divine nature. So when he says an idol is God, he does not signify the true Deity. On the other hand, a Catholic signifies the true Deity when he says that there is one God. Therefore this name God is not applied univocally, but equivocally to the true God, and to God according to opinion. *I answer that*, This name God in the three above significations is taken neither univocally nor equivocally, but analogically. This is apparent from this reason. Univocal terms mean absolutely the same thing, but equivocal terms absolutely different things; but in analogical terms a word taken in one signification must be placed in the definition of the same word taken in other senses; as, for instance, being which is applied to substance is placed in the definition of being as applied to accident; and healthy applied to animal is placed in the definition of healthy as applied to urine and medicine. For urine is the sign of health in the animal, and medicine is the cause of health.

The same applies to the question at issue. For this name God, as signifying the true God, includes the idea of God when it is used to denote God in opinion, or participation. For when we name anyone god by participation, we understand by the name of god some likeness of the true God. Likewise, when we call an idol god, by this name god we understand and signify something which men think is God; thus it is manifest that the name has different meanings, but that one of them is comprised in the other significations. Hence it is manifestly said analogically.

Reply Obj. 1. The multiplication of names does not depend on the predication of the name, but on the signification: for this name man, of whomsoever it is predicated, whether truly or falsely, is predicated in one sense. But it would be multiplied if by the name man we meant to signify different things; for instance, if one meant to signify by this name man what man really is, and another meant to signify by the same name a stone, or something else. Hence it is evident that a Catholic saying that an idol is not God contradicts the pagan asserting that it is God; because each of them uses this name God to signify the true God. For when the pagan says an idol is God, he does not use this name as meaning God in opinion, for he would then speak the truth, as also Catholics sometimes use the name in the sense, as in the Psalm, *All the gods of the Gentiles are demons* (Ps. 95:5).

The same remark applies to the *second and third Objections*. For those reasons proceed from the different predication of the name, and not from its various significations.

Reply Obj. 4. The term animal applied to a true and a pictured animal is not purely equivocal; for the Philosopher⁹ takes equivocal names in a large sense, including analogous names; because also being, which is predicated analogically, is sometimes said to be predicated equivocally of different predicaments.

Reply Obj. 5. Neither a Catholic nor a pagan knows the very nature of God as it is in itself, but each one knows it according to some idea of causality, or excellence, or remotion (Q XII, A 12). So the Gentile can take this name God in the same way when he says an idol is God as the Catholic does in saying an idol is not God. But if anyone should be quite ignorant of God altogether, he could not even name Him, unless, perhaps, as we use names the meaning of which we know not.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 16, A 6, ANS 98b-d

Article 6. Whether There Is Only One Truth, According to Which All Things Are True?

We proceed thus to the Sixth Article: It seems that there is only one truth, according to which all things are true.

Objection 1. For according to Augustine (*De Trin.* xv, 1),¹⁰ nothing is greater than the mind of man, except God. Now truth is greater than the mind of man; otherwise the mind would be the judge of truth, while in fact it judges all things according to truth, and not according to its own measure.

Therefore God alone is truth. Therefore there is no other truth but God.

Obj. 2. Further, Anselm says (*De Verit.* xiv),¹¹ that, just as the relation of time is to temporal things, so that of truth is to true things. But there is only one time for all temporal things. Therefore there is only one truth, by which all things are true.

On the contrary, it is written (Ps. 11. 2), *Truths are decayed from among the children of men.*

I answer that, In one sense truth, by which all things are true, is one, and in another sense it is not. In proof of which we must consider that when anything is predicated of many things univocally, it is found in each of them according to its proper nature; as animal is found in each species of animal. But when anything is said of many things analogically, it is found in only one of them according to its proper nature, and from this one the rest are denominated. So health is predicated of animal, of urine, and of medicine; not that health is only in the animal, but from the health of the animal medicine is called healthy in so far as it is the cause of health, and urine is called healthy in so far as it indicates health. And although health is neither

⁹ *Categories*, I (1st1).

¹⁰ PL 42, 1057.

¹¹ PL 158, 484.

in medicine nor in urine, yet in either there is something by which the one causes, and the other indicates health.

Now we have said (A. 1) that truth resides primarily in the intellect, and secondarily in things, according as they are related to the divine intellect. If therefore we speak of truth as it exists in the intellect, according to its proper nature, then are there many truths in many created intellects, and even in one and the same intellect, according to the number of things known. Hence a gloss on Ps. 11. 2, *Truth are decayed from among the children of men*, says¹²: “As from one man’s face many likenesses are reflected in a mirror, so many truths are reflected from the one divine truth.” But if we speak of truth as it is in things, then all things are true by one primary truth; to which each one is assimilated according to its own entity. And thus, although the essences or forms of things are many, yet the truth of the divine intellect is one, according to which all things are said to be true.

Reply Obj. 1. The soul does not judge of all things according to any kind of truth, but according to the primary truth, in so far as it is reflected in the soul, as in a mirror, by reason of the first principles of the understanding. It follows, therefore, that the primary truth is greater than the soul. And yet, even created truth, which resides in our intellect, is greater than the soul, not absolutely, but relatively, in so far as it is its perfection, even as science may be said to be greater than the soul. Yet it is true that nothing subsisting is greater than the rational mind, except God.

Reply Obj. 2. The saying of Anselm is correct in so far as things are said to be true by their relation to the divine intellect.

Summa Theologica, PART I-II, Q 20, A 3, REP 3 713c-714c

Article 3. Whether the Goodness and Malice of the External Action Are the Same As Those of the Interior Act?

We proceed thus to the Third Article: It would seem that the goodness and malice of the interior act of the will are not the same as those of the external action.

Objection 1. For the principle of the interior act is the interior apprehensive or appetitive power of the soul, while the principle of the external action is the power that accomplishes the movement. Now where the principles of action are different, the actions themselves are different. Moreover, it is the action which is the subject of goodness or malice, and the same accident cannot be in different subjects. Therefore the goodness of the interior act cannot be the same as that of the external action.

¹² *Glossa Lombardi* (PL 191, 155); cf. *Glossa interl.* (III, 102h); Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps. 11.2* (PL 36, 138).

Obj. 2. Further, “A virtue makes that which has it good, and renders its action good also.”¹³ But the intellectual virtue in the commanding power is distinct from the moral virtue in the power commanded, as is declared in the *Ethics*.¹⁴ Therefore the goodness of the interior act, which belongs to the commanding power, is distinct from the goodness of the external action, which belongs to the power commanded.

Obj. 3. Further, the same thing cannot be cause and effect, since nothing is its own cause. But the goodness of the interior act is the cause of the goodness of the external action, or *vice versa*, as stated above (AA. 1, 2). Therefore it is not the same goodness in each.

On the contrary, It was shown above (Q. XVIII, A. 6) that the act of the will is the form, as it were, of the external action. Now that which results from the material and formal element is one thing. Therefore there is but one goodness of the internal and external act.

I answer that, As stated above (Q. XVII, A. 4), the interior act of the will, and the external action, considered morally, are one act. Now it happens sometimes that one and the same individual act has several aspects of goodness or malice, and sometimes that it has but one. Hence we must say that sometimes the goodness of the interior act is the same as that of the external action, and sometimes not. For as we have already said (AA. 1, 2), these two goodnesses or malices, of the internal and external acts, are ordered to one another. Now it may happen, in things that are ordered to something else, that a thing is good merely from being ordered to another; thus a bitter draught is good merely because it procures health. Therefore there are not two goodnesses, one the goodness of health, and the other the goodness of the draught, but one and the same. On the other hand it happens sometimes that that which is ordered to another has some aspect of goodness in itself, besides the fact of its being ordered to some other good; thus a palatable medicine can be considered in the light of a pleasurable good, besides of being conducive to health.

We must therefore say that when the external action derives goodness or malice from its relation to the end only, then there is but one and the same goodness of the act of the will which of itself regards the end and of the external action, which regards the end through the medium of the act of the will. But when the external action has goodness or malice of itself, that is, in regard to its matter and circumstances, then the goodness of the external action is distinct from that goodness of the will which is taken from the end; yet so that the goodness of the end passes into the external action, and the goodness of the matter and circumstances passes into the act of the will, as stated above (AA. 1, 2).

¹³ Aristotle, *Ethics*, II, 6 (1106^a15).

¹⁴ Aristotle, I, 13 (1103^a3).

Reply Obj. 1. This argument proves that the internal and external actions are different in the natural order; yet distinct as they are in that respect, they combine to form one thing in the moral order, as stated above (Q. XVII, A. 4).

Reply Obj. 2. As stated in the *Ethics*,¹⁵ a moral virtue is ordered to the act of that virtue, which act is the end, as it were, of that virtue; but prudence, which is in the reason, is ordered to things directed to the end. For this reason different virtues are necessary. But right reason in regard to the very end of a virtue has no other goodness than the goodness of that virtue, in so far as the goodness of the reason is participated in each virtue.

Reply Obj. 3. When a thing is derived by one thing from another, as from a univocal agent cause, then it is not the same in both; thus when a hot thing heats, the heat of the thing heating is distinct from the heat of the thing heated, although it is the same specifically. But when a thing is derived by one thing from another according to analogy or proportion, then it is one and the same in both; thus the healthiness which is in medicine or urine is derived from the healthiness of the animal's body; nor is health as applied to urine and medicine, distinct from health as applied to the body of an animal, of which health medicine is the cause, and urine the sign. It is in this way that the goodness of the external action is derived from the goodness of the will, and vice versa; namely, according to the order of one to the other.

20 AQUINAS: *Summa Theologica*, PART III, Q 60, A 1, ANS 847b-848a

Article 1. *Whether a Sacrament Is a Kind of Sign?*

We proceed thus to the First Article: It seems that a sacrament is not a kind of sign.

Objection 1. For sacrament appears to be derived from making holy (*sacrando*), just as medicament, from healing (*medicando*). But this seems to be of the nature of a cause rather than to the nature of a sign. Therefore a sacrament is in the genus of cause rather than in the genus of sign.

Obj. 2. Further, sacrament seems to signify something hidden, according to Tob. 12. 7: *It is good to hide the secret (sacramentum) of a king*; and Ephes. 3. 9: *What is the dispensation of the mystery (sacramenti) which hath been hidden from eternity in God*. But that which is hidden, seems to be against the nature of a sign for, "a sign is that which conveys something else to the mind besides the species which it puts into the senses," as Augustine explains.¹⁶ Therefore it seems that a sacrament is not in the genus of sign.

¹⁵ Aristotle, VI, 12 (1144^a8).

¹⁶ *Christian Doctrine*, II, I (PL 34, 35).

Obj. 3. Further, an oath is sometimes called a sacrament, for it is written in the Decretals:¹⁷ “Children who have not attained the use of reason must not be obliged to swear, and whoever has foresworn himself once, must no more be a witness, nor be allowed to take a sacrament”—that is, an oath. But an oath is not a kind of sign, and therefore it seems that a sacrament is not a kind of sign.

On the contrary, Augustine says:¹⁸ “The visible sacrifice is the sacrament, that is, the sacred sign, of the invisible sacrifice.”

I answer that, All things that are ordered to one, even in different ways, can be denominated from it; thus, from health which is in an animal, not only is the animal said to be healthy through being the subject of health, but medicine also is said to be healthy through producing health, diet through preserving it, and urine, through being a sign of health. Consequently, a thing may be called a sacrament either from having a certain hidden sanctity, and in this sense a sacrament is the same as a sacred secret; or from having some relationship to this sanctity, which relationship may be that of a cause, or of a sign or of any other relation. But now we are speaking of sacraments in a special sense, as implying the relationship of sign, and in this way a sacrament is a kind of sign.

Reply Obj. 1. Because medicine is an efficient cause of health, consequently whatever things are denominated from medicine are called so in relation to one first agent, so that a medicament implies a certain causality. But sanctity from which a sacrament is denominated is not there taken as an efficient cause, but rather as a formal or a final cause. Therefore it does not follow that a sacrament need always imply causality.

Reply Obj. 2. This argument considers sacrament in the sense of a sacred secret. Now not only God’s, but also the king’s, secret, is said to be sacred and to be a sacrament, because according to the ancients, whatever it was unlawful to lay violent hands on was said to be holy or sacrosanct,¹⁹ such as the city walls,²⁰ and persons of high rank. Consequently those secrets, whether Divine or human, which it is unlawful to violate by making them known to anybody whatever, are called sacred secrets or sacraments.

Reply Obj. 3. Even an oath has a certain relation to sacred things, in so far as it consists in calling a sacred thing to witness. And in this sense it is called a sacrament, not in the sense in which we speak of sacraments now, the word sacrament being thus used not equivocally but analogically—that is, by reason of a different relation to the one thing—namely, something sacred.

¹⁷ Gratian, *Decretum*, II, causa XXII, Q. 5, can. 14 (RF I, 886).

¹⁸ *City of God*, X, 5 (PL 41, 282).

¹⁹ Cf. *Digest*, I, tit. VIII, leg. 8 (KR 1, 40A).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, leg. I (KR 1, 39a).