2e. Abstract and concrete names

8 ARISTOTLE: Prior Analytics, BK I, CH 34 66b-c

19 AQUINAS: Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 3, A 3, REP 1 16a-d; Q 13, A 1, REP 2 62c-63c; A 9, ANS 71b-72c; Q 31, A 1, REP 5 171c-172b; Q 32, A 2 178a-179b; Q 39, AA 4-6 205c-209a; Q 40, A 2, ANS 214b-215b; Q 54, A 1, REP 2 285a-d

23 HOBBES: Leviathan, PART I, 55b-c; 57a

35 LOCKE: Human Understanding, BK III, CH VIII 284b-285a

38 ROUSSEAU: Inequality, 341b-c

53 JAMES: Psychology, 305a-308b; 689a

54 FREUD: General Introduction, 516b-c

8 ARISTOTLE: *Prior Analytics*, BK I, CH 34 66b-c

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48ª Men will frequently fall into fallacies through not setting out the terms of the premiss well, e. g. suppose *A* to be health, *B* disease, *C* man. It is true to say that *A* cannot belong to any *B* (for health belongs to no disease) and again that *B* belongs to every *C* (for every man is capable of disease). It would seem to follow that health cannot belong to any man. The reason for this is that the terms are not set out well in the statement, since if the things which are in the conditions are substituted, no syllogism can be made, e. g. if 'healthy' is substituted for 'health' and 'diseased' for 'disease'. For it is not true to say that being healthy cannot belong to one who is diseased. But unless this is assumed no conclusion results, save in respect of possibility: but such a conclusion is not impossible: for it is possible that health should belong to no man. Again the fallacy may occur in a similar way in the middle figure: 'it is not possible that health should belong to any disease, but it is possible that health should belong to every man, consequently it is not possible that disease should belong to any man'. In the third figure the fallacy results in reference to possibility. For health and disease, and knowledge and ignorance, and in general contraries, may possibly belong to the same thing, but cannot belong to one another. This is not in agreement with what was said before: for we stated[1] that when several things could belong to the same thing, they could belong to one another.

It is evident then that in all these cases the fallacy arises from the setting out of the terms: for if the things that are in the conditions are substituted, no fallacy arises. It is clear then that in such premisses what possesses the condition ought always to be substituted for the condition and taken as the term.

19 AQUINAS: *Summa Theologica*, PART I, Q 3, A 3, REP 1 16a-d; Q 13, A 1, REP 2 62c-63c; A 9, ANS 71b-72c; Q 31, A 1, REP 5 171c-172b; Q 32, A 2 178a-179b; Q 39, AA 4-6 205c-209a; Q 40, A 2, ANS 214b-215b; Q 54, A 1, REP 2 285a-d

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 3, A 3, REP 1 16a-d

Article 3. *Whether God Is the Same As His Essence or Nature?*

We proceed thus to the Third Article: It seems that God is not the same as His essence or nature.

[1] 39ª 14-19.

Objection 1. For nothing is in itself. But the essence or nature of God, which is the Godhead, is said to be in God. Therefore it seems that God is not the same as His essence or nature.
Obj. 2. Further, the effect is likened to its cause, for every agent produced its like. But in created things the suppositum is not identical with its nature, for a man is not the same as his humanity. Therefore God is not the same as His Godhead.
On the contrary, It is said of God that He is life, and not only that He is living: *I am the way, the truth, and the life* (John 14. 6). Now the relation between Godhead and God is the same as the relation between life and a living thing. Therefore God is His very Godhead.
I answer that, God is the same as His essence or nature. To understand this, it must be noted that in things composed of matter and form, the nature or essence must differ from the suppositum, because the essence or nature comprises in itself only what is included in the definition of the species; as, hunamity comprises in itself all that is included in the definition of man, for it is by this that man is man, and it is this that humanity signifies, that, namely, whereby man is man.Now individual matter, with all its individualizing accidents, is not included in the definition of the species. One of the elements in this defect in imitation is that what is one and simple can be represented only by many things. And so there comes about in these effects composition, which renders suppositum distinct from nature in them. For this flesh, these bones, this blackness or whiteness, etc., are not included in the definition of a man. Therefore this flesh, these bones, and the accidents designating this matter, are not included in humanity; and yet they are included in the thing which is a man. Hence the thing which is a man has something in it which humanity does not have. Consequently humanity and a man are not wholly the same, but humanity is taken to mean the formal part of a man, because the principles by which a thing is defined are as the formal constituent in relation to the individualizing matter.
On the other hand, in things not composed of matter and form, in which individualization is not due to individual matter—that is to say, to *this* matter—the very forms being individualized of themselves,—it is necessary that the forms themselves should be subsisting supposita. Therefore suppositum and nature do not differ in them as we have shown above (A. 2.). Since God then is not composed of matter and form, He must be His own Godhead, His own Life, and whatever else is thus predicated of Him.
Reply Obj. 1. We can speak of simple things only as though they were like the composite things from which we derive our knowledge. Therefore, in speaking of God, we use concrete nouns to signify His subsistence, because with us only those things subsist which are composite; and we use abstract nouns to signify His simplicity. In saying therefore that Godhead, or life, or

the like are in God, it must be ascribed to the diversity which lies in the way our intellect receives, and not to any diversity in reality.
Reply Obj. 2. The effects of God do not imitate Him perfectly, but only as far as they are able.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 13, A 1, REP 2 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*)[2] 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 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,[3] 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.

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[2] Sect. 5 (PG 3, 593).
[3] Interpretation, 1 (16^a3).

Reply Obj. 2. 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.

Reply Obj. 3. 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, ANS 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,[4] 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).

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 31, A 1, REP 5 171c-172b

Article 1. *Whether There Is Trinity in God?*

We proceed thus to the First Article: It seems there is not trinity in God.

Objection 1. For every name in God signifies substance or relation. But this name Trinity does not signify the substance; otherwise it would be predicated of each one of the persons. Nor does it signify relation, for it does not express a name that refers to another. Therefore the word Trinity is not to be applied to God.

Obj. 2. Further, this word trinity is a collective term, since it signifies multitude. But such a word does not apply to God, since the unity of a

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

collective name is the least of unities, while in God there exists the greatest possible unity. Therefore this word trinity does not apply to God.
Obj. 3. Further, every triple is threefold. But in God there is no triplicity, since triplicity is a kind of inequality. Therefore neither is there trinity in God.
Obj. 4. Further, all that exists in God exists in the unity of the divine essence, because God is His own essence. Therefore, if Trinity exists in God, it exists in the unity of the divine essence; and thus in God there would be three essential unities, which is heresy.
Obj. 5. Further, in all that is said of God, the concrete is predicated of the abstract; for Deity is God and paternity is the Father. But the Trinity cannot be called triple; otherwise there would be nine realities in God, which is erroneous. Therefore the word trinity is not to be applied to God.
On the contrary, Athanasius says:[5] "Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity is to be revered."
I answer that, The name Trinity in God signifies the determinate number of persons. And so the plurality of persons in God requires that we should use the word trinity, because what is indeterminately signified by plurality is signified by trinity in a determinate manner.
Reply Obj. 1. In its etymological sense, this word Trinity seems to signify the one essence of the three persons, according as trinity may mean trine-unity. But in the strict meaning of the term it rather signifies the number of persons of one essence.And on this account we cannot say that the Father is the Trinity, as He is not three persons. Yet it does not mean the relations themselves of the Persons, but rather the number of persons related to each other. And hence it is that the word in itself does not express regard to another.
Reply Obj. 2. Two things are implied in a collective term, plurality of the supposita, and a unity of some kind, namely of some order. For people is a multitude of men comprehended under a certain order. In the first sense, this word trinity is like other collective words; but in the second sense it differs from them, because in the divine Trinity not only is there unity of order, but also with this there is unity of essence.
Reply Obj. 3. Trinity is taken in an absolute sense, for it signifies the threefold number of persons. Triplicity signifies a proportion of inequality; for it is a species of unequal proportion, according to Boëthius (*Arithm.* i, 23).[6] Therefore in God there is not triplicity, but Trinity.
Reply Obj. 4. In the divine Trinity is to be understood both number and the persons numbered. So when we say, "Trinity in Unity," we do not place number in the unity of nature, just as the supposita of a nature are said to

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[5] Creed *"Quicumque"* (MA II, 1355, DZ 39).
[6] PL 63, 1101.

exist in that nature. On the other hand, we say “Unity in Trinity,” meaning that the nature is in its supposita.
Reply Obj. 5. When we say, “Trinity is triple,” by reason of the number implied we signify the multiplication of that number by itself, since the word triple imports a distinction in the supposita of which it is spoken. Therefore it cannot be said that the Trinity is triple; otherwise it follows that, if the Trinity be triple, there would be three supposita of the Trinity; as when we say, “God is triple,” it follows that there are three supposita of the Godhead.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 32, A 2 178a-179b

Article 2. *Whether There Are Notions in God?*

We proceed thus to the Second Article: It seems that in God there are no notions.
Objection 1. For Dionysius says (*Div. Nom.* i):[7] “We must not dare to say anything of God but what is taught to us by the Holy Scripture.” But Holy Scripture does not say anything concerning notions. Therefore there are none in God.
Obj. 2. Further, all that exists in God concerns the unity of the essence or the trinity of the person. But the notions do not concern the unity of the essence, nor the trinity of the persons, for neither can what belongs to the essence be predicated of the notions; for instance, we do not say that paternity is wise or creates. Nor can what belongs to the persons be so predicated; for example, we do not say that paternity begets, nor that sonship is begotten. Therefore there do not exist notions in God.
Obj. 3. Further, we are not to presuppose any abstract notions as principles of knowing simple things, for they are known of themselves. But the divine persons are supremely simple. Therefore we are not to suppose any notions in God.
On the contrary, Damascene says (*De Fide Orthod.* iii, 5):[8] “We recognize difference of hypostases that is, of persons, in the three properties; i. e., in the paternal, the filial, and the processional.” Therefore we must admit properties and notions in God.
I answer that, Prepositinus, considering the simplicity of the persons, said[9] that in God there were no properties or notions, and wherever they were mentioned, he propounded the abstract for the concrete. For as we are accustomed to say, “I beseech your kindness”—that is, you who are kind—so when we speak of paternity in God, we mean God the Father. But, as shown above (Q. III, A. 3, Ans. 1; Q. XIII, A. 1, Ans, 2), the use of concrete and abstract names in God is not in any way against the divine

[7] Sect. 1, 2 (PG 3, 588).
[8] PG 94, 1000.
[9] *Summa* (fol. 671b).

simplicity, since we always name a thing as we understand it. Now, our intellect cannot attain to the absolute simplicity of the divine essence considered in itself, and therefore, our human intellect apprehends and names divine things according to its own mode, that is in so far as they are found in sensible things from which its knowledge is derived. In these things we use abstract terms to signify simple forms, and to signify subsistent things we use concrete terms. Hence also we signify divine things, as above stated, (*loc. cit.*), by abstract names, to express their simplicity; but, to express their subsistence and completeness, we use concrete names.

But not only must essential names be signified in the abstract and in the concrete, as when we say Deity and God, or wisdom and wise, but the same applies to the personal names, so that we may say paternity and Father. Two chief motives for this can be cited. The first arises from the obstinacy of heretics. For since we confess the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be one God and three persons, to those who ask: "Whereby are They one God? and whereby are they three persons?" as we answer that they are one in essence or deity, so there must also be some abstract terms whereby we may answer that the persons are distinguished; and these are the properties or notions signified by an abstract term, as paternity and sonship. Therefore the divine essence is signified as "What", and the person as "Who", and the property as "Whereby."

The second motive is because one person in God is related to two Persons—namely, the person of the Father to the person of the Son and to the person of the Holy Ghost. This is not, however, by one relation; otherwise it would follow that the Son also and the Holy Ghost would be related to the Father by one and the same relation. Thus, since relation alone multiplies the Trinity, it would follow that the Son and the Holy Ghost would not be two persons. Nor can it be said with Prepositinus that as God is related in one way to creatures, while creatures are related to Him in divers ways, so the Father is related by one relation to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, but these two persons are related to the Father by two relations. For, since the specific idea of a relation is that it refers to another, it must be said that two relations are not specifically different if but one opposite relation corresponds to them. For the relation of lord and father must differ according to the difference of sonship and servitude. Now, all creatures are related to God as His creatures by one specific relation. But the Son and the Holy Ghost are not related to the Father by one and the same kind of relation. Hence there is no parity.

Further, in God there is no need to admit any real relation to the creature (Q. XXVIII, A. 1, Ans. 3), while there is no reason against our admitting in God many logical relations. But in the Father there must be a real relation to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Hence, corresponding to the two relations of

the Son and of the Holy Ghost, whereby they are related to the Father, we must understand two relations in the Father, whereby He is related to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Hence, since there is only one Person of the Father, it is necessary that the relations should be separately signified in the abstract; and these are what we mean by properties and notions.
Reply Obj. 1. Although the notions are not mentioned in Holy Scripture, yet the persons are mentioned, comprising the idea of notions, as the abstract is contained in the concrete.
Reply Obj. 2. In God the notions have their significance not after the manner of realities, but by way of certain ideas whereby the persons are known, although in God these notions or relations are real, as stated above (Q. XXVIII, A. 1). Therefore whatever has order to any essential or personal act cannot be applied to the notions, since this is against their mode of signification. Hence we cannot say that paternity begets, or creates, or is wise, or is intelligent. The essentials, however, which are not ordered to any act, but simply remove created conditions from God, can be predicated of the notions; for we can say that paternity is eternal, or immense, or such like. So also on account of the real identity, substantive terms, whether personal or essential, can be predicated of the notions; for we can say that paternity is God, and that paternity is the Father.
Reply Obj. 3. Although the persons are simple, still without prejudice to their simplicity, the proper ideas of the persons can be abstractly signified, as above explained.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 39, AA 4-6 205c-209a

Article 4. *Whether the Concrete Essential Names Can Stand for the Person?*

We proceed thus to the Fourth Article: It would seem that the concrete, essential names cannot stand for the person, so that we can truly say "God begot God."
Objection 1. For, as the logicians say, "a singular term signifies what it stands for."[10] But this name *God* seems to be a singular term, for it cannot be predicated in the plural, as above explained (A. 3). Therefore, since it signifies the essence, it stands for essence, and not for person.
Obj. 2. Further, a term in the subject is not restricted by a term in the predicate, as to its signification, but only as to the time signified in the predicate. But when I say, "God creates," this name "God" stands for the essence. So when we say "God begot," this term *God* cannot, by reason of the notional predicate, stand for person.
Obj. 3. Further, if this be true, "God begot," because the Father generates, for the same reason, this is true, "God does not beget," because the Son

[10] Peter of Spain, *Summulae Logicae,* VII, 3. See Prantl, *Gesch. der Logik,* chap. 17.

does not beget. Therefore there is God who begets, and there is God who does not beget; and thus it follows that there are two Gods.

Obj. 4. Further, if "God begot God," He begot either God, that is Himself, or another God. But He did not beget God, that is Himself; for, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* i, 1),[11] "nothing begets itself." Neither did He beget another God, as there is only one God. Therefore it is false to say, "God begot God."

Obj. 5. Further, if God begot God, He begot either God who is the Father, or God who is not the Father. If God who is the Father, then god the Father was begotten. If God who is not the Father, then there is a God who is not God the Father, which is false. Therefore it cannot be said that "God begot God."

On the contrary, In the Creed it is said, "God of God."[12]

I answer that, Some have said[13] that "this name God and the like, properly according to their nature, stand for the essence, but by reason of some notional adjunct are madeto stand for the Person." This opinion apparently arose from considering the divine simplicity, which requires that in God, He Who possesses and what is possessed be the same. So He Who possesses Godhead, which is signified by the name God, is the same as Godhead.

But when we consider the proper way of expressing ourselves, the mode of signification must be considered no less than the thing signified. Hence as this word God signifies the divine essence as in Him Who possesses it, just as the name man signifies humanity in a suppositum, others more truly have said[14] that "this word God, from its mode of signification, can, in its proper sense, stand for person," as does the word man.

So this word God sometimes stands for the essence, as when we say "God creates," because this predicate belongs to the subject by reason of the form signified—that is, Godhead. But sometimes it stands for the person, either for only one, as when we say God begots, or for two, as when we say, God spirates; or for three, as when it is said: *To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God,* etc. (I Tim. 1. 17).

Reply Obj. 1. Although this name God agrees with singular terms as regards the form signified not being multiplied, nevertheless it agrees also with general terms so far as the form signified is to be found in several supposita. So it need not always stand for the essence it signifies.

Reply Obj. 2. This holds good against those who say that the word God does not naturally stand for person.

Reply Obj. 3. The word God stands for the person in a different way from that in which this word man does; for since the form signified by this word

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[11] PL, 42, 820.

[12] Nicaean Creed (MA II, 666; DZ 54).

[13] Gilbert de la Porrée, *In De Praedicat. Trium Pers.,* (PL 64, 1310); cf. Wm. of Auxerre, *Summa Aurea*, Pt. I, tr. 4, chap. 4 (fol. 5d); Alexander of Hales, *S.T.* II, 357 (QR I, 535).

[14] Alan of Lille, *Theol. Reg.,* 24 (PL 210, 632); 32 (636); also, Wm. of Auxerre, *Summa Awrea,* II, 4, 4 (fol. 6a).

man—that is, humanity—is really divided among its different supposita, it stands of itself for the person, even if there is nothing added determining it to the person—that is, to a distinct suppositum. The unity or community of the human nature, however, is not a reality, but is only in the consideration of the mind. Hence this term man does not stand for the common nature, unless this is required by something added, as when we say, man is a species, but the form signified by the name God—that is, the divine essence—is really one and common. So of itself it stands for the common nature, but by some adjunct it may be restricted so as to stand for the person. So, when we say, "God generates," by reason of the notional act this name God stands for the person of the Father. But when we say, "God does not generate," there is no addition to determine this name to the person of the Son, and hence the phrase means that generation is contrary to the divine nature. If, however, something be added belonging to the person of the Son, this proposition, for instance, "God begotten does not beget," is true. Consequently, it does not follow that there exists a "God generator," and a "God not generator," unless there be added something pertaining to the persons; as, for instance, if we were to say, "the Father is God the generator" and "the Son is God the non-generator"; and so it does not follow that there are many Gods, for the Father and the Son are one God, as was said above (A. 3).

Reply Obj. 4. This is false, "the Father begot God, that is Himself," because the word Himself, as a reciprocal term, refers to the same suppositum. Nor is this contrary to what Augustine says[15] that God the Father begot another self (*alterum se*), since the word "*se*" is either in the ablative case, and then it means "He begot another from Himself," or it indicates a simple relation, and thus points to identity of nature. This is, however, either an improper or an emphatic way of speaking, so that it would really mean, "He begot another most like to Himself." Likewise also it is false to say, "He begot another God," because although the Son is another than the Father, as above explained (Q. XXXI, A. 2), nevertheless it cannot be said that He is "another God," because this adjective "another" would be understood to apply to the noun God; and thus the meaning would be that there is a distinction of Godhead. Yet this proposition "He begot another God" is tolerated by some,[16] provided that another be taken as a noun, and the word God be construed in appossiton with it. This, however, is an improper way of speaking, and to be avoided, for fear of giving occasion to error.

Reply Obj. 5. To say, "God begot God Who is God the Father," is wrong, because since the word Father is construed in apposition to God, the word God is restricted to the person of the Father, so that it would mean, "He begot God, Who is Himself the Father," and then the Father would be

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[15] *Epist.,* CLXX (PL 33, 749).

[16] Wm. of Auxerre, *Summa Aurea,* 1, 4, 4 (fol. 5d).

spoken of as begotten, which is false. Therefore the negative of this proposition is true, “He begot God Who is not God the Father. If, however, we understand these words not to be in apposition, and require something to be added, then, on the contrary, the affirmative proposition is true, and the negative is false; so that the meaning would be “He begot God Who is God Who is the Father.” Such a rendering, however, appears to be forced, so that it is better to say simply that the affirmative proposition is false, and the negative is true.

Yet Prepositivus said[17] that both the negative and affirmative are false, because this relative “Who” in the affirmative proposition can be referred to the suppositum, while in the negative it denotes both the thing signified and the suppositum. Hence, in the affirmative the sense is that to be God the Father is befitting to the person of the Son, and in the negative the sense is that “to be God the Father,” is to be removed from the Son's divinity as well as from His personality. This, however, appears to be irrational, since, according to the Philosopher,[18] what is open to affirmation, is open also to negation.

Article 5. *Whether Abstract Essential Names Can Stand for the Person?*

We proceed thus to the Fifth Article: It would seem that abstract essential names can stand for the person, so that this proposition is true, Essence begets essece.

Objection 1. For Augustine says (*De Trin.* vii, 2):[19] “The Father and the Son are one Wisdom, because they are one essence; and taken singly Wisdom is from Wisdom, as essence from essence.”

Obj. 2. Further, generation or corruption in ourselves implies generation ir corruption of what is within us. But the Son is generated. Therefore since the divine essence is in the Son, it seems that the divine essence is generated.

Obj. 3. Further, God and the divine essence are the same, as is clear from what is above explained (Q. III, A. 3). But, as was shown, it is true to say that “God begets God.” Therefore this is also true:—”Essence begets essence.”

Obj. 4. Further, a predicate can stand for that of which it is predicated. But the Father is the divine essence. Therefore essence can stand for the person of the Father. Thus the essence begets.

Obj. 5. Further, the essence is “a thing begetting,” because the essence is the Father Who is begetting. Therefore if the essence is not begetting, the essence will be “a thing begetting” and “not begetting,” which cannot be.

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[17] *Summa* (fol. 55vb).
[18] *Interpretation,* 6 (17ª30).
[19] PL 42, 820.

Obj. 6. Further, Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv, 20):[20] "The Father is the principle of the whole Godhead." But He is principle only by begetting or spirating. Therefore the Father begets or spirates the Godhead.

On the contrary, Augustine says (*De Trin.* i, 1):[21] "Nothing begets itself." But if the essence begets the essence, it begets itself only, since nothing exists in God as distinguished from the divine essence. Therefore the essence does not beget the essence.

I answer that, Concerning this, the abbot Joachim erred[22] in asserting that as we can say "God begot God," so we can say, "Essence begot essence," considering that, by reason of the divine simplicity God is nothing else but the divine essence.

In this he was wrong, because if we wish to express ourselves correctly, we must take into account not only the thing which is signified, but also the mode of mode of its signification, as above stated (A. 4). Now although God is really the same as Godhead, nevertheless the mode of signification is not in each case the same. For since this word God signifies the divine essence in Him that possesses it, from its mode of signification it can of its own nature stand for person. Thus the things which properly belong to the persons can be predicated of this word God, as, for instance, we can say "God is begotten" or "is Begetter," as above explained (A. 4). The word essence, however, in its mode of signification, cannot stand for Person, because it signifies the essence as an abstract form. Consequently, what properly belongs to the persons whereby they are distinguished from each other cannot be attributed to the essence. For that would imply distinction in the divine essence in the same way as there exists distinction in the suposita.

Reply Obj. 1. To express unity of essence and of person, the holy Doctors have something expressed themselves with greater emphasis than the property of terms allows. And so instead of enlarging upon such expressions we should rather explain them: thus, for instance, abstract names should be explained by concrete names, or even by personal names; as when we find "essence from essence," or "wisdom from wisdom" we should take the sense to be, the Son, Who is essence and wisdom, is from the Father Who is essence and wisdom. Nevertheless, as regards these abstract names a certain order should be observed, because what belongs to act is more nearly allied to the persons because acts belong to supposita. So "nature from nature," and "wisdom from wisdom" are less improper than "essence from essence."

Reply Obj. 2. In creatures the one generated has not the same nature numerically as the generator, but another nature, numerically distinct,

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[20] PL 42, 908.
[21] PL 42, 820.
[22] Cf. *Decretal. Gregor.,* IX, 1, tit. 1, chap. 2 (RF II, 6).

which begins to exist in it anew by generation, and ceases to exist by corruption, and so it is generated and corrupted accidentally; but God begotten has the same nature numerically as the begetter. So the divine nature in the Son is not begotten either per se or accidentally.

Reply Obj. 3. Although God and the divine essence are really the same, nevertheless, on account of their different mode of signification, we must speak in a different way about each of them.

Reply Obj. 4. The divine essence is predicated of the Father by mode of identity by reason of the divine simplicity; yet it does not follow that it can stand for the Father because its mode of signification is different. This objection would hold good as regards things which are predicated of another as the universal of a particular.

Reply Obj. 5. The difference between substantive and adjectival names consists in this, that the former carry their suppositum with them, while the latter do not, but add the thing signified to the noun. Hence logicians say[23] that the noun stands in the place of but the adjective does not stand for but joins. Therefore substantive personal terms can be predicated of the essence because they are really the same; nor does it follow that a personal property makes a distinct essence, but it belongs to the suppositum implied in the substantive name. But notional and personal adjectives cannot be predicated of the essence unless we add some noun. We cannot say that the essence is begetting; yet we can say that the essence is a thing begetting, or that it is God begetting, if "thing and God" stand for person, but not if they stand for essence. Consequently, there exists no contradiction in saying that "essence is a thing begetting," and "a thing not begetting," because in the first case "thing" stands for person, and in the second it stands for the essence.

Reply Obj. 6. So far as Godhead is one in several supposita, it agrees in a certain degree with the form of a collective term. So when we say, the Father is the principle of the whole Godhead, the term Godhead can be taken for all the persons together, since it is the principle in all the divine persons. Nor does it follow that He is His own principle, as for example one of the people may be called the ruler of the people without being ruler of himself. We may also say that He is the principle of the whole Godhead, not as generating or spirating it, but as communicating it by generation and spiration.

Article 6. *Whether the Persons Can be Predicated of the Essential Terms?*

We proceed thus to the Sixth Article: It would seem that the persons cannot be predicated of the concrete essential names, so that we can say for instance, God is three persons, or, God is the Trinity.

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[23] Peter of Spain, *Summulae Logicae,* VII, I, I; see Prantl, *Gesch. der Logik,* 17, 200 (III, 51).

Objection 1. For it is false to say, man is every man, because it cannot be verified as regards any suppositum. For neither Socrates, nor Plato, nor anyone else is every man. In the same way this proposition, God is the Trinity, cannot be verified of any one of the supposita of the divine nature. For the Father is not the Trinity, nor is the Son, nor is the Holy Ghost. So to say, God is the Trinity, is false.
Obj. 2. Further, the lower is not predicated of the higher except by accidental predication; as for instance when I say, animal is man, for it is accidental to animal to be man. But this name God as regards the three persons is as a general term to inferior terms, as Damascene says (*De Fide Orthod.* iii, 4).[24] Therefore it seems that the names of the persons cannot be predicated of this name God, except in an accidental sense.
On the contrary, Augustine says,[25] in his sermon on Faith, We believe that one God is one divinely named Trinity.
I answer that, As above explained (A. 5, Ans. 5), although adjectival terms, whether personal or notional, cannot be predicated of the essence, nevertheless substantive terms can be so predicated, owing to the real identity of essence and person. The divine essence is not only really the same as one person, but it is really the same as the three persons. And so, one person, and two, and three, can be predicated of the essence as if we were to say, The essence is the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And because this word God can of itself stand for the essence, as above explained (A. 4, Ans. 3), hence, just as it is true to say, The essence is the three persons, so likewise it is true to say, God is the three persons.
Reply Obj. 1. As above explained (A. 4, Ans. 3) this term man can of itself stand for person, whereas an addition is required for it to stand for the universal human nature. So it is false to say, Man is every man, because it cannot be verified of any suppositum. On the contrary, this word God can of itself stand for the divine essence. So, although to say of any of the supposita of the divine nature, God is the Trinity, is untrue, nevertheless it is true of the divine essence. This was denied by Gilbert de la Porrée [26] because he did not take note of this distinction.
Reply Obj. 2. When we say, God, or the divine essence, is the Father the predication is one of identity, and not of the lower in regard to a higher species, because in God there is no universal and singular. Hence, as this proposition, The Father is God, is of itself true, so this proposition, God is the Father, is true of itself, and not in any accidental way.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 40, A 2, ANS 214b-215b

Article 2. *Whether the Persons Are Distinguished by the Relations?*

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[24] PG 94, 997.
[25] Cf. Fulgentius, PL 65, 673.
[26] *De Trin.,* (PL 64, 1311).

We proceed thus to the Second Article: It would seem that the persons are not distinguished by the relations.
Objection 1. For simple things are distinct by themselves. But the persons are supremely simple. Therefore they are distinguished by themselves, and not by the relation.
Obj. 2. Further, a form is distinguished only in relation to its genus. For white is distinguished from black only by quality. But hypostasis signifies an individual in the genus of substance. Therefore the hypostases cannot be distinguished by relations.
Obj. 3. Further, what is absolute comes before what is relative. But the distinction of the divine persons is the primary distinction. Therefore the divine persons are not distinguished by the relations.
Obj. 4. Further, whatever presupposes distinction cannot be the first principle of distinction. But relation presupposes distinction, which comes into its definition; for a relation is what is towards another. Therefore the first distinctive principle in God cannot be relation.
On the contrary, Boethius says (*De Trin.*):[27] "Relation alone multiplies the Trinity" of the divine Persons.
I answer that, In whatever multitude of things is found something common to all, it is necessary to seek out the principle of distinction. So, as the three persons agree in the unity of essence, we must seek to know the principle of distinction whereby they are several. Now, there are two principles of difference between the divine persons, and these are origin and relation. Although these do not really differ, yet they differ in the mode of signification; for origin is signified by way of act, as generation; and relation by way of the form, as paternity.
Some,[28] then, considering that relation follows upon act, have said that the divine hypostases are distinguished by origin, so that we may say that the Father is distinguished from the Son, because the former begets and the latter is begotten. Further, that the relations, or the properties, make known the distinctions of the hypostases or persons as resulting therefrom; as also in creatures the properties manifest the distinctions of individuals, which distinctions are caused by the material principles.
This opinion, however, cannot stand — for two reasons. Firstly, because, in order that two things be understood as distinct, their distinction must be understood as resulting from something intrinsic to both; thus in things created it results from their matter or their form. Now origin of a thing does not designate anything intrinsic, but means the way from something, or to something; as generation signifies the way to the thing generated, and as

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[27] Chap. 6. (PL 64, 1255).
[28] See *De Pot.,* VIII, 3, 13, where Richard of St. Victor is mentioned (*De Trin.,* IV, 15 — PL 196, 939); cf. Bonaventure, *In Sent.,* I, dist. XXVI, A. I, Q. 2, arg. 3 (QR 1, 455); Q. 3, arg. 3 (QR 1, 456).

proceeding from the generator. Hence it is not possible that what is generated and the generator should be distinguished by generation alone, but in the generator and in the thing generated we must presuppose whatever makes them to be distinguished from each other. In a divine person there is nothing to presuppose but essence, and relation or property. Hence, since the persons agree in essence, it only remains to be said that the persons are distinguished from each other by the relations.
Secondly, because the distinction of the divine persons is not to be so understood as if what is common to them all is divided, because the common essence remains undivided, but the distinguishing principles themselves must constitute the things which are distinct. Now the relations or the properties distinguish or constitute the hypostases or persons, since they are themselves the subsisting persons; as paternity is the Father, and sonship is the Son, because in God the abstract and the concrete do not differ. But it is against the notion of origin that it should constitute hypostasis or person. For origin taken in an active sense signifies proceeding from a subsisting person, so that it presupposes the latter; while in a passive sense origin, as nativity, signifies the way to a subsisting person, and as not yet constituting the person.
It is therefore better to say that the persons or hypostases are distinguished rather by relations than by origin. For, although in both ways they are distinguished, nevertheless in our mode of understanding they are distinguished chiefly and firstly by relations; hence this name Father signifies not only a property, but also the hypostasis; but this term Begetter or Begetting signifies property only, because this name Father signifies the relation which is distinctive and constitutive of the hypostasis; and this term Begetter or Begotten signifies the origin which is not distinctive and constitutive of the hypostasis.
Reply Obj. 1. The persons are the subsisting relations themselves. Hence it is not against the simplicity of the divine persons for them to be distinguished by the relations.
Reply Obj. 2. The divine persons are not distinguished as regards being, in which they subsist, nor in anything absolute, but only as regards something relative. Hence relation suffices for their distinction.
Reply Obj. 3. The more prior a distinction is, the nearer it approaches to unity, and so it must be the least possible distinction. So the distinction of the persons must be by that which distinguishes the least possible; and this is by relation.
Reply Obj. 4. Relation presupposes the distinction of the supposita when it is an accident; but when the relation is subsistent, it does not presuppose, but brings about distinction. For when it is said that relation is to be towards another, the word "another" signifies the correlative which is not prior but simultaneous in the order of nature.

Summa Theologica, PART I, Q 54, A 1, REP 2 285a-d

Article 1. *Whether an Angel's Act of Understanding Is His Substance?*

We proceed thus to the First Article: It would seem that the angel's act of understanding is his substance.

Objection 1. For the angel is both higher and simpler than the agent intellect of a soul. But the substance of the agent intellect is its own action, as is evident from Aristotle[29] and from his Commentator.[30] Therefore much more is the angel's substance his action,— that is his act of understanding.

Obj. 2. Further, the Philosopher says[31] that "the action of the intellect is life." But since "in living things to live is to be," as he says,[32] it seems that life is essence. Therefore the action of the intellect is the essence of an angel who understands.

Obj. 3. Further, if the extremes be one, then the middle does not differ from them, because extreme is farther from extreme than the middle is. But in an angel the intellect and the thing understood are the same, at least in so far as he understands his own essence. Therefore the act of understanding, which is between the intellect and the thing understood, is one with the substance of the angel who understands.

On the contrary, The action of a thing differs more from its substance than does its being. But no creature's being is its substance, for this belongs to God only, as is evident from what was said above (Q. III, A. 4; Q. VII, A. 1, Ans. 3; Q. XLIV, A. 1). Therefore neither the action of an angel, nor of any other creature, is its substance.

I answer that, It is impossible for the action of an angel, or of any other creature, to be its own substance. For an action is properly the actuality of a power, just as being is the actuality of a substance, or of an essence. Now it is impossible for anything which is not a pure act, but which has some admixture of potency, to be its own actuality, because actuality is opposed to potentiality. But God alone is pure act. Hence only in God is His substance the same as His being and His action.

Besides, if an angel's act of understanding were his substance, it would be necessary for it to be subsisting. Now a subsisting act of intelligence can be but one, just as an abstract thing that subsists can be but one. Consequently the substance of one angel would neither be distinguished from God's substance, which is His very act of understanding subsisting, nor from the substance of another angel.

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[29] *Soul,* III, 5, (430^{a}18).
[30] Comm. 19 (VI, 162C).
[31] *Metaphysics,* XII, 7 (1072^{b}27).
[32] *Soul,* II, 4 (415^{b}13).

Also, if the angel were his own act of understanding, there could then be no degrees of understanding more or less perfectly; for this comes about through the diverse participation of the act of understanding.
Reply Obj. 1. When the agent intellect is said to be its own action, such predication is not essential, but concomitant, because, since its very nature consists in act, instantly, so far as lies in itself, action accompanies it, which cannot be said of the possible intellect, for this has no actions until after it has been reduced to act.
Reply Obj. 2. The relation between *life* and *to live* is not the same as that between *essence* and *to be*, but rather as that between *a race* and *to run*, one of which signifies the act in the abstract, and the other in the concrete. Hence it does not follow, if *to live* is *to be*, that *life* is *essence.* Although life is sometimes put for the essence, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* x),[33] "Memory and understanding and will are one essence, one life," yet it is not taken in this sense by the Philosopher when he says that "the act of the intellect is life."
Reply Obj. 3. The action which passes to something extrinsic, is really a medium between the agent and the subject receiving the action. The action which remains within the agent is not really a medium between the agent and the object, but only according to the manner of expression; for it really follows the union of the object with the agent. For the act of understanding is brought about by the union of the thing understood with the one who understands it, as an effect which differs from both.

23 HOBBES: *Leviathan*, PART I, 55b-c; 57a

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.

[33] Chap. II (PL 42, 983).

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*.

Leviathan, PART I, 57a
First, a thing may enter into account, for matter, or body; as *living, sensible, rational, hot, cold, moved, quiet;* with all which names the word *matter,* or *body,* is understood; all such being names of matter.
Secondly, it may enter into account, or be considered, for some accident or quality which we conceive to be in it; as for *being moved,* for *being so long,* for *being hot,* etc.; and then, of the name of the thing itself, by a little change or wresting, we make a name for that accident which we consider; and for *living* put into the account *life;* for *moved, motion;* for *hot, heat;* for *long, length,* and the like: and all such names are the names of the accidents and properties by which one matter and body is distinguished from another. These are called *names abstract,* because severed, not from matter, but from the account of matter.
Thirdly, we bring into account the properties of our own bodies, whereby we make such distinction: as when anything is *seen* by us, we reckon not the thing itself, but the *sight,* the *colour,* the *idea* of it in the fancy; and when anything is *heard,* we reckon it not, but the *hearing* or *sound* only, which is our fancy or conception of it by the ear: and such are names of fancies.

35 LOCKE: *Human Understanding*, BK III, CH VIII 284b-285a

Chap. VIII. *Of Abstract and Concrete Terms*

1. *Abstract terms not predictable one of another, and why.* The ordinary words of language, and our common use of them, would have given us light into the nature of our ideas, if they had been but considered with attention. The mind, as has been shown, has a power to abstract its ideas, and so they become essences, general essences, whereby the sorts of things are distinguished. Now each abstract idea being distinct, so that of any two the one can never be the other, the mind will, by its intuitive knowledge,[34] perceive their difference, and therefore in propositions no two whole ideas can ever be affirmed one of another. This we see in the common use of language, which permits not any two abstract words, or names of abstract ideas, to be affirmed one of another. For how near of kin soever they may seem to be, and how certain soever it is that man is an animal, or rational, or white, yet every one at first hearing perceives the falsehood of these propositions: *humanity is animality,* or *rationality,* or *whiteness:* and this is as evident as any of the most allowed maxims. All our affirmations then are only in concrete, which is the affirming, not one abstract idea to be another, but one abstract idea to be joined to another; which abstract idea, in substances, may be of any sort; in all the rest are little else but of relations; and in substances the most frequent are of powers: v. g. "a man is white," signifies that the thing that has the essence of a man has also in it the essence of whiteness, which is nothing but a power to produce the idea of whiteness in one whose eyes can discover ordinary objects: or, "a man is rational," signifies that the same thing that hath the essence of a man hath also in it the essence of rationality, i. e. a power of reasoning.

2. *They show the difference of our ideas.* This distinction of names shows us also the difference of our ideas: for if we observe them, we shall find that *our simple ideas have all abstract as well as concrete names:* the one whereof is (to speak the language of grammarians) a substantive, the other an adjective; as whiteness, white; sweetness, sweet.[35] The like also holds in our ideas of modes and relations; as justice, just; equality, equal: only with this difference, that some of the concrete names of relations amongst men chiefly are substantives; as, *paternitas, pater;* whereof it were easy to render a reason. But as to our ideas of substances, we have very few or no abstract names at all. For though the Schools have introduced *animalitas, humanitas, corporietas,* and some others; yet they hold no proportion with that infinite number of names of substances, to which they never were ridiculous enough to attempt the coining of abstract ones: and those few that the Schools forged, and put into the mouths of their scholars, could never yet get admittance into common use, or obtain the license of public approbation. Which seems to me at least to intimate the confession of all mankind, that they have no ideas of the real essences of substances, since

[34] Cf. Bk. IV. ch. ii. § I.
[35] Cf. Bk. II. ch. xxxi. § 12.

they have not names for such ideas: which no doubt they would have had, had not their consciousness to themselves of their ignorance of them kept them from so idle an attempt. And therefore, though they had ideas enough to distinguish gold from a stone, and metal from wood; yet they but timorously ventured on such terms, as *aurietas* and *saxietas, metallietas* and *lignietas,* or the like names, which should pretend to signify the real essences of those substances whereof they knew they had no ideas. And indeed it was only the doctrine of *substantial forms,* and the confidence of mistaken pretenders to a knowledge that they had not, which first coined and then introduced *animalitas* and *humanitas,* and the like; which yet went very little further than their own Schools, and could never get to be current amongst understanding men. Indeed, *humanitas* was a word in familiar use amongst the Romans; but in a far different sense, and stood not for the abstract essence of any substance; but was the abstracted name of a mode, and its concrete *humanus,* not *homo.*

38 ROUSSEAU: *Inequality*, 341b-c

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.

53 JAMES: *Psychology*, 305a-308b; 689a

Psychology, 305a-308b

"ABSTRACT" IDEAS

We have now to pass to a less excusable mistake. There are philosophers who deny that associated things can be broken asunder at all, even provisionally, by the conceiving mind. The opinion known as Nominalism says that we really never frame any conception of the partial elements of an experience, but are compelled, whenever we think it, to think it in its totality, just as it came.

I will be silent of mediæval Nominalism, and begin with Berkeley, who is supposed to have rediscovered the doctrine for himself. His asseverations against 'abstract ideas' are among the oftenest quoted passages in philosophic literature.

It is agreed [he says] on all hands that the qualities or modes of things do never really exist each of them apart by itself, and separated from all others, but are mixed, as it were, and blended together, several in the same object. But, we are told, the mind being able to consider each quality singly, or abstracted from those other qualities with which it is united, does by that means frame to itself abstract ideas. ... After this manner, it is said, we come by the abstract idea of man, or, if you please, humanity, or human nature; wherein it is true there is included color, because there is no man but has some color, but then it can be neither white, nor black, nor any particular color, because there is no one particular color wherein all men partake. So likewise there is included stature, but then it is neither tall stature nor low stature, nor yet middle stature, but something abstracted from all these. And so of the rest. ... Whether others have this wonderful faculty of abstracting their ideas, they best can tell: for myself, I find indeed I have a faculty of imagining or representing to myself the ideas of those particular things I have perceived and of variously compounding and dividing them. ... I can consider the hand, the eye, the nose, each by itself abstracted or separated from the rest of the body. But then, whatever hand or eye I imagine, it must have some particular shape and color. Likewise the idea of man that I frame to myself must be either of a white, or a black, or a tawny, a straight, or a crooked, a tall, or a low, or a middle-sized man. I cannot by any effort of thought conceive the abstract idea above described. And it is equally impossible for me to form the abstract idea of motion distinct from the body moving, and which is neither swift nor slow, curvilinear nor rectilinear; and the like may be said of all other abstract general ideas whatsoever. ... And there is ground to think most men will acknowledge themselves to be in my case. The generality of men which are simple and illiterate never pretend to abstract notions. It is said they are difficult, and not to be attained without pains and study.

...Now I would fain know at what time it is men are employed in surmounting that difficulty, and furnishing themselves with those necessary helps for discourse. It cannot be when they are grown up, for then it seems they are not conscious of any such painstaking; it remains therefore to be the business of their childhood.

And surely the great and multiplied labor of framing abstract notions will be found a hard task for that tender age. Is it not a hard thing to imagine that a couple of children cannot prate together of their sugar-plums and rattles and the rest of their little trinkets, till they have first tacked together numberless inconsistencies, and so framed in their minds abstract general ideas, and annexed them to every common name they make use of?[36]

The note, so bravely struck by Berkeley, could not, however, be well sustained in face of the fact patent to every human being that we *can* mean color without meaning any particular color, and stature without meaning any particular height. James Mill, to be sure, chimes in heroically in the chapter on Classification of his 'Analysis'; but in his son John the nominalistic voice has grown so weak that, although 'abstract ideas' are repudiated as a matter of traditional form, the opinions uttered are really nothing but a conceptualism ashamed to call itself by its own legitimate name.[37] Conceptualism says the mind can conceive any quality or relation it pleases, and mean nothing but it, in isolation from everything else in the world. This is, of course, the doctrine which we have professed. John Mill says:

"The formation of a Concept does not consist in separating the attributes which are said to compose it from all other attributes of the same object, and enabling us to conceive those attributes, disjoined from any others. We neither conceive them, nor think them, nor cognize them in any way, as a thing apart, but solely as forming, in combination with numerous other attributes, the idea of an individual object. But, though meaning them only as part of a larger agglomeration, we have the power of fixing our attention on them, to the neglect of the other attributes with which we think them combined. *While the concentration of attention lasts, if it is sufficiently intense, we may be temporarily unconscious of any of the other attributes, and may really, for a brief interval, have nothing-present to our mind but the attributes constituent of the concept*.... General concepts, therefore, we have, properly speaking, none; we have only complex ideas of objects in the concrete: but we are able to *attend exclusively to certain parts* of the concrete idea: and by that *exclusive attention* we enable those parts to *determine exclusively the course of our thoughts* as subsequently called up by association; and are in a condition to carry on a train of meditation or reasoning relating to those parts only, *exactly as if* we were able to *conceive* them separately from the rest."[38]

This is a lovely example of Mill's way of holding piously to his general statements, but conceding in detail all that their adversaries ask. If there be a better description extant, of a mind in possession of an 'abstract idea,' than is contained in the words I have italicized, I am unacquainted with it. The Berkeleyan nominalism thus breaks down.

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[36] Principles of Human Knowledge, Introduction, §§ 10, 14.
[37] 'Conceptualisme honteux,' Rabier, Psychologie, 310.
[38] Exam. of Hamilton, p. 393. Cf. also Logic, bk. ii, chap. v, § 1, and bk iv, chap ii, § 1.

It is easy to lay bare the false assumption which underlies the whole discussion of the question as hitherto carried on. That assumption is that ideas, in order to know, must be cast in the exact likeness of whatever things they know, and that the only things that can be known are those which ideas can resemble. The error has not been confined to nominalists. *Omnis cognitio fit per assimilationem cognoscentis et cogniti* has been the maxim, more or less explicitly assumed, of writers of every school. Practically it amounts to saying that an idea must *be* a duplicate edition of what it knows[39]—in other words, that it can only know itself—or, more shortly still, that knowledge in any strict sense of the word, as a self-transcendent function, is impossible.

Now our own blunt statements about the ultimateness of the cognitive relation, and the difference between the 'object' of the thought and its mere 'topic' or 'subject of discourse' (cf. p. 178 ff.), are all at variance with any such theory; and we shall find more and more occasion, as we advance in this book, to deny its general truth. All that a state of mind need do, in order to take cognizance of a reality, intend it, or be 'about' it, is to lead to a remoter state of mind which either acts upon the reality or resembles it. The only class of thoughts which can with any show of plausibility be said to resemble their objects are sensations. The stuff of which all our other thoughts are composed is symbolic, and a thought attests its pertinency to a topic by simply *terminating*, sooner or later, in a sensation which resembles the latter.

But Mill and the rest believe that a thought must *be* what it means, and mean what it *is*, and that if it be a picture of an entire individual, it cannot mean any part of him to the exclusion of the rest. I say nothing here of the preposterously false descriptive psychology involved in the statement that the only things we can mentally picture are individuals completely determinate in all regards. Chapter XVIII will have something to say on that point, and we can ignore it here. For even if it were true that our images were always of concrete individuals, it would not in the least follow that our meanings were of the same.

The sense of our meaning is an entirely peculiar element of the thought. It is one of those evanescent and 'transitive' facts of mind which introspection cannot turn round upon, and isolate and hold up for examination, as an entomologist passes round an insect on a pin. In the (somewhat clumsy) terminology I have used, it pertains to the 'fringe' of the subjective state, and is a 'feeling of tendency,' whose neural counterpart is undoubtedly a lot of dawning and dying processes too faint and complex to be traced. The geometer, with his one definite figure before him, knows perfectly that his

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[39] E.g.: "The knowledge of things must mean that the mind finds itself in them, or that, in some way, the difference between them and the mind is dissolved." (E. Caird, Philosophy of Kant, first edition, p. 553.)

thoughts apply to countless other figures as well, and that although he *sees* lines of a certain special bigness, direction, color, etc., he *means* not one of these details. When I use the word *man* in two different sentences, I may have both times exactly the same sound upon my lips and the same picture in my mental eye, but I may mean, and at the very moment of uttering the word and imagining the picture, know that I mean, two entirely different things. Thus when I say: "What a wonderful man Jones is!" I am perfectly aware that I mean by man to exclude Napoleon Bonaparte or Smith. But when I say: "What a wonderful thing Man is!" I am equally well aware that I mean to *in*clude not only Jones, but Napoleon and Smith as well. This added consciousness is an absolutely positive sort of feeling, transforming what would otherwise be mere noise or vision into something *understood*; and determining the sequel of my thinking, the later words and images, in a perfectly definite way. We saw in Chapter IX that the image *per se*, the nucleus, is *functionally* the least important part of the thought. *Our doctrine, therefore, of the 'fringe' leads to a perfectly satisfactory decision of the nominalistic and conceptualistic controversy,* so far as it touches psychology. *We must decide in favor of the conceptualists,* and affirm that the power to think things, qualities, relations, or whatever other elements there may be, isolated and abstracted from the total experience in which they appear, is the most indisputable function of our thought.

UNIVERSALS

After abstractions, universals! The 'fringe,' which lets us believe in the one, lets us believe in the other too. An individual conception is of something restricted, in its application, to a single case. A universal or general conception is of an entire class, or of something belonging to an entire class, of things. The conception of an abstract quality is, taken by itself, neither universal nor particular.[40] If I abstract *white* from the rest of the wintry landscape this morning, it is a perfectly definite conception, a self-identical quality which I may mean again; but, as I have not yet individualized it by expressly meaning to restrict it to this particular snow, nor thought at all of the possibility of other things to which it may be applicable, it is so far nothing but a 'that,' a 'floating adjective,' as Mr. Bradley calls it, or a topic broken out from the rest of the world. Properly it is, in this state, a singular—I have 'singled it out;' and when, later, I universalize or individualize its application, and my thought turns to mean

[40] The traditional conceptualist doctrine is that an abstract must *eo ipso* be a universal. Even modern and independent authors like Prof. Dewey (Psychology, 207) obey the tradition: "The mind seizes upon some one aspect,... abstracts or prescinds it. This very seizure of some one element generalizes the one abstracted.... Attention, in drawing it forth, makes it a distinct content of consciousness, and thus universalizes it; it is considered no longer in its particular connection with the object, but on its own account; that is, as an idea, or what it signifies to the mind; and significance is always universal."

either *this* white or *all possible* whites, I am in reality meaning two new things and forming two new conceptions.[41] Such an alteration of my meaning has nothing to do with any change in the image I may have in my mental eye, but solely with the vague consciousness that surrounds the image, of the sphere to which it is intended to apply. We can give no more definite account of this vague consciousness than has been given on pp. 161-72. But that is no reason for denying its presence.[42]

Psychology, 689a

As it is with reasons, so it is with words. The first words are probably always names of entire things and entire actions, of extensive coherent groups. A new experience in the primitive man can only be talked about by him in terms of the old experiences which have received names. It reminds him of certain ones from among them, but the *points* in which it agrees with them are neither named nor dissociated. Pure similarity must work before the abstraction can work which is based upon it. The first adjectives will therefore probably be total nouns embodying the striking character. The primeval man will say, not "the bread is hard," but "the bread is stone"; not "the face is round," but "the face is moon"; not "the fruit is sweet," but "the fruit is sugar-cane." The first words are thus neither particular nor general, but *vaguely* concrete; just as we speak of an "oval" face, a "velvet" skin, or an "iron" will, without meaning to connote any other attributes of the adjective-noun that those in which it *does* resemble the noun it is used to qualify. After a while certain of these adjectively-used nouns come only to signify the particular quality for whose sake they are oftenest used; the *entire thing* which they originally meant receives another name, and they become true abstract and general terms. Oval, for example, with us suggests *only* shape. The first abstract qualities thus formed are, no doubt, qualities of one and the same sense found in different objects—as big, sweet; next analogies between different senses, as "sharp" of taste, "high" of sound, etc.; then analogies of motor combinations, or form of relation, as simple, confused, difficult, reciprocal, relative, spontaneous, etc. The extreme degree of subtlety in analogy is reached in such cases as when we say certain English art critics' writing reminds us of a close room in which

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[41] C. F. Reid's Intellectual Powers, Essay v, chap. iii.—*Whiteness* is one thing, *the whiteness of this sheet of paper* another thing.

[42] Mr. F. H. Bradley says the conception or the 'meaning' "consists of a part of the content, cut off, fixed by the mind, and considered apart from the existence of the sign. It would not be correct to add, and referred away to another real subject; for where we think without judging, and where we deny, that description would not be applicable." This seems to be the same doctrine as ours; the application to one or to all subjects of the abstract fact conceived (i.e. its individuality or its universality), constituting a new conception. I am, however, not quite sure that Mr. Bradley steadily maintains this ground. Cf. the first chapter of his Principles of Logic. The doctrine I defend is stoutly upheld in Rosmini's Philosophical System, Introduction by Thomas Davidson, p. 43 (London, 1882).

pastilles have been burning, or that the mind of certain Frenchmen is like old Roquefort cheese. Here language utterly fails to hit upon the basis of resemblance.

54 FREUD: *General Introduction*, 516b-c

Obviously this achievement is by no means an easy one. In order to get some idea of its difficulty, imagine that you had undertaken to replace a political leading article in a newspaper by a series of illustrations; you would have to abandon alphabetic characters in favour of hieroglyphics. The people and concrete objects mentioned in the article could be easily represented, perhaps even more satisfactorily, in pictorial form; but you would expect to meet with difficulties when you came to the portrayal of all the abstract words and all those parts of speech which indicate relations between the various thoughts, e.g., particles, conjunctions, and so forth. With the abstract words you would employ all manner of devices: for instance, you would try to render the text of the article into other words, more unfamiliar perhaps, but made up of parts more concrete and therefore more capable of such representation. This will remind you of the fact that most abstract words were originally concrete, their original significance having faded; and therefore you will fall back on the original concrete meaning of these words wherever possible. So you will be glad that you can represent the *possessing* of an object as a literal, physical *sitting upon* it (possess = potis+sedeo). This is just how the dream-work proceeds. In such circumstances you can hardly demand great accuracy of representation, neither will you quarrel with the dream-work for replacing an element which is difficult to reduce to pictorial form, such as the idea of breaking marriage vows, by some other kind of breaking, e.g., that of an arm or leg.[43] In this way you will to some extent succeed in overcoming the awkwardness of rendering alphabetic characters into hieroglyphs.
When you come to represent those parts of speech which indicate thought-relations, e.g., *because, therefore, but,* and so on, you have no such means as those described to assist you; so that these parts of the text must be lost, so far as you translation into pictorial form is concerned.

[43] Whilst correcting these pages, my eye happened to fall upon a newspaper paragraph which I reproduce here as affording unexpected confirmation of the above words.