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# UNIT 1 BEING AS ANALOGOUS

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

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The term Analogy is used in different disciplines with different connotation and denotation. Our focus in this unit is

- To get a historical basis for the term Analogy
- Take into account the various views and the criticisms put forward and
- Very precisely, to get to know the Metaphysical usage of the term

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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The root of the English term “analogy” must be sought in the Greek language, and especially in the Greek mathematical language, where the term *analogia* was used to designate the identity of the relation occurring among the members of a proportion. In Greek, *analogia* meant: to be in a corresponding relation to something, to correspond to something. The etymological meaning of the term indicates some kind of duplication or multiplication of content or relations. The term analogy is used to designate some relation or group of relations. In everyday language, we usually use the term analogy wherever there occurs some rather imprecisely defined similarity, although we distinguish the meaning of the word ‘similar’ from ‘analogical’. We say for example that two Keralites are similar to one another and not analogical, whereas we speak of analogy existing between the wings of a bird and the wings of an aeroplane, or between the human family and the family of the animals.

However, in different disciplines the word had different connotation. The Latin term ‘**analogia**’ in scriptural exegesis, according to Aquinas, was the method of showing that one part of scripture did not conflict with another. In rhetoric and grammar analogy was the method of settling a doubt about a word’s form by appeal to a similar and more certain case. Several twelfth-century theologians use the word in this sense. In translations of Pseudo-Dionysius the term had a strictly ontological sense, for it refers to a being’s capacity for participation in divine perfections as this relates to lower or higher beings. In logic, authors were aware that the Greek word ‘ἀνάλογος’, sometimes called ‘**analogia**’ in Latin, but often translated as ‘**proportio**’ or ‘**proportionalitas**’, referred to the comparison between two proportions. However, by the 1220s the word came to be linked with the phrase “in a prior and a posterior sense” and by the 1250s terms said according to a comparison of proportions were normally separated from terms said according to a prior and a posterior sense.

The word ‘analogical’ soon became linked with the word ‘ambiguous’ in Latin authors. In his commentary on Aristotle’s **Posterior Analytics**, written in the 1220s, Robert Grosseteste says that Aristotle’s use of analogy to find a common term produces ambiguous names said according to a prior and a posterior sense, and he uses the phrase “**ambiguum analogum**”. In the same decade, the **Glossa** of the theologian Alexander of Hales links being said in a prior and a posterior sense with ambiguity and (in one possibly unreliable manuscript) with analogy, and the writings of Philip the Chancellor also link being said in a prior and a posterior sense with analogy. In logic textbooks, the word ‘analogy’ in the new sense appears in the **Summe metenses**, once dated around 1220, but now thought to be by Nicholas of Paris, writing between 1240 and 1260. The new use of ‘analogy’ rapidly became standard in both logicians and theologians.

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## 1.2 ANALOGY IN PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SOURCES

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The use of analogy in philosophy originated in the context of two problems in philosophy. On the one hand it is related to the problem of one and the many or unity and multiplicity and on the other it is related to the problem of identity. From Medieval period on it has a theological background too. If one is to look for the sources of the use of analogy one can identify three, namely Logic, Metaphysics and Theology.

It is a matter of our experience that everything existing is either individually or specifically distinct from others. For example, Peter is distinct from Paul individually and man is distinct from cat specifically. However, there is no complete diversity in nature because under the aspect of existence or being everything is united. Therefore, being is the basis of unity among things. This unity as we have seen is called the formal unity. But it does not take away the diversity among things. The individual and the specific diversity are founded on something which is in the existential order or is a being. Therefore, the basis of diversity is also being. Hence the problem of being is one and many and consequently we ask how this term “being” can be applied to the inferiors?

We find three different answers to this problem:

- There are some philosophers who admit only unity of being and their system is known as monism. According to them reality is one and what we call multiplicity is nothing but the manifestation or the participation or the projection of this one and the same reality. According to some of them this one reality is material and is known as materialistic monism while others say that it is something divine and their theory is known as pantheistic monism.
- There is the other extreme theory which denies the unity of beings and exaggerates the multiplicity. This theory is known as pluralism in philosophy.
- The third theory takes a via media and defense the unity as well as multiplicity of being. This is known as analogy of being.

From Logical principles it is clear that a term can be predicated in three different ways, namely **univocally, equivocally and analogously**. Every term has thought content and when it is found in a uniform manner in different things then it is called univocal predication. In other words, in a univocal predication the predicates have an absolute meaning and can be accurately and distinctly defined in themselves. The univocal terms arise by a complete abstraction from the particular subjects in which the perfection is present so that the difference in the subject does not enter into their meaning. E.g. the term man is applied to Peter, Paul, and Thomas etc in a uniform manner.

On the other hand, the term remaining the same can be applied in a diverse sense to the inferiors. Then it is called equivocal predication. eg. Post can mean a pole or where letters are mailed etc. One source for the theory of analogy is the doctrine of equivocal terms found in logic texts. Until the early twelfth century, the only parts of Aristotle's logic to be available in Latin were the **Categories** and **On Interpretation**, supplemented by a few other works including the monographs and commentaries of Boethius. The **Categories** opens with a brief characterization of terms used equivocally, such as 'animal' used of real human beings and pictured human beings, and terms used univocally, such as 'animal' used of human beings and oxen. In the first case, the spoken term is the same but there are two distinct significates or intellectual conceptions; in the second case, both the spoken term and the significate are the same. We should note that equivocal terms include homonyms (two words with the same form but different senses, e.g., 'pen'), polysemous words (one word with two or more senses), and, for medieval thinkers, proper names shared by different people. By the mid-twelfth century the rest of Aristotle's logic had been recovered, including the **Sophistical Refutations** in which Aristotle discusses three types of equivocation and how these contribute to fallacies in logic. For writers throughout the later middle ages, the discussion of analogical terms was fitted into the framework of univocal and equivocal terms provided by Aristotle and his commentators.

Finally, the thought content of a term can be applied partly in the same sense and partly in a diverse sense to the inferiors and it is known as analogous predication. Strictly analogous predicates cannot be defined accurately and distinctly because their meaning is proportional to the subjects of which they are predicated. In contrast to univocal and equivocal terms analogous terms arise by the incomplete abstraction known as separation, but they retain a relation to the primary subject. eg. The term

health is strictly applied to the living beings and it is applied to air, water, food, etc., because they contribute to the health of the living beings.

Among the first metaphysical principles the **principle of Identity** has a distinctive place. All other metaphysical principles presuppose it and take their meaning from it. The principle of identity logically introduces us to the reflection on analogy, already present, in a vertical line; in the hierarchy of existents it makes concrete, in its way, the perfection of being, according to *more* or *less*. Every existent of a superior grade realizes being more perfectly than that of an inferior grade. “Analogy is identity that flowers in diversity, it is diversity harmonized and founded by identity and on identity”.

### Metaphysics

A second source for doctrines of analogy is metaphysics. The philosophical relevance of the concept of analogy is very evident in the context of the problem of monism, of dualism, and of radical pluralism. The point is, all these issues depend on the solutions before this paradox: how can be explained the identical and the diverse, the one and the multiple, similarity and dissimilarity in the things of this world. The first part of Aristotle’s **Metaphysics** had been translated by the mid-twelfth century, though the full text was recovered only gradually. One crucial text is found in **Metaphysics** 4.2 (1003a33-35): “There are many senses (**multis modis**) in which being (**ens**) can be said, but they are related to one central point (**ad unum**), one definite kind of thing, and are not equivocal. Everything which is healthy is related to health. . . . and everything which is medical to medicine. . . .” In this text, Aristotle raises the general problem of the word ‘being’ and its different senses, and he also introduces what is known as **pros hen** equivocation or focal meaning, the idea that different senses may be unified through a relationship to one central sense. Another foundational text is from Avicenna’s **Metaphysics**, also translated into Latin during the twelfth century, where he writes that being (**ens**) is neither a genus nor a predicate predicated equally of all its subordinates, but rather a notion (**intentio**) in which they agree according to the prior and the posterior. As we shall see below, this reference to the prior and the posterior is particularly important.

### Theology

Twelfth-century theology is another important source for the doctrine of analogy, for twelfth-century theologians such as Gilbert of Poitiers and Alan of Lille explored the problem of divine language in depth. Their work initially sprang from works on the Trinity by Augustine and Boethius. These authors insisted that God is absolutely simple, so that no distinctions can be made between God’s essence and his existence, or between one perfection, such as goodness, and another, such as wisdom, or, more generally, between God and his properties. New attention was also paid to Greek theologians, especially Pseudo-Dionysius. These theologians insisted on God’s absolute transcendence, and on what came to be called negative theology. We cannot affirm anything positive about God, because no affirmation can be appropriate to a transcendent being. These theological doctrines raised the general problem of how we can speak meaningfully of God at all, but they also raised a number of particular problems. Must we say that “God is justice” means the same as “God is just”? Must we say that “God is just” means the same as “God is good”? Can we say that God is just and that Peter

is just as well? For our purposes, this last question is the most important, for it raises the question of one word used of two different realities. In other words, how can one use the word *being* both for God the creator and human being the creature?

**Check Your Progress I**

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) What is analogy?

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2) What is Analogy in Metaphysics?

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### 1.3 THEORIES OF ANALOGY

In order to understand the way in which theories of analogy developed, one needs to consider the divisions of equivocation found in medieval authors. It was Boethius who presented a series of divisions in his commentary on the **Categories**. The first division was into chance equivocals and deliberate equivocals. In the first case, the occurrences of the equivocal term were totally unconnected, as when a barking animal, a marine animal, and a constellation were all called ‘**canis**’ (dog). Chance equivocation was also called pure equivocation, and it was carefully distinguished from analogy by later writers. In the second case, that of deliberate equivocation, some intention on the part of the speakers was involved, and the occurrences of the equivocal term could be related in various ways. Boethius himself gave four subdivisions. These are found in various later sources, including Ockham’s commentary on the **Categories**.

The first of Boethius’s four subdivisions was *similitude*, used of the case of the noun ‘animal’ said of both real human beings and pictured human beings. Medieval logicians seem to have been totally unaware of the fact that the Greek word used by Aristotle was genuinely polysemous, meaning both animal and image, and they explained the extended use of ‘animal’ in terms of a likeness between the two referents — a likeness which had nothing to do with the significate of the term ‘animal’, which picks out a certain kind of nature, but which was nonetheless more than metaphorical in that the external shape of the pictured object does correspond to that of the living object.

Those medieval authors whose discussion of equivocation was very brief tended to use this example, and they often claimed that Aristotle introduced it in order to accommodate analogy as a kind of equivocation. On the other hand, authors whose discussion was more extensive tended to drop both the example and the subdivision of similitude.

Boethius’s second type of equivocation is ‘**analogia**’ in the Greek sense, and the standard example was the word ‘**principium**’ (principle or origin), which was said to apply to unity with respect to number and to point with respect to a line, or to both the source of a river and the heart of an animal. ‘**Principium**’ is a noun and, as such, might be expected to pick out a common nature, but although a unity, a point, a source and a heart can all be called ‘**principium**’ with equal propriety, there is no common nature involved. Mathematical objects, rivers, and hearts, represent not merely different natural kinds, but different categories, in that mathematical objects fall under the category of quantity, and hearts at least under the category of substance. What allows these disparate things to be grouped together is a similarity of relations: a source is to a river as a heart is to an animal — or so it was claimed. While theologians, including Aquinas himself in **De veritate**, and the fourteenth-century Dominican Thomas Sutton, occasionally make use of this type of analogy, most logicians do not even mention it.

The last two subdivisions found in Boethius are ‘of one origin’ (**ab uno**), with the example of the word ‘medical’, and ‘in relation to one’ (**ad unum**), with the example of the word ‘healthy’. These subdivisions correspond to Aristotle’s **pros hen** equivocation. The example ‘healthy’ (**sanum**) as said of animals, their diet, and their urine is particularly important here. ‘Sanum’, like other adjectives, was classified as a concrete accidental term. As such, it did not fall within an Aristotelian category, since its primary signification had two elements whose combination was variously explained. On the one hand, some kind of reference is made to the abstract entity health, which belongs to the category of quality; on the other hand, some kind of reference is made to an external object which belongs to the category of substance. This dual reference precludes the term from picking out a natural kind, though in the case of other adjectives, such as ‘brown’, no problem is caused thereby. Brown things may not form a natural kind, but at least they are all physical objects, and ‘brown’ is used in the same sense of each one. ‘Healthy’, however, is more complicated. To say that Rover is healthy is to say that Rover is a thing having health, and obviously this analysis can’t be applied to diet, which is called healthy only because it causes health in an animal, or to urine, which is called healthy only when it is the sign of health in an animal. Whatever the properties which characterize urine and food, they are different from those characterizing the animal.

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## 1.4 DIVISIONS OF ANALOGY

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Boethius’s subdivisions had one major failure: they did not seem to accommodate the different uses of the word ‘being’ (**ens**). As a result, many authors used a new threefold division which included Boethius’s last two subdivisions and one more. They presented the division as a division of deliberate equivocals, and they identified deliberate equivocals with analogical terms. This threefold division of analogy was established in the thirteenth-century, in response to a remark by Averroes in his commentary on the

**Metaphysics** to the effect that Aristotle had classified ‘healthy’ as a case of relationship to one thing as an end, ‘medical’ as a case of relationship to one thing as an agent, and ‘being’ (**ens**) as a case of relationship to one subject. It is found in Thomas Aquinas’s own commentary on the **Metaphysics**. An analogical term is now seen as one which is said of two things in a prior and a posterior sense, and it is grounded in various kinds of attribution or relationship to the primary object: food is healthy as a cause of a healthy animal, a procedure is medical when applied by a medical agent, a quality has being by virtue of the existent substance that it characterizes.

A second threefold division of analogy has its origin from reflection on the relationship between equivocal and analogical terms. Analogical terms were said to be intermediaries between equivocal and univocal terms, and the standard view was that analogical terms were intermediary between chance equivocals and univocals, and hence that they were to be identified with deliberate equivocals. The notion of an intermediary term, however, is open to more than one interpretation, and some authors went further in suggesting that at least some analogical terms were intermediary between univocals and deliberate equivocals, so that they were not equivocal in any of the normal senses at all. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, an anonymous commentator on the **Sophistical Refutations** gives the following classification. First, there are analogical terms which are univocal in a broad sense of ‘univocal’. Here reference was made to genus terms such as ‘animal’. Human beings and donkeys participate equally in the common nature animal, but are not themselves equal, since human beings are more perfect than donkeys. This type of analogy was routinely discussed in response to a remark Aristotle had made in **Physics VII** (249a22-25) which, in Latin translation, asserted that many equivocations are hidden in a genus. Medieval logicians felt obliged to fit this claim into the framework of equivocation and analogy, even if the consensus was that in the end the use of genus terms was univocal. Second, there are those analogical terms such as ‘being’ (**ens**) which are not equivocal, because only one concept or nature (**ratio**) seems to be involved, and which are not univocal either, because things participate this one **ratio** unequally, in a prior and a posterior way. It is these terms which are the genuine intermediaries. Third, there are those analogical terms which are deliberate equivocals, because there are two concepts or natures (**rationes**) which are participated in a prior and a posterior way. The example here was ‘healthy’. This second threefold division was much discussed. Duns Scotus bitterly criticized it in his earlier logical writings. Walter Burley claimed that both the first and the second kinds of analogical term could properly be regarded as univocal in a wide sense. The division was popular in the fifteenth century with such Thomists as Capreolus, who realized its closeness to the account given by Aquinas in his **Sentences** commentary.

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## 1.5 ANALOGICAL USE OF THE TERM ‘BEING’

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In the contemporary discussion use of analogy is first and foremost applied in **Metaphysics** and is used primarily in the case of being. The point is how the term being is to be applied? According to monist it is univocal while the pluralist say that it is equivocal but the moderates call that it is analogous. The philosophical meaning of analogy is inseparably connected with the theory of being. Being is also predicated of various subjects in an analogical manner. The term ‘being’ is attributed to everything

which is, but it does not apply to everything in the same way. As in the case of other predications, the ultimate basis of analogy lies in the very realities to which the analogical term refers: they are partially the same and partially different. Hence being is attributed to God and to creatures analogically, because there is a certain similarity between the Creator and the creatures, but it goes with a dissimilarity which is equally clear: God and creatures *are*, but God *is* by essence, whereas creatures *are* by participation. Even within the realm of categories, being is attributed analogically to substance and accidents. They both are and can be, and therefore called, 'beings'; the substance, however, *is* by itself, whereas the accidents always *are* in something else, namely in a substance.

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## 1.6 REASONS FOR THE ANALOGY OF BEING

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It is very easy to demonstrate that being is analogous. There are two different approaches:

### By way of exclusion

In this argument we show that being is neither univocal nor equivocal. Consequently by exclusion we conclude that being is analogous. **Being is not univocal.** As we know in the univocal predication the thought content of a term is applied in the same sense. But it is not the case with being. If it were so we could call God and Man and other things 'beings' without any distinction but it is not the fact.

**Being is also not equivocal.** In the equivocal predication there is no basis for using the same term to two different things. eg. the term post for pole and for the place where letters are mailed. But it is quite different with the application of the term being to two different objects. Because there is a common basis namely reference to existence. Therefore, being is not equivocal. As a result it follows that being should be analogous because there is no other type of predication.

### By means of Application

In this argument we give as the major the definition of the analogous predication and then we show that this definition is verified in the case of being. Consequently being should be analogous.

A term is said to be analogous when it is applied partly in the same sense and partly in a different sense. One can say that the application of the term being is done in this manner. It can be proved from our own experience. The different things are called beings only because they exist or have a reference to existence. Therefore, in relation to existence there is the same sense in the application of the term being. But it is not a uniform application because though different things are called beings on account of their relation to existence, they are not completely identical. Therefore, some different sense is also implied by the term being. Hence being is analogous.



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## 1.7 THREE DIVISIONS OF ANALOGY ACCEPTED IN CONTEMPORARY DISCUSSIONS

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It is easy to demonstrate that being is analogous. But when we discuss about the type of analogy that is to be applied to being there comes the real problem in metaphysics. Before entering into this problem we have to keep in mind the three different types of analogy namely analogy of attribution, metaphorical analogy and analogy of Proportionality. To understand these three types of analogy we should know first what we understand by the term analogate. It means something to which an analogous term is applied. It can be primary or secondary according to the preference we give in the question of predication.

- **Analogy of Attribution**

In this analogy the term is found intrinsically in the primary analogate while it is found in the secondary analogate in relation to the primary analogate. Eg. Health is found intrinsically in the living beings but food, water, air, etc., are said to be healthy in relation to the living beings.

- **Metaphorical Analogy**

Here the term is found intrinsically and formally in the primary analogate while in the secondary analogate there is only a virtual existence and not intrinsic. example with regard to study someone is called the Lion of the class. What makes a lion or the essence of a lion is found intrinsically and formally only in the animal known as lion. Now lion is understood to be the king of animals because of its energy or force. Applying this force in the matter of study, some one, is called lion of the class. This force is intrinsically in this person. But the form of a lion is not found in him but the virtue is expressed by means of his studies. Therefore, because of this virtue in the intellectual order metaphorically one is a lion.

- **Analogy of Proportionality**

In this analogy the term is found intrinsically and formally in all the analogates. But according to a proportional similarity, the only example is of being.

This analogy of proportionality is distinct from:

- 1) analogy of attribution where the term is found intrinsically only in the primary analogate. But in the case of analogy of proportionality it is intrinsically found in all the analogate.
- 2) Metaphorical analogy: where the term is applied intrinsically and formally only to the primary analogate. But here in the case of analogy of proportionality the term is intrinsically and formally applied to all the analogate.
- 3) Distinct from Univocal Predication: in the univocal predication the term is found intrinsically and formally in all the subjects in a uniform manner while in the case of the analogy of proportionality the term is found in a proportional similarity.

All those who agree that being is analogous admit that it cannot be metaphorically analogous. Because in that case only the primary analogate will be being and all other things will be called beings just metaphorically. Therefore, metaphorical analogy is excluded in the case of being. Consequently one has to decide between analogy of attribution and proportionality. According to Suarez S.J., and the Jesuit school it is analogy of intrinsic attribution. They divide analogy of attribution into extrinsic and intrinsic. It is extrinsic when the term is found in the secondary analogate because of an extrinsic relation. The example is the same as that of health. On the other hand, the analogy of intrinsic attribution consists in an intrinsic relationship of the secondary analogate with the primary analogate. The only example is that of being.

Suarez gives the following argument in favour of his theory. For him we can find only two groups of being in nature namely either being in itself or in another and being by itself or by another. In both these groups the being by itself and being in itself are the primary analogates while the being by another and being in another are the secondary analogates. They are being only because they are intrinsically related to a being by itself or being in itself. This is what he calls the analogy of intrinsic attribution.

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**1.8 CRITICISM OF THE THEORY**

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The above seems to be very reasonable, but the following objections are raised against it:

- 1) The above argument is based on the causal dependence of the secondary analogate on the primary analogate. But in defining a thing this causal dependence is never expressed. Eg. to the question what a man is we never say that he is a being created by God and having so many qualities. On the contrary, we say he is a rational animal. But here in the argument of Suarez he bases his theory of intrinsic attribution on the causal dependence. Therefore, we cannot accept it.
- 2) According to Suarez’s argument the secondary analogates are beings only because of the intrinsic relationship with the primary analogate. Therefore, the being-hood of the analogate consists in the intrinsic relationship, i.e., the constitutive element of the secondary analogate is a relationship which is very absurd.
- 3) He says that being is analogous by means of intrinsic attribution because there are only two different groups of beings namely being by itself or by another and being in itself or in another. If such a distinction is taken into account in the application of being then there is no more problem of analogy because only diversity is stressed here. Consequently we cannot agree with the theory of Suarez.

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**1.9 THE THOMIST’S SENTENCE**

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The Thomists follow the other sentence, namely Being is analogous by analogy of proportionality. To prove this theory they apply to the notion of being the three requites of analogy of proportionality. They do not distinguish between the primary and the secondary analogates. They argue as follows: All beings are intrinsically related and therefore analogy of attribution has nothing to do with beings where only the primary analogate is intrinsically being while others are beings because of the relationship with

the primary analogate. In the same manner all the beings are formally beings and as a consequence it is not metaphorical analogy. However it is not univocal predication because different beings are called beings due to a proportional similarity. Hence being is analogous by analogy of proportionality.

### Criticism

The Thomistic theory seems to be very appealing because the very essence of being is found intrinsically and formally in all the analogates and in reality it should be so. Otherwise it would follow that only the primary analogate is really being. However, the theory of proportional similarity is very hard to be accepted. The reason is it would imply that the nature of each individual being is already existing - to make the proportional similarity independent of existence which seems to us to be very absurd. Therefore, it is difficult to accept the Thomist theory too.

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## 1.10 CARDINAL CAJETAN: A NEW APPROACH

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In 1498 Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, wrote a little book called **On the Analogy of Names** which he intended to supplement his commentary on Aristotle's **Categories**. The book rapidly became very popular, and it had a significant effect on subsequent discussions of analogy. Part of the work is devoted to formal and objective concepts and ways in which the latter can be ordered, but Cajetan also offered a new account of types of analogy. He began by presenting the second threefold division. He called the first type of analogy, the case of genus terms, the analogy of inequality, and dismissed it as unimportant, indeed, not properly analogy at all. He called the second type the analogy of attribution, and here he made two changes. First, he gave a new account of its subdivisions by adding Boethius's subdivision, similitude, to the first threefold division involving attribution to one efficient cause, one end, and one subject. He described the resulting four subdivisions in terms of Aristotle's four causes. Second, he claimed that attribution involved only extrinsic denomination. That is, in each case of attribution, only the prior object is intrinsically characterized by the property in question, e.g., health.

He called the third type of analogy the analogy of proportionality. It included metaphor and what he called proper proportionality. The latter, he said, is analogy in the Greek sense of the word, and is the only true kind of analogy. Moreover, it involves only intrinsic denomination: both the primary and the secondary object referred to are characterized by the property in question. While the word 'being' can be used in accordance with attribution, Cajetan claimed that it, and all other metaphysically significant analogical terms, principally belonged in this last division. Both in his insistence on the priority of the analogy of proper proportionality and in his use of the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic denomination, Cajetan departed from earlier medieval discussions of analogy. Unfortunately, many later commentators have been misled into taking his account as a typical one, and, even more unfortunately, as a useful summary of the doctrines of Aquinas.

**Check Your Progress II**

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.  
b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of the unit.

- 1) How is Being analogous by way of exclusion?  
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- 2) How does Aquinas bring out the analogy of Being?  
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**1.11 LET US SUM UP**

To summarize our discussion on one of the very highly debatable topic, we are drawn towards a number of conclusions. The discussion on the Analogy of Being has emerged from the very ancient time itself, from Aristotle and it has continued down the centuries even up to this day. Very many of the eminent philosophers have contributed their share as and when they were challenged by this term. The contribution of St. Thomas, although in a theological and spiritual sense, is really note worthy.

**1.12 KEY WORDS**

- Analogy** : a comparison between two things that are similar in some way, often used to help explain something or make it easier to understand.
- Being** : that which is in some way or something.

**1.13 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES**

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## 1.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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### Answers to Check Your Progress I

- 1) The root of the English term “analogy” must be sought in the Greek language, and especially in the Greek mathematical language, where the term *analogia* was used to designate the identity of the relation occurring among the members of a proportion. In Greek, *analogia* meant: to be in a corresponding relation to something, to correspond to something. The etymological meaning of the term indicates some kind of duplication or multiplication of content or relations. The term analogy is used to designate some relation or group of relations. In everyday language, we usually use the term analogy wherever there occurs some rather imprecisely defined similarity, although we distinguish the meaning of the word ‘similar’ from ‘analogical’. We say for example that two Keralites are similar to one another and not analogical, whereas we speak of analogy existing between the wings of a bird and the wings of an aeroplane, or between the human family and the family of the animals. However, in different disciplines the word had different connotation.
  
- 2) The philosophical relevance of the concept of analogy is very evident in the context of the problem of monism, of dualism, and of radical pluralism. The point is, all these issues depend on the solutions before this paradox: how can be explained the identical and the diverse, the one and the multiple, similarity and dissimilarity in the things of this world. The first part of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* had been translated by the mid-twelfth century, though the full text was recovered only gradually. One crucial text is found in *Metaphysics* 4.2 (1003a33-35): “There are many senses (*multis modis*) in which being (*ens*) can be said, but they are related to one central point (*ad unum*), one definite kind of thing, and are not equivocal. Everything which is healthy is related to health. . . . and everything which is medical to medicine. . . .” In this text, Aristotle raises the general problem of the word ‘being’ and its different senses, and he also introduces what is known as *pros hen* equivocation or focal meaning, the idea that different senses may be unified through a relationship to one central sense. Another foundational text is from Avicenna’s *Metaphysics*, also translated into Latin during the twelfth century, where he writes that being (*ens*) is neither a genus nor a predicate predicated equally of all its subordinates, but rather a notion (*intentio*) in which they agree according to the prior and the posterior. As we shall see below, this reference to the prior and the posterior is particularly important.

## Answers to Check Your Progress II

- 1) **Being is not univocal.** As we know in the univocal predication the thought content of a term is applied in the same sense. But it is not the case with being. If it were so we could call God and Man and other things 'beings' without any distinction but it is not the fact.

**Being is also not equivocal.** In the equivocal predication there is no basis for using the same term to two different things. Eg. The term post for pole and for the place where letters are mailed. But it is quite different with the application of the term being to two different objects. Because there is a common basis namely reference to existence. Therefore, being is not equivocal. As a result it follows that being should be analogous because there is no other type of predication.

- 2) The Thomists follow the other sentence, namely Being is analogous by analogy of proportionality. To prove this theory they apply to the notion of being the three requites of analogy of proportionality. They do not distinguish between the primary and the secondary analogates. They argue as follows: All the beings are intrinsically and therefore analogy of attribution has nothing to do with beings where only the primary analogate is intrinsically being while others are beings because of the relationship with the primary analogate. In the same manner all the beings are formally beings and as a consequence it is not metaphorical analogy. However it is not univocal predication because different beings are called beings due to a proportional similarity. Hence being is analogous by analogy of proportionality.