



## The *Ratio Communis* of the Analogous Name

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[See table of contents](#)

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## The *Ratio Communis* of the Analogous Name

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Since the analogous name is one which signifies in a manner midway between that of pure equivocation and univocation,<sup>1</sup> it will participate something of the modes of these extremes. Things are said to be named equivocally if they have a common name but the notions signified by the name are diverse ; things are said to be named univocally if they have a common name which signifies the same notion in each case. The affinity of the analogous name with the equivocal as well as with the univocal name is brought out by saying that the notions signified by the analogous name *partim sunt diversae et partim non diversae*.<sup>2</sup> This " in between " character of the analogous name has been responsible for difficulties which arise again and again in the minds of students of St. Thomas. If there is something the same in the many notions signified by the analogous name why can't we extract that common note and say that, insofar as the term is taken to signify it, the term is univocal ? Thus while the *ratio substantiae* differs from the *ratio accidentis* there seems nevertheless to be something common to both, a *ratio communis*, and, if " being " is taken to signify the latter, it is univocal, if taken to signify the diverse *rationes* of substance and accident, it is analogous. Some such consideration as this seems to underlie the teaching of Duns Scotus that " being " is univocal insofar as it signifies a *ratio communis*.<sup>3</sup> He takes as a sign of our recognition of such a common notion the fact that we can know that a thing is without being sure whether it is a substance or an accident.

A second difficulty concerning analogous names is based on the fact that such names signify many different notions. Because of this, it is argued, an analogous term cannot enter into a syllogism without entailing the fallacy of equivocation, for it may be understood according to different significations in each occurrence and we would then have a four term syllogism.

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1. *Ia*, q.13, a.5.

2. *In VI Metaph.*, lect.1, n.535.

3. Cf. Alan B. WOLTER, O.F.M., *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N. Y., 1952 ; C. L. SHIRCEL, O.F.M., *The Univocity of Being in the Philosophy of Duns Scotus*, Washington, 1942 ; T. BARTH, O.F.M., *De fundamento univocationis apud Duns Scotum*, Romae, 1949. Of these, Fr. Wolter's study is perhaps the best, not least because he undertakes the defense of Scotus' position against various Thomistic criticisms.

Both of these difficulties are stressed by Scotus and it is hardly surprising, consequently, that Cajetan attempts to show that neither difficulty is decisive.<sup>1</sup> In the present paper our purpose is not to examine the doctrine of Scotus or the rebuttal of Cajetan; rather we want to see if there is cause in the writings of St. Thomas for the difficulties Scotus has and, if so, what in those writings is the indicated solution. The accomplishment of this purpose can hardly fail to throw some more or less oblique light on the controversy between Cajetan and Scotus.

It is the presence or absence of a *ratio communis* of the analogous name which must first be established. However, in reading St. Thomas, one encounters some texts which seem to assert that the analogous name has no *ratio communis* while other texts seem to imply that the analogous name does have a *ratio communis*. This suggests a mode of approach. We shall begin by setting down some representative texts some of which reject and others of which assume a *ratio communis* for the analogous name. In this way the difficulties are heightened, certainly, but we will also see the required solution. "Auditorem enim oportet iudicare de auditis. Sicut autem in iudiciis nullus potest iudicare nisi audiat rationes utriusque partis, ita necesse est eum, qui debet audire philosophiam, melius se habere in iudicando si audierit omnes rationes quasi adversariorum dubitantium."<sup>2</sup>

#### I. TEXTS WHICH REJECT A 'RATIO COMMUNIS'

Of words which are said in many ways (*πολλαχῶς λεγόμενα*), "being" is a notable instance. Aristotle often points out the multiple signification of this word and in commenting on such texts St. Thomas provides us with statements relevant to our present interest. Thus, in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle writes, "there are many senses in which a thing may be said to be, but all that is is related to one central point,

1. Cf. *De nominum analogia* (ed. P. N. Zammit, O.P., and P. H. Hering, O.P.), Romae, 1952, cap. X et XI.

2. In *III Metaph.*, lect. 1, n. 342. It has recently been argued that the difficulty we pose ourselves in this essay is a fictitious one, since St. Thomas changed his mind on the matter. That is, while in early writings we find him speaking of *una ratio analogice communis*, in his more mature writings St. Thomas speaks only of the diverse notions signified by the analogous name. See George P. Klubertanz, S.J., *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy*, Chicago, 1960, pp. 23-4. Apart from the chronological aspects of the argument (on which see our review of the book soon to appear in the *New Scholasticism*), it seems to be a faulty understanding of what is meant by one notion which prompts the view that St. Thomas changed his mind. Our interpretation does not depend on a putative shift of attitude on the part of St. Thomas; rather, as we will see, one must understand "one notion" and "common notion" in such a way that the analogous name remains distinct from the univocal name.

one definite kind of thing, and is not said to be by mere ambiguity.”<sup>1</sup> St. Thomas states the argument of this passage as follows. “Quaecumque communiter unius recipiunt praedicationem, licet non univoce, sed analogice de his praedicetur, pertinent ad unius scientiae considerationem : sed ens hoc modo praedicatur de omnibus entibus : ergo omnia entia pertinent ad considerationem unius scientiae, quae considerat ens inquantum est ens, scilicet tam substantia quam accidentia.”<sup>2</sup> To accept the argument, we must understand the premisses and St. Thomas goes on to discuss the minor and major. “Being or what is, is said in many ways.”<sup>3</sup> To manifest what this statement means, we first look at what is predicated univocally and equivocally. Something said of many according to a *ratio* in every way the same is said to be predicated univocally of them, e.g., animal of horse and cow. When something is predicated of many according to wholly diverse *rationes* it is said to be predicated equivocally of them, e.g., dog of star and animal. It is clear that the “something” which is predicated is a word ; if we should understand the *aliquid* in any other way, such as nature or concept, it would be impossible to make sense out of these definitions. It would have been better, therefore, to state our examples in this way : “animal” of horse and cow ; “dog” of star and animal. Whether we begin our definition with things, as Aristotle does in the *Categories*, or with names as St. Thomas does here, there are always three elements in the discussion of these different types of signification : the word, the thing, and the *ratio substantiae* (*λόγος τῆς οὐσίας*), i.e. that which we know of the thing and which is immediately signified by the word. Whether we are concerned with univocals, equivocals or analogates, we have things which share a common name ; it is not the signification which renders the word one, since, if this were so, there could be no purely equivocal name.<sup>4</sup> The analogical term is predicated according to notions which are partly diverse, partly not diverse. Their diversity arises from the fact that diverse relations are expressed ; their similarity from the fact that there is some one thing to which these relations refer. Lest we think the unity involved here is one of notion, St. Thomas adds :

Item sciendum quod illud unum ad quod diversae habitudines referuntur in analogicis, est unum numero, et non solum unum ratione, sicut est unum illud quod per nomen univocum designatur. Et ideo dicit quod ens etsi dicatur multipliciter, non tamen dicitur aequivoce, sed per respectum ad unum ; non quidem ad unum quod sit solum ratione unum, sed quod est unum sicut una quaedam natura.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Metaph.*, IV, 2, 1003 a 33-4.

2. *In IV Metaph.*, lect.1, n.534.

3. *Ibid.*, n.535.

4. *Quodl. IV*, q.9, a.2.

5. *In IV Metaph.*, lect.1, n.536.

There is, then, no *ratio communis* of the analogous term ; rather there are many notions expressing different relations to some numerically one nature.

The same point is stressed in the discussion of the major premiss of the argument. There can be one science not only of things which are named univocally, i.e. according to a notion in every way one, but also of things named analogically because of the one nature to which reference is made in the diverse relations.<sup>1</sup> It is just this which explains the primacy of substance in metaphysics : substance is the point of reference of all other things which are said to be.<sup>2</sup> There is no generic notion, no *ratio communis entis* which engages the metaphysician's attention first of all ; rather the community of "being" indicates that his first and chief task will be an investigation of the principles and causes of substance.

If "being" does not signify a *ratio communis* it is not surprising to find that "good" does not. Aristotle points out that if this had been recognized by the Platonists they would not have posited an Idea of the good, since they did not hold that there was one Idea of things related as prior and posterior.<sup>3</sup> But this is the case here "since 'good' has as many senses as 'being' (for it is predicated of substance, as of God and of reason, and of quality, i.e. of the virtues, and in quantity, i.e. of the useful, and in time, i.e. of the right opportunity, and in place, i.e. of the right locality and the like), clearly it cannot be something universally present in all cases and single, for then it could not have been predicated in all the categories but in one only."<sup>4</sup> St. Thomas makes the point in the terminology which interests us now. "Ex quo sequitur quod eorum quorum non est una ratio communis, non possit esse una idea. Sed diversorum prae-dicamentorum non est una ratio communis. Nihil enim univoce de his praedicatur."<sup>5</sup>

The analogous name signifies many notions, one primarily, the others with reference to it, so that what the name principally signifies is included in the secondary notions.<sup>6</sup> Thus substance chiefly is and is first named by the term "being" ; whatever else is or is said to be is referred to substance.<sup>7</sup> In things named analogically, then, there

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1. *Ibid.*, n.544.

2. *Ibid.*, n.546.

3. Cf. *In III Metaph.*, lect.8, nn.437-8 ; *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.21, a.4.

4. *Nic. Ethics.*, I, 6, 1096 a 24 ff.

5. *In I Ethic.*, lect.6, n.81.

6. *Ia*, q.13, a.6 : "...dicendum quod in omnibus nominibus, quae de pluribus analogice dicuntur, necesse est quod omnia dicantur per respectum ad unum : et ideo illud unum oportet quod ponatur in definitione omnium." Cf. *ibid.*, aa.5 et 10.

7. *In IV Metaph.*, lect.1, n.539 ; *In I Ethic.*, lect.6, n.80.

is no notion common to the various analogates ; rather there is some first and proper signification and other secondary significations which make reference to the primary signification. In the case of " being " this would mean that we should look for no *ratio communis* thanks to which it would name something over and above substance and accidents. If the word is used without qualification, it must be taken to name substance.<sup>1</sup> Thus, if we take any of the *expositiones nominis entis* (*id quod habet esse, quod est, habens esse*), the term names substance primarily.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps one of the most striking statements of this is to be found in the *Contra Gentiles* where St. Thomas argues that if " being " were said univocally of substance and accident, substance would enter into its own definition insofar as it is named being.

Quod praedicatur de aliquibus secundum prius et posterius, certum est univoce non praedicari, nam prius in definitione posterioris includitur ; sicut substantia in definitione accidentis secundum quod est ens. Si igitur univoce diceretur *ens* de substantia et accidente, oporteret quod substantia etiam poneretur in definitione entis secundum quod de substantia praedicatur.<sup>3</sup>

The force of the argument depends on this that what " being " names when used without qualification is substance.

A further sign that the analogous name does not signify a common notion but rather many notions related as primary and secondary is had in the warning that when a term " said in many ways " is used in an argument discourse can be vitiated if we do not make clear which meaning of the term we have in mind.<sup>4</sup> It is just this that makes the argument of Parmenides so difficult to assess.<sup>5</sup> How fitting then that Aristotle, in the *Metaphysics* where words common to all things are used, should devote a whole book to distinguishing the various meanings of key common terms.<sup>6</sup>

The only conclusion to be drawn from such texts as we have just examined is that the analogous name does not have a *ratio communis*. If it did, the implication is, it would be a univocal term and " being," for instance, would be generically common to the categories. Doubtless this is why the analogous name is spoken of as a type of equi-

1. In *I Periherm.*, lect.5, n.19 : "... *ens* non dicitur proprie aequivoce, sed secundum prius et posterius ; unde simpliciter dictum intelligitur de eo, quod per prius dicitur." Cf. *Q. D. de ver.*, q.7, a.5, ad 3. So too " virtue " *simpliciter dictum* is moral virtue. *Ia IIae*, q.56, a.3, ad 3.

2. Cf. In *XI Metaph.*, lect.3, n.2197 ; In *XII Metaph.*, lect.1, n.2419 ; *IIIa*, q.11, a.5, ad 3.

3. *I Contra Gentes.*, cap.32.

4. In *I de Coelo et Mundo*, lect.24, n.2.

5. In *I Metaph.*, lect.9, n.139.

6. In *V Metaph.*, lect.1, n.749.



vocal term,<sup>1</sup> though one involving design and not mere chance,<sup>2</sup> since, though it signifies not one notion but many, the many notions are related *per prius et posterius*. When faced with such a term, our first task is to distinguish its several meanings and to be quite explicit as to which meaning we have in mind, a counsel also applicable to the use of a purely equivocal term. If the analogous name involves a type of community which is midway between pure equivocation and univocation, the texts we have been looking at would suggest that it has greater affinity with the purely equivocal term. What would cause us to shift the balance towards the opposite pole would be the presence of a *ratio communis*, but this is what the analogous name is said not to possess.

## II. TEXTS WHICH IMPLY A "RATIO COMMUNIS ANALOGI"

The matter is not as simple as the preceding section would indicate : in a plethora of texts St. Thomas speaks quite clearly of a *ratio communis* of the analogous name. Indeed this seems to be involved in texts where substance and accident are discussed as modes of being which differ from the transcendental modes.<sup>3</sup> Being is that which our intellect first grasps and into which all other conceptions are resolved. Resolution is the breaking of a whole into its parts, the reduction of the secondary to the primary. Resolution to being, consequently, implies that all other concepts involve addition to that of being. What is the manner of this addition? It cannot be the addition of a nature extraneous to being as difference is extraneous to genus since every nature is essentially being. Being is not a genus and a concept can add to it only in the sense that it expresses a mode of being that the term "being" itself does not express. Thus far we would seem to be given to understand that "being" expresses a common notion and that though something may be added to it, the added note is not some nature.<sup>4</sup> There are two ways in which words can express being in a way "being" itself does not : first, such that a special mode of being is expressed : this is the case with each of the categories. Secondly, a term can express a mode of being which belongs generally to being and is not confined to a given category. This suggests a *ratio communis entis*, say "that which has existence," a notion which expresses no determinate mode of being but is common to the special categorical modes. Moreover, the *ratio substantiae* will express more than the *ratio communis entis* ; there will be at least an addition *ra-*

1. *Ia*, q.13, a.10, ad 4.

2. *In I Ethic.*, lect.7, n.95.

3. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.1, a.1.

4. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.10, a.11, ad 10.

*tione* and thus the apparent equation of the notion of substance and that of being said without qualification, an equation suggested by the texts examined in the previous section, is called into question. Prior to the notions of substance and accident there is the notion of being and insofar as "being" is taken to signify this first and fundamental grasp of reality, it signifies a *ratio communis*.

Much the same point is made by St. Thomas in his discussion of the transcendental name "good," although this time he makes the point even more forcefully by citing a threefold way in which something can be added to something else.<sup>1</sup> They are: (1) the way in which accident adds to substance, (2) the way in which addition leads to a contraction and determination of the common, e.g. "man" contracts and determines what "animal" signifies, (3) the way in which something purely of reason is added to something. Thus, when we say "blind man", we are not adding some real nature but a lack in the real order. However, though what is added *is* in mind alone, the addition of "blind" enables us to contract "man" since not all men are blind. No such contraction is gotten by adding "blind" to "tree" since no tree can see. Which of these modes can be involved in an addition to *ens universale*? Not the first since there is no natural thing which is "outside the essence of universal being" though, of course, one thing can be essentially different from another thing. With certain qualifications, the second mode of addition is involved in the distinction of the categories: unlike species with reference to genus, this contraction and determination of universal being is not had by the addition of any difference which is outside the essence of being, but by expressing a determinate mode of being (*modus essendi*) which is founded in the very essence of the thing. Such addition cannot explain such terms as "good," however, since good like being is divided by the categories.

What is suggested, accordingly, is a *ratio communis entis* other than and superior to the *rationes* of substance and accident. Moreover, since they too escape confinement to one category, the so-called transcendental notions will be shown to add something of reason to the common notion of being. From this one might want to conclude that, while metaphysics may be concerned first of all with substance when it turns to the special modes of being, it can first occupy itself with the notion of being which is prior to the categories and establish the transcendental properties of being as being. Indeed, it might even be maintained that this is the proper level of metaphysical consideration. Some authors suggest that concern with the *ratio communis entis* is characteristically Thomistic as opposed to the Aristotelian penchant for substance, which is only a special mode of being. Occupation with the *ratio communis* leads to a deduction of

1. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.21, a.1.



the transcendental properties from *esse*, the suggestion continues, since there is little else to work with the common notion. This more than anything else seems to recommend the acceptance of the *ratio communis* to some contemporary Thomists, for it seems to entail that "putting of the accent on *esse*" which is said to separate the metaphysics of St. Thomas from all others, including that of Aristotle, which look to essence as source of intelligibility in philosophical wisdom thereby putting a premium on "conceptual" thought.<sup>1</sup>

In the previous section we cited the procedure of the fifth book of the *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle distinguishes the various meanings of common names, in support of the view that there is no *ratio communis* of such names. However, if we look somewhat more closely at this process of distinguishing, we notice something which suggests support for the present side of our *aporia*. To take a few random examples: in discussing the various meanings of "disposition," St. Thomas cites a *ratio communis* of the name.<sup>2</sup> At the end of the analysis of the meanings of "principle," St. Thomas writes, "Reducit omnes praedictos modos ad aliquid commune: et dicit quod commune in omnibus dictis modis est, ut dicatur principium illud, quod est primum, aut in esse rei, sicut prima pars rei dicitur principium, aut in fieri rei, sicut primum movens dicitur principium, aut in rei cognitione."<sup>3</sup> So too what is common to all modes of "element" is to be first in something.<sup>4</sup> The discussion of "one" is begun with this statement, "... illa quae sunt penitus indivisibilia, maxime dicuntur unum: quia ad hunc modum alii modi reducuntur, quia universaliter hoc est verum, quod quaecumque non habent divisionem, secundum hoc dicuntur unum, inquantum divisionem non habent."<sup>5</sup> So too in the discussion of "prior and posterior": "Primo assignat rationem communem prioris et posterioris."<sup>6</sup> And there is a reduction of all modes of "possible" to one.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, when speaking of the subject of metaphysics, St. Thomas speaks of being as prior to substance. "Subiectum autem huius scientiae potest accipi, vel sicut communiter in tota scientia considerandum, cuiusmodi est ens et unum: vel sicut id de quo est principalis intentio, ut substantia."<sup>8</sup>

Elsewhere as well St. Thomas speaks of a *ratio communis* of the analogous name. "Potest autem origo considerari dupliciter: aut

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1. Cf. "The Ambiguity of Existential Metaphysics," *Laval théologique et philosophique*, (1956), XII, 1, pp.120-124.

2. *In V Metaph.*, lect.20, n.1058.

3. *Ibid.*, lect.1, n.761.

4. *Ibid.*, lect.4, n.807.

5. *Ibid.*, lect.8, n.866.

6. *Ibid.*, lect.13, n.936.

7. *Ibid.*, lect.14, n.975.

8. *Ibid.*, lect.7, n.842.

secundum communem rationem originis, quae est aliquid ab aliquo esse, et sic una ratio est communis ad originem personarum et originem creaturarum, non quidem communitate univocationis, sed analogiae : et similiter etiam nomen principii.”<sup>1</sup> Mortal and venial sin share a common notion albeit analogously.<sup>2</sup> “Person” can be taken to signify a notion which abstracts from the things to which it is analogously common.<sup>3</sup> So too the analogous cause of truth communicates with its effect in name and a common notion.<sup>4</sup> The term “passion,” which is said in many ways, has a common meaning.<sup>5</sup> Finally, with respect to the use of an analogous term in an argument, we can cite a text mentioned in this connection by Cajetan,<sup>6</sup> “. . . dicendum quod generatio Filii et productio creaturarum non sunt unius rationis secundum univocationem, sed secundum analogiam tantum. Dicit enim Basilius quod accipere Filius habet commune cum omni creatura ; et ratione huius dicitur ‘primogenitus omnis creaturae’ et hac ratione potest eius generatio productionibus creaturae communicari sub una distributione.”<sup>7</sup>

We began by noticing that analogical signification is said to be midway between univocation and pure equivocation and that it participates something of these extremes ; indeed insofar as the analogous name is thought of as more closely resembling pure equivocation the accent will be placed on the many *rationes* signified and cautions expressed as to the use of an analogous name in an argument since we may shift from one meaning to another and end up with a four term syllogism. The texts we looked at in the previous section stress the multiplicity of notions signified by an analogous name and seem not to allow for a *ratio communis*. The texts we have just examined, on the other hand, speak of a *ratio communis* for such names although, when they do, they are careful to distinguish it from the common notion signified by the univocal name. If there is a *ratio communis* of the analogous name, it is not equally common to its inferiors. This is check enough, surely, against assuming that wherever there is a common notion there is univocity. Nevertheless, there remains at least an apparent opposition between these groups of texts and we must ask how they can be reconciled. In pursuit of an answer, we will recall the doctrine of analogical signification with particular reference to the terminology St. Thomas uses to describe it.

1. *I Sent.*, d.29, q.1, a.2, sol.1.

2. *Q. D. de Malo*, q.7, a.1, ad 1 : “. . . ratio communis perfecte salvatur in uno.” Cf. *ibid.*, ad 2 ; *II Sent.*, d.42, q.1, a.3 ; *Ia IIae*, q.88, a.1, ad 1.

3. *I Sent.*, d.25, q.1, a.2, ad 5.

4. *In II Metaph.*, lect.2, n.294.

5. *Ia IIae*, q.22, a.1 ; *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.26, q.1, a.2 ; *III Sent.*, d.15, q.2, a.1, sol.2.

6. *Op. cit.*, n.107.

7. *Q. D. de Pot.*, q.2, a.5, ad 6.

## III. THE ANALOGY OF NAMES

The difficulty we have posed for ourselves will find its solution in a proper understanding of the nature of analogical signification. The texts we have set down above and the preliminary remarks we have made concerning them imply an understanding of a number of connected matters. We have spoken of words, of naming, of different ways things can be named, of the notions signified by a word ; most importantly, we have spoken of analogous, univocal and purely equivocal names as if these were quite manifest in their nature. None of these can be taken for granted if we are going to understand the nature of the *ratio communis* of the analogous name.<sup>1</sup>

1. *The Imposition of Names*

At the outset of *On Interpretation*, Aristotle points out that written words are signs of spoken words and spoken words are signs of "passions of the soul" which, in turn, are likenesses of things.<sup>2</sup> It is significant that while words are called signs, concepts are called similitudes, likenesses or images, for a sign, properly speaking, is a sensible thing. If asked what is meant by "sign", we might point to the red octagonal metal pieces erected at street corners, or to those plaques placed alongside highways on which are emblazoned curved arrows, etc. As anyone knows who takes a driver's test, the shape of these signs or the images on them are supposed to tell us something. Should someone be asked in such a test what a given sign is and answer that it is a triangle, he would show that he knows something, but remains ignorant of how that something is a sign. A sign is something which, when it is known, makes something else known. Smoke is a sign of fire ; the turning of the leaves is a sign that winter is coming ; footprints in the sand are signs that someone has been here before. If all our examples are of sensible things which function as signs this is because a sign is, properly speaking, sensible. A sign is what is first known and then makes something other than itself known ; thus the sign must be more obvious and easily known than that of which it is a sign. It is because they are more obvious to us that sensible things can function as signs. As we shall point out presently, if we say of something which is not sensible that it is a sign we shall have to explain what we mean by going back to what is most properly a sign, namely sensible things.

We have discussed the notion of sign by means of examples of conventional and natural signs. No decision on our part, no act of will, constitutes smoke as a sign of fire : that is all we mean by calling

1. See our *The Logic of Analogy*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1961.

2. 16 a 6-7.

a sign natural. Language, like traffic signs, involves human choice in order that certain sensible things be constituted as signs. We are now interested only in common nouns and how they come to be signs. The term "imposition" is used in this connection and, in ordinary English, to impose on someone is to do violence, to a greater or lesser degree, with more or less politeness. To speak to another person of something of great interest to us and of no interest to him is an imposition. This use of the term is not relevant to our purpose. *Imponere* suggests putting on, adding to; it connotes the voluntary on the part of the one doing the imposing. Something like that is involved in talk of the imposition of a word to signify. What is material in the word, in the spoken word which is primary, is noise emanating from the throat. Some such noises are signs straight off, without further ado from us: a groan, a sigh, a scream signify in quite natural fashion the subjective states of the one emitting them. (*Peter and the Wolf*, far from threatening this, confirms it.) This type of vocal sign can be said to be common to man and brute. Human language, human vocal sounds, has its source in practical intelligence and will.<sup>1</sup> It is agreed that a certain sound will mean a certain thing. "Man" can be used to stand for such things as Plato, Socrates, etc. Unlike smoke with reference to fire, something must mediate between this noise and these things for it to be a sign of them, a mediation which Aristotle speaks of in terms of "passions of the soul," that is, what we know of such things. A word is not immediately a sign of things in the way in which smoke is a sign of fire; rather it is immediately a sign of what we know which, in turn, is a likeness of what these things are. Language is properly a sign since it is sensible (audible primarily, visible secondarily), and it is an artificial sign because it is imposed to signify, thus implying choice, arbitrariness, convention.<sup>2</sup>

Words are signs of concepts, Aristotle has said, and concepts are likenesses of things. Why doesn't he say that concepts are signs of things? There are two reasons why this is not done; first, because

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1. Although statements about the conventional character of the signification of words conjure up the image of a primitive group, capable only of grunts and groans, sitting in silent council to impose in some wordless way noises on notions, we should not be misled and rush to the extreme which would maintain that language is natural and that some noises naturally have certain meanings. What is the reply to the question: who decided "father" would mean father? The implication of the question is that if no *one* decided this, it wasn't decided. Perhaps appeal should be made to something like Durkheim's "collective representation"? Not at all. The explanation of the conventional signification of language is not something which can be *accommodated* to the view that language evolves out of the group in a hit or miss manner; rather it depends on just that. If language is an instrument of communication, we would be wrong to look for some solitary "imposer of names" — he would be an imposter. Language is convention in the root sense, a coming together, an agreement in practise and context, as to the signification of sounds.

2. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1.

the concept is immaterial and not sensible<sup>1</sup> and, secondly, because we do not first know concepts and find ourselves led on to knowledge of something else. The concept is not a sign properly speaking.

We have said that we name things as we know them. Now what are easily and first known by us are sensible things which are complex ; consequently our concrete names, while they signify the whole, will be taken from what is obvious to us in these things. Thus St. Thomas distinguished between *that from which* our names are imposed to signify and *that which* they are imposed to signify. His favorite example in manifesting this distinction is the term *lapis*. That from which the term is imposed to signify is an effect,<sup>2</sup> namely to bruise our feet when we stumble against it (*laesio pedis*), but this is not what the term signifies, for then anything we stumble on would be called a stone.<sup>3</sup> Rather, the term is imposed to signify a certain kind of body. It will be noticed that *that from which* the name is imposed is what we would call its etymology ; as a general rule, a name's signification and its etymology differ.<sup>4</sup> When the name is taken to signify *that from which* it is imposed to signify, it is said to signify *minus proprie*.<sup>5</sup> Where there is this difference between *what* the term signifies and *that from which* it is imposed, the latter will always be something sensible and manifest thus providing a fitting bridge to what the term signifies when this is something abstract and difficult to know. As instruments of communication, or teaching, words must lead the learner naturally and easily from what is already evident to him.<sup>6</sup>

There are some words in which there appears to be no distinction between *that from which* they are imposed and what they signify. " Si qua vero sunt quae secundum se sunt nota nobis, ut calor, frigus, albedo, et huiusmodi, non ab aliis denominantur. Unde in talibus idem est quod nomen significat, et id a quo imponitur nomen ad significandum." <sup>7</sup> If anything can be said to be directly and immediately known to us, it will be the proper sensibles, and what is thus most basic in our knowledge will not be denominated from anything else, since this would imply appeal to something more obvious. " Heat " is denominated from the very sensible quality it signifies : so too with " cold," " smoothness," etc.

There is another way to speak of denomination, namely insofar as the thing is denominated from that which is formal in it, that is, from the specific difference. " Dicitur autem nomen imponi ab eo

1. Cf. *IV Sent.*, d.1, q.1, a.1, sol.2.

2. *Q. D. de Pot.*, q.9, a.2, ad 1.

3. A scandalous suggestion. Cf. *Ia*, q. 13, a.2, ad 2.

4. *IIa IIae*, q.92, a.1, ad 2 ; *I Sent.*, d.24, q.2, a.2, ad 2.

5. *Ia.*, q.18, a.2.

6. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.11, a.1.

7. *Ia*, q.13, a.8.



quod est quasi differentia constitutiva et non ex ratione generis . . .”<sup>1</sup> Thus the name “man” is imposed from the difference rational. Now when that from which the name is imposed to signify is not an accident or effect, but the difference, the name will be said to signify it primarily. “Primarily” does not mean exclusively, of course, since then the name of the species and that of the difference would be synonyms. Rather when the name is imposed from that which is most formal in the thing, it is imposed from that which completes the notion signified by the name.<sup>2</sup> The *res significata* of the name “man” will be a compound to whose components the integral parts of the *ratio nominis*, e.g. genus and difference, answer in a certain fashion.<sup>3</sup>

Human nature comprises body and soul and if the soul is as form to the body, the whole nature is formal with respect to such individuals as Socrates and Plato. There are different ways of signifying this same thing, human nature, something which can be brought out by considering the difference between “man” and “humanity.” Both terms signify the same thing, the same nature, but they do so in different ways. These ways are designated as the concrete and abstract, respectively.<sup>4</sup> The concrete name of the nature signifies it as subsistent by not prescinding, in its mode of signifying, from the individuals in which the nature is found, by allowing for individual characters although, of course, not expressing them. Thus “man” can be directly predicated of Socrates, whereas “humanity” cannot.

Sic ergo patet quod essentia hominis significatur hoc nomine *homo* et hoc nomine *humanitas*, sed diversimode, ut dictum est : quia hoc nomen *homo* significat eam ut totum, in quantum scilicet non praecedit designationem materiae, sed implicite continet eam et indistincte, sicut dictum est quod genus continet differentiam : et ideo praedicatur hoc nomen *homo* de individuis ; sed hoc nomen *humanitas* significat eam ut partem, quia non continet nisi id quod est hominis in quantum homo, et praecedit omnem designationem materiae, unde de individuis hominis non praedicatur.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. *Ways of Being Named*

Having looked at the different ways in which the nature or essence can be signified, we turn now to the way in which things can have a

1. *I Sent.*, d.4, q.1, a.1.

2. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1, ad 8 : “Dicendum quod nomen dicitur ab aliquo imponi dupliciter : aut ex parte imponentis nomen, aut ex parte rei cui imponitur. Ex parte autem rei nomen dicitur ab illo imponi per quod completur ratio rei quam nomen significat. Et hoc est quod principaliter significatur per nomen. Sed quia differentiae essentiales sunt nobis ignotae, quandoque utimur accidentibus vel effectibus loco earum . . . et sic illud quod loco differentiae essentialis sumitur, est a quo imponitur nomen ex parte imponentis.”

3. Cf. *De ente et essentia*, cap.2 ; *In VII Metaph.*, lect.9.

4. *Ia*, q.13, a.1, ad 2.

5. *De ente*, cap.3.



name or be named. It is here that we shall endeavor to discern what is meant by an analogous name, and, as we have already pointed out, such a name is discussed with reference to univocal and equivocal names.

Things are said to be named equivocally when they have a name in common but not one signification of that name ; that is, the community is solely one of the word, since once we ask what the word signifies quite different notions would be mentioned. "Notions" here translates *rationes*. The equivocal name is said to be divided by the *res significatae*. "Things" here does not mean the individuals to whom the name is applied, of course, for then the univocal name would have to be called an equivocal name.<sup>1</sup> Multiple signification is not had in terms of the diverse supposits in which the nature signified by the name is found and of which, consequently, it can be predicated, but in terms of *res significatae*, i.e. diverse *rationes* signified by the name. For example, in these propositions, "He stood fast" and "He broke his fast," the word "fast" does not mean the same thing, though the pronoun might stand for Alcibiades in both cases, since the signification of the word is different in these two uses. If our example is well taken, we would be hard put to it to explain why the same word has been used to signify such utterly different things ; our perplexity would be increased if we were asked to relate these meanings of "fast" (fixity of position, non-consumption of food) to a third, great rate of speed.<sup>2</sup>

To understand the equivocal term is already in some way to understand what is meant by the univocal term. Things are said to be named univocally which share not only a name but also the same meaning of the name. We say John is a man and Peter is a man ; or man is an animal and horse is an animal : "man" and "animal" mean the same thing in the two instances of their predication. The univocal name (actually this applies only to the generic name) is said to be divided by differences : thus while man and horse are alike in what is signified by "animal", they differ by something not expressed by that term, namely in this that the one is rational and the other is not.

The analogical name is one which does not fit in either of the above classifications but which can be described with reference to them.

In his vero quae praedicto modo dicuntur, idem nomen de diversis praedicatur secundum rationem partim eandem, partim diversam. Diversam quidem quantum ad diversos modos relationis. Eandem vera quantum ad id ad quod fit relatio. Esse enim significativum, et esse effectivum, diversum est. Sed sanitas una est . . . Et propter hoc huiusmodi dicuntur

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1. *Ia*, q.13, a.10, ad 1.

2. I take this example from C. S. Peirce.

analoga, quia proportionantur ad unum.<sup>1</sup> Et iste modus communitatis medius est inter puram aequivocationem et simplicem univocationem. Neque enim in his quae analogice dicuntur, est una ratio, sicut est in univocis; nec totaliter diversa, sicut in aequivocis; sed nomen quod sic multipliciter dicitur, significat diversas proportionales ad aliquid unum; sicut *sanum* de urina dictum, significat signum sanitatis animalis, de medicina vero dictum, significat causam eiusdem sanitatis.<sup>2</sup>

Because it signifies different things, the analogous name is sometimes called equivocal,<sup>3</sup> but this is to take "equivocal" in a wide sense, i.e. analogously, as will become clear. In the strict sense of "equivocal," it is impossible, as we suggested earlier, to discover any reason why the same name has come to mean the different things it does. It is with this in mind that one would say that it just does, that it *happens* to signify these different things. With the analogous name, however, there is good reason why the same word is used with many meanings, as the example of "healthy" shows so well. The variety of meanings of this term, we would feel, did not come about just by chance, but on purpose.<sup>4</sup> Let us now look at a comparison of the analogous and univocal names.

The most succinct statement of their difference is this: "... quando aliquid praedicatur univoce de multis, illud in quolibet eorum secundum propriam rationem invenitur, sicut animal in quolibet specie animalis. Sed quando aliquid dicitur analogice de multis, illud invenitur secundum propriam rationem in uno eorum tantum, a quo alia denominantur."<sup>5</sup> In order to grasp the meaning of this comparison, we must establish the meaning of *ratio propria*.

We saw above, in our discussion of the *id a quo nomen imponitur*, that on the part of the thing this will be the specific difference. The difference completes the *ratio* of the thing signified by the name, as rational completes the definition of man.<sup>6</sup> The definition "rational animal" appropriates to the thing defined a *ratio communis*, namely the genus. Thanks to the addition of the proper difference, the genus is contracted and made proper to the species. All of the things of which the specific name is said univocally receive the name precisely because it can be said of them according to that *ratio propria et completa*. It would be a great mistake to interpret "illud in quolibet eorum secundum propriam rationem invenitur" in terms of intrinsic form or intrinsic denomination, for then we would deny the possibility

1. *In XI Metaph.*, lect.3, n.2197.

2. *Ia*, q.13, a.5.

3. Cf. *Ia*, q.13, a.10, ad 4.

4. *In I Ethic.*, lect.7, n.95.

5. *Ia*, q.16, a.6.

6. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1, ad 8.

of univocal predication in those categories of accident which arise from extrinsic denomination.<sup>1</sup> The specific name, then, signifies the *ratio propria* (not just difference, but principally the difference : that is what makes it a proper notion), the generic name a *ratio communis*, although the subalternate genus is named by a name which signifies a *ratio propria* with respect to a higher genus. This is the first and most obvious way of understanding the phrases *ratio propria* and *ratio communis* : the latter is more universal and less determinate in the line of univocal predicates.

When it is a question of things named analogously, the *ratio propria* of the name is said to be saved in one of them alone. To exhibit the meaning of this, we want to examine a case of analogy that arose earlier, that of "sign." What is a sign? St. Thomas adopts the definition given by Augustine in the *De doctrina christiana* : "signum est quod, praeter speciem quam ingerit sensibus, facit aliquid aliud in cognitionem venire."<sup>2</sup> This is the *ratio propria* of the term and only what saves this notion without qualification will properly be called a sign and, together with other things which save the *ratio propria*, be named sign univocally. Only sensible things will properly be called signs since only they can save the definition of the term. What we first know are the sensible effects or accidents of material substance and these lead us to knowledge of the substance. Can we put it more generally and say that any effect is a sign of its cause? Let us look at a fairly lengthy answer of St. Thomas to this question.

Dicendum quod unumquodque praecipue denominatur et definitur secundum illud quod convenit ei primo et per se : non autem per id quod convenit ei per aliud. Effectus autem sensibilis per se habet quod ducat in cognitionem alterius, quasi primo et per se homini innotescens : quia omnis nostra cognitio a sensu initium habet. Effectus autem intelligibiles non habent quod possint ducere in cognitionem alterius nisi inquantum sunt per aliud manifestati, idest per aliqua sensibilia. Et inde est quod primo et principaliter dicuntur signa quae sensibus offerentur : sicut Augustinus dicit . . . quod 'signum est quod praeter speciem quam ingerit sensibus, facit aliquid aliud in cognitionem venire.' Effectus autem intelligibiles non habent rationem signi nisi secundum quod manifestati per aliqua signa.<sup>3</sup>

It is not the relationship of effect to cause which is proper to sign, let it be noted ; what is proper to the sign is that it be something sensible, more known to us and conducive to knowledge of something else, whether this something else be its cause or its effect.<sup>4</sup> Where

1. Cf. *In III Phys.*, lect.5 (ed. Pirotta), n.619.

2. *IIIa*, q.60, a.4, ad 1.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.9, a.4, ad 5.

one of these notes is lacking, say that of being sensible, the thing cannot be called a sign in the proper sense of the term. To call such a thing a sign will be to use the word in a wide sense, less properly, *communiter*.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of this, we can better appreciate why, at the outset of *On Interpretation*, we read that words are *signs* of concepts and concepts are *likenesses* of things. Words are signs properly speaking, indeed they are more perfect signs than natural things<sup>2</sup> (not with respect to the *ratio nominis*, but from the point of view of efficaciousness); they are sensible things which are known in themselves and lead on to knowledge of something else. Concepts are not sensible and are not first known to us so that they cannot be called signs, properly speaking, "*quia si aliquid eorum quae sunt de ratione alicuius auferatur, iam non erit propria acceptio.*"<sup>3</sup>

### 3. *The Extension of the Name*

What are first known by us are sensible things and these are the first things we name. When we come to know non-sensible things, we could impose any noise to signify what we know, but should we proceed in such an arbitrary fashion we would not be fabricating an apt instrument of communication. Let us imagine that, when a philosopher came to the recognition of the existence of the agent intellect he decided to call it the *kook*. In order to know what he means by this word, we would have little choice but to submit ourselves altogether into his hands, rid ourselves of all our presuppositions (among them the language of daily life), and learn what could only be called a jargon.<sup>4</sup> Such a procedure is quite contrary to the way in which the phrase "agent intellect," for example, purposely keeps us in contact with ordinary experience: "agent" through more obvious earlier impositions, "intellect" by its etymology. Words are inevitably sensible and thereby retain their link with what is obvious to us; if to this is added the retention of the same word that signified the sensible when we want a term to signify something non-sensible in some way similar to the word's first meaning, well then the word will carry

1. *Ibid.*, ad 4.

2. *Ibid.*, q.11, a.1, ad 11.

3. *Ibid.*, q.4, a.2.

4. Unfortunately, this is what the study of philosophy too often amounts to, even in institutions where St. Thomas is taken as guide. I say "even" with irony, not smugness, since St. Thomas himself has so much to say about the nature of efficacious philosophical language. It is not surprising to find the encyclical *Humani Generis* urge that special attention be paid to the language used in the presentation of the traditional doctrine. English and other modern languages present special problems in this regard, since so much philosophical terminology has been gotten from Latin and Greek, without the carry-over of the flavor and history which underlay the selection of a given term to play a philosophical role.

along with it the reminder of the trajectory of our knowledge. And, if we take our words from ordinary language (as opposed to inventing a language), we must respect the meanings they have there when we wish to give them new meanings. So soon as ordinary terms are taken over by the philosopher and, by whimsy or caprice, imposed to signify what is not even remotely similar to what they ordinarily signify, we have an instrument not of communication but of confusion.<sup>1</sup> St. Thomas often makes this point.

Respondeo dicendum quod quia nomina, secundum Philosophum, sunt signa intellectuum, necesse est quod secundum processum intellectivae cognitionis, sit etiam nominationis processus. Procedit autem nostra cognitio intellectualis a notioribus ad minus nota. Et ideo apud nos a notioribus nomina transferuntur ad significandum res minus notas. Et inde est quod . . . ab his quae sunt secundum locum, processit nomen distantiae ad omnia contraria ; et similiter nominibus pertinentibus ad motum localem, utimur ad significandum alios motus, eo quod corpora, quae loco circumscribuntur, sunt maxime nobis nota. Et inde est quod nomen *circumstantiae* ab his quae in loco sunt, derivatur ad actus humanos.<sup>2</sup>

The same point is made with respect to "see" which in its first imposition signifies the act of sight and then is extended to signify the acts of the other senses as in "see how it tastes."<sup>3</sup> In each of these examples, the *ratio propria* of the word is found in only one of the things it is taken to name and is said of that *per prius*, first of all. "Respondeo dicendum quod per prius dicitur nomen de illo in quo salvatur tota ratio nominis perfecte, quam de illo in quo salvatur secundum aliquid : de hoc enim dicitur quasi per similitudinem ad id in quo perfecte salvatur, quia omnia imperfecta sumuntur a perfectis."<sup>4</sup> It is said of the others because of some relation to what saves the *ratio propria* and to these secondary meanings we can apply the phrase : *semper prius salvatur in posteriori*.<sup>5</sup> It is not the case that what saves the name most properly, with the most propriety, is always the most perfect of the things named by that word.<sup>6</sup> This can best be brought out by examining at some little length the analogous word "virtue."

We may find it disturbing to see different virtues on different occasions singled out as the principal virtue. Thus, wisdom is said to

1. Of course if a somewhat surprising use has become customary in the philosophical tradition, we must respect this. "Sed tamen, quia nominibus utendum est ut plures utantur, quia, secundum Philosophum, usus maxime est aemulandus in significationibus nominum ; et quia omnes Sancti communiter utuntur nomine verbi, prout personaliter dicitur, ideo hoc magis dicendum est, quod scilicet personaliter dicitur." — *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.2.

2. *Ia IIae*, q.7, a.1.

3. *Ia*, q.67, a.1.

4. *Ia*, q.33, a.3.

5. *Ia*, q.60, a.2.

6. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.1, a.2. Think of the analogy of "sin."



be the chief intellectual virtue <sup>1</sup> and, since intellect has a more perfect mode of operation than will,<sup>2</sup> it seems to follow that wisdom will be more perfect than virtues which have appetitive powers as their subjects. Nevertheless, we read that prudence, whose subject is practical intellect, *habet verius rationem virtutis*,<sup>3</sup> and this because of its dependence on moral virtues which are in the appetitive part of the soul. To resolve the issue, we must see that "virtue" is an analogous name whose *ratio* is saved unequally, *per prius et posterius*, by the habits named virtues.

The definition of virtue is drawn from Aristotle; virtue is "quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit."<sup>4</sup> What is formal in this definition is the good and it is because they are diversely ordered to the good<sup>5</sup> that different habits receive the name "virtue" in different ways. There are two fundamentally different ways in which something can be ordered to the good: formally, that is to the good as good, and materially, as when a habit is ordered to something which is good but does not look to it insofar as it is good (*sub ratione boni*). The good as good is the object of appetite, since *bonum est quod omnia appetunt*; only those habits which are in the appetitive part or which depend upon appetite in a special way are ordered formally to the good. Only such habits will save the definition of virtue most perfectly.<sup>6</sup>

How can there be intellectual virtues if the definition of virtue implies an *ordinatio* to the good which is the object of appetite? They cannot be virtues *simpliciter*, but only *secundum quid* insofar as they are ordered to the good *materialiter*. Truth is the object of intellect, its perfection or good, and the habits which determine it to this object can be called virtues. Truth, as a good, comes under the object of appetite.<sup>7</sup> Intellectual habits, therefore, do not perfectly save the *ratio virtutis*: "...non simpliciter dicuntur virtutes: quia non reddunt bonum opus nisi in quadam facultate nec simpliciter faciunt bonum habentem."<sup>8</sup> For this reason science and art are sometimes numbered among the virtues and at other times opposed to the virtues. Thanks to his good will, one having the science of grammar and thus the capacity to speak well, actually speaks well; the *use* of the intellectual virtues of art, understanding (*intellectus*), science and wisdom pertains to the will insofar as their objects are chosen as goods.<sup>9</sup>

1. *Ia IIae*, q.57, a.2, ad 2.

2. *Ia*, q.82, a.3.

3. *Q. D. de Virt. in com.*, a.7.

4. *Nic. Ethics*, II, 6, 1106 a 15.

5. *Q. D. de Virt. in com.*, a.7; cf. *ibid.*, a.12.

6. *Ibid.*, a.7.

7. *Ia IIae*, q.56, a.3, ad 2.

8. *Ia IIae*, q.56, a.3.

9. *Ibid.*, q.57, a.1.



This dependence on will for their use is accidental to intellectual habits.<sup>1</sup>

Some intellectual virtues depend in a special way on appetite and for this reason share more properly in the definition of virtue. Divine faith depends on will with respect to the very object (*nemo credit nisi volens*) ; prudence depends upon rectified appetite with respect to the end. Speaking of these two virtues with respect to the other intellectual habits, St. Thomas writes, " Et licet omnes quoquo modo possint dici virtutes ; tamen perfectius et magis proprie hi duo ultimi habent rationem virtutis ; licet ex hoc non sequatur quod sint nobiliores habitus vel perfectiores." <sup>2</sup> We have here the solution of the riddle we posed a moment ago : prudence is named virtue more properly than is wisdom, but wisdom is more perfect than prudence.<sup>3</sup>

The analogous name is one which signifies a notion which is participated unequally by the things to which the name is analogically common ; if there is one notion, it is *una ratio analogice commune, per prius et posterius*, according to a scale of propriety given what is most formal in the signification of the word. Thus, an analogous term can be said to be used *communiter, proprie et propriissime*.<sup>4</sup> Notice, that *communiter* here is equivalent to *minus proprie* ; thus we can say that wisdom is a virtue *communiter loquendo*, that sensation and intellection are passions *communiter loquendo*.<sup>5</sup> Thus, while science and wisdom are called virtues in the least proper, most remote and diluted sense of the word, there is no question of extracting the minimal content of the *ratio virtutis* in such a way that we then form a *ratio communis* which transcends the inequality of the things named virtues. The *ratio communis* of the analogous named cannot be equated with the *communiter loquendo* ; rather, the *ratio virtutis* which is analogically common to many is precisely the *quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit*.

The priority and posteriority among things which share a common name is read in terms of what the name principally signifies ; thus, because the name " virtue " involves the good in its formal signification, habits which have the appetite as their subject or which depend in a special way on appetite will be named properly by the word. A thing is denominated a virtue from its reference to the good, and this is what is chiefly, principally, formally signified by the word. This is that from which the name is imposed to signify ; however, since the *id a quo nomen imponitur* can mean different things, we sometimes find different and even contrary orders of priority and posteriority of

1. *Q. D. de Virt., in com.*, a.7 ; *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.14, a.3, ad 3.

2. *Q. D. de Virt. in com.*, a.7.

3. Cf. *Ia IIae*, q.61, a.1, ad 3 ; *ibid.*, q.66, a.3.

4. *Ia IIae*, q.22, a.1.

5. *In II de Anima*, lect.11, n.366.

the analogous name mentioned. Let us approach this by an examination of the analogy of *verbum*.

*Verbum* is imposed to signify from something sensible, a reverberation in the air, which is more easily known by the one imposing the name.<sup>1</sup> If the name is imposed from this sensible phenomenon, it is not that that is signified by *verbum*. This must be kept in mind when we read that, according to the first imposition of the word *verbum* something is named which does not best save that which the word is imposed to signify, the *res significata*.<sup>2</sup> This distinction between imposition and signification is also expressed in terms of a distinction between the *interpretatio nominis* and the *res significata*.<sup>3</sup> *Verbum* is taken to signify first of all the spoken word ; by saying " first of all " we are suggesting, of course, that something is said to be a *verbum* in many ways. " Ad cuius evidentiam, sciendum est quod *verbum* tripliciter quidem in nobis proprie dicitur : quarto autem modo, dicitur improprie sive figurative. Manifestius autem et communius in nobis dicitur *verbum* quod voce profertur." <sup>4</sup> St. Thomas indicates here that any non-metaphorical use of *verbum* is proper, though this does not preclude a scale of greater and lesser propriety ; metaphor here is characterized by the adverb *improprie*. Another point of interest in this text is the way the first imposition of the word is described : it is *manifestius* and *communius*. " More common " does not refer to our problem of the *ratio communis*, but simply indicates the more obvious, familiar and manifest sense of the word. The spoken word is what is usually and commonly meant by *verbum*. Before discussing subsequent impositions of *verbum*, St. Thomas makes a general observation.

Dicendum quod nomina imponuntur secundum quod cognitionem de rebus accipimus. Et quia ea quae sunt posteriora in natura, sunt ut plurimum prius nota nobis, inde est quod frequenter secundum nominis impositionem aliquando nomen prius in aliquo duorum invenitur in quorum altero res significata per nomen prius existit ; sicut patet de nominibus quae dicuntur de Deo et creaturis, ut ens, et bonum, et huiusmodi, quae prius fuerunt creaturis imposita, et ex his ad divinam praedicationem translata, quamvis esse et bonum prius inveniantur in Deo.<sup>5</sup>

The extension of *verbum* is carried on in terms of the cause of what is first named such, namely the inner word which is both the final and efficient cause of the spoken word. " *Finalis* quidem, quia *verbum* vocale ad hoc a nobis exprimitur, ut interius *verbum* manifestetur : unde oportet quod *verbum* interius sit illud quod significatur per ver-

1. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1, ad 8 ; *I Sent.*, d. 27, q.2, a.1, obj.1.

2. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1.

3. *I Sent.*, d.27, q.2, a.1, ad 1.

4. *Ia*, q.34, a.1.

5. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1.

bum exterius. Verbum autem quod exterius profertur, significat id quod intellectum est, non ipsum intelligere, neque hoc intellectum quod est habitus vel potentia, nisi quatenus et haec intellecta sunt : unde verbum interius est ipsum interius intellectum.”<sup>1</sup> The spoken word is not simply a reverberation of air, not simply a noise emanating from the throat, a *vox*, but a *vox significativa ad placitum*. That is, to understand the first imposition of *verbum* is to understand that it is expressive of what is understood by the mind.<sup>2</sup> Now since what is understood is what is formal in the first imposition of *verbum*, it is not surprising to find *verbum* transferred to mean that which is understood and signified by the *verbum prolatum*.

The inner word is also said to be the efficient cause of the spoken word : what is involved here is the working up in the imagination of what is to be spoken. “ Similiter etiam voces significantes naturaliter, non ex proposito aut cum imaginatione aliquid significandi, sicut sunt voces brutorum animalium, interpretationes dici non possunt.”<sup>3</sup> “ Primo, ponitur *vox* per modum generis, per quod distinguitur nomen ab omnibus sonis, qui non sunt voces. Nam vox est sonus ab ore animalis prolatus, cum imaginatione quadam . . .”<sup>4</sup> From this point of view, the spoken word is an artifact and, as such, has the will as a principle. There must then preexist an exemplar of the spoken word.

Et ideo, sicut in artifice tria consideramus, scilicet finem artificii, et exemplar ipsius, et ipsum artificium iam productum, ita etiam in loquente triplex verbum invenitur : scilicet id quod per intellectum concipitur, ad quod significandum verbum exterius profertur : et hoc est verbum cordis sine voce prolatum ; item exemplar exterioris verbi, et hoc dicitur verbum interius quod habet imaginem vocis ; et verbum exterius expressum, quod dicitur verbum vocis.<sup>5</sup>

A *vox* is said to be a *verbum* only insofar as it is taken to be significative of what is grasped by the mind and the order of the three modes of *verbum* distinguished is this : “ Sic igitur primo et principaliter interior mentis conceptus verbum dicitur : secundario vero, ipsa vox interioris conceptus significativa : tertio vero, ipsa imaginatio vocis verbum dicitur.”<sup>6</sup> Since the *verbum cordis* enters into the notions

1. *Ibid.*

2. Cf. *In Evang. Ioann.*, cap.1, lect.1, nn.25-6.

3. *In Periherm.*, proem., n.3.

4. *In I Periherm.*, lect.4, n.3 ; *In II de Anima*, lect.18, n.477. Cf. ST. ALBERT, *In praedicament.*, tract.1, cap.2.

5. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q.4, a.1. The production of the artifact which is the word involves a practical syllogism, as St. Thomas explains elsewhere : “ . . . ut quasi videatur esse quidam syllogismus cuius in parte intellectiva habeatur major universalis, et in parte sensitiva habeatur minor particularis, per virtutem motivam imperatam ; ipsa enim operatio se habet in operabilibus sicut conclusio in speculativis . . .” — *I Sent.*, d.27, q.2, a.1.

6. *Ia*, q.34, a.1.

signified by *verbum* in the other two cases, the word "word" is obviously analogous and is said *per prius* of the *verbum cordis*.

The analogy of *verbum* presents a problem which is repeated many times and is most notably exemplified in the names common to God and creature. What is most obviously meant by "word" is the significant sound emanating from a man's mouth; the name is then extended to signify that of which the spoken word is significative, the concept, what is grasped by the mind. Then we are told that what the name is later imposed to signify is the *per prius* of the word and that what was first named receives the name only secondarily and *per posterius*. Now, since we name things as we know them, such a name is extended from the more known to the less known and we can say that the latter is denominated from the former. With the extension of the name, however, that on which the name is secondarily imposed is said to save the name *per prius* and what was first named is denominated from it. In the light of this, let us recall the following definition of the analogous name. "Sed quando aliquid dicitur analogice de multis, illud invenitur secundum propriam rationem in uno eorum tantum, a quo alia denominantur."<sup>1</sup> How do we interpret this remark when faced with such names as *verbum*? It will be recalled that it was in commenting on this passage that Cajetan exhibits the most confidence that what he calls analogy of proper proportionality is the most important type of analogy; but the description of analogy just quoted does not apply to analogy of proper proportionality. That is, in names common to God and creature, Cajetan feels it is not true to say that *illud invenitur secundum propriam rationem in uno eorum tantum*.

The different orders of priority and posteriority we have just mentioned are described by St. Thomas in a number of ways; sometimes he will say that the *ordo rerum* and the *ordo nominis* may differ;<sup>2</sup> sometimes he calls these respectively the *ordo rerum* and the *ordo quae attenditur quantum ad impositionem nominis*;<sup>3</sup> sometimes *quantum ad rem significatam* and *quantum ad impositionem nominis*; finally the opposition is expressed in terms of *res significata* and *modus significandi*.<sup>4</sup> The following text is typical.

Dicendum quod aliquod nomen dicitur per prius de uno quam de alio dupliciter: uno modo quantum ad nominis impositionem; alio modo quantum ad rei naturam; sicut nomina dicta de Deo et creaturis quantum ad nominum impositionem per prius dicuntur de creaturis; quantum vero ad rei naturam per prius dicuntur de Deo, a quo in creaturas omnis perfectio derivatur.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Ia*, q.16, a.6.

2. *I Contra Gentes*, cap.34.

3. *In V Metaph.*, lect.5, n.824; *Q. D. de Malo*, q.1, a.5, ad 19.

4. *I Sent.*, de.22, q.1, a.2.

5. *Q. D. de Malo*, q.1, a.5, ad 19.

There is involved in this a difficulty which exercised Sylvester of Ferrara because it is posed in the *Contra Gentiles*. In discussing the order of the *ratio* and *res* in terms of "healthy," St. Thomas points out that the power of healing in the medicine is naturally prior to the quality of the animal as cause is prior to effect ; nevertheless animal is first of all named healthy because the quality is first known by us.<sup>1</sup> So too, St. Thomas goes on, names common to God and creatures are first imposed to signify created perfections although God is naturally prior to any created effect. Now it seemed to Sylvester that "healthy" is not like the names common to God and creature for, while the case of healthy may be naturally prior to the health of the animal it effects, we do not say that medicine is first called healthy and the health of the animal denominated from it. But, in the case of "being" said of God and creatures, we do go on to say that God is first of all signified by the word when we attend to the *res significata* and that creatures are denominated beings from God.<sup>2</sup> "*Creatura enim non habet esse nisi secundum quod a primo ente descendit, nec nominatur ens nisi inquantum ens primum imitatur ; et similiter est de sapientia, et de omnibus aliis quae de creatura dicuntur.*"<sup>3</sup> We do not say that medicine saves the *res significata* by "healthy" *per prius* ; as a matter of fact, *sanitas* is not in medicine at all. This enables us to appreciate Cajetan's rejection of most of St. Thomas' statements about analogy. In names common to God and creature, e.g. "being," "wise," etc., the *res significata* is found in both and, Cajetan feels, we must reject the statement that the *ratio propria* is found in only one of the analogates. Now, according to the text in which the cited description of analogy occurs, it is only true of things named univocally that the *ratio propria* is found in each of them. Cajetan of course attempts to fend off the obvious consequence of his interpretation : he does not want to say that names are univocally common to God and creature. We will not examine that attempt here. Obviously the analogy of names is not decided on whether or not the *res significata*, the perfection signified by the name, is found in more than one analogate, but rather on the way it is signified as the name is predicated of those things to which it is said to be analogically common. When "being" is predicated of God and creature, it is predicated *essentialiter* and of the creature *per participationem*.<sup>4</sup> From the point of view of the *ratio nominis* as such, names are always the names of creatures.<sup>5</sup> The *ratio nominis* always involves a *modus significandi*, and with re-

1. *I Contra Gentes*, cap.34.

2. Cf. *In Scti. Pauli epist. ad Ephesios*, cap.3, lect.4 ad : "Ex quo omnis paternitas in caelis et in terra nominatur."

3. *I Sent.*, prolog., a.2, ad 2.

4. *Quodl. II*, q.2, a.1.

5. *I Contra Gentes*, cap.34, in fine ; *Q. D. de Pot.*, q.7, a.5, ad 5.



spect to the mode of signifying *omne nomen cum defectu est* as said of God.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUDING SUMMARY

The problem of the *ratio communis* of the analogous name can best be expressed as follows: if the analogous name signifies some one notion it seems indistinguishable from the univocal name. Things are said to be univocal when they have a common name which signifies exactly the same notion as said of each. Things are said to be named analogously, on the other hand, if they have a common name which does not signify the same notion as said of each. To say that the analogous name signifies *una ratio analogice communis* suggests the extraction of the least common denominator from the many notions and, once more, one wonders how the analogous name differs from the univocal name. Thus substance and accident are both named being and the *ratio substantiae* differs from the *ratio accidentis* with the latter proportional to the former; but the *ratio entis* is not the *ratio substantiae* nor the *ratio accidentis*. Is not the *ratio entis*, uninformative though it be, equally common to substance and accident and to God and creature? Is it only blind loyalty to St. Thomas that leads one to deny this suggestion of Scotus? Well, surely if what is principally signified by *ens* is existence (*nomen entis imponitur ab esse*),<sup>2</sup> it cannot be maintained that substance and accident participate equally in the common notion. More emphatically, since God is existence and creatures only have it, there is hardly equality in this case. There is unequal participation by substance and accident in the *ratio entis*; being is predicated of God *essentialiter*, of creatures only *participative*. Scotus' proposed univocity of "being" makes sense only apart from predication, apart from the community of the name to many (a curious use of "univocity"), or in terms of an ignorance of the distinction between substance and accident, between God and creatures. To say that we know a thing exists but do not know whether it is a substance or accident certainly suggests that we already know that "being" is not predicated in the same way of both. Truly to hesitate in such a judgment of existence could mean that all one can safely say is "I am presently having a sensation, but it may be an hallucination."

One final point. To say that things named analogously participate unequally in a common notion must not be confused with the way in which the species of a genus may be related *per prius et posterius*. The following passage contains the best brief statement of St. Thomas on this question.

1. *I Contra Gentes*, cap.30.

2. *In IV Metaph.*, lect.2, n.553.

(3)



Sed dicendum quod unum dividendium aliquod commune potest esse prius altero dupliciter : uno modo, secundum proprias rationes, aut naturas dividendium ; alio modo, secundum participationem rationis illius communis quod in ea dividitur. Primum autem non tollit univocationem generis, ut manifestum est in numeris, in quibus binarius secundum propriam rationem naturaliter est prior ternario ; sed tamen aequaliter participant rationem generis sui, scilicet numeri : ita enim est ternarius multitudo mensurata per unum, sicut et binarius. Sed secundum impedit univocationem generis. Et propter hoc *ens* non potest esse genus substantiae et accidentis : quia in ipsa ratione *entis*, substantia, quae est ens per se, prioritatem habet respectu accidentis, quod est ens per aliud et in alio.<sup>1</sup>

If the analogous name signifies a common notion this notion is not participated in equally by those things of which the name is said analogically. Such a *ratio communis*, then, does nothing toward diminishing the difference between the analogous and univocal name.

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1. In *I Periherm.*, lect.8, n.6.