

Same and Other

INTRODUCTION

THE problems of identity and diversity—of sameness and otherness, similarity and difference—occur at that level of philosophical thought which deals with being and with unity. Plotinus, for example, says that in addition to Being, Motion, and Rest, “we are obliged to posit the further two, Identity and Difference, so that we have in all five genera.”

In Aristotle’s conception, terms like ‘being,’ ‘one,’ and ‘same’ have a greater universality than the terms he calls the highest genera, e.g., ‘substance,’ ‘quantity,’ ‘quality,’ ‘relation,’ and so forth. These latter represent categories or classes under which certain things fall and others do not. Not everything is a substance or a quantity, but in Aristotle’s opinion there is nothing of which it cannot be said that it is a being in some sense, that it has some kind of unity, that it is identical with itself, and that, compared with anything else in the whole universe, it is in certain respects the same, in others different.

The fundamental relation of quantities with one another, namely, equality, consists in their being the same. The fundamental relation of qualities consists in their being alike, or the same in spite of some difference in degree or intensity, e.g., a brighter and a darker red of the same hue. The notion of relation itself seems to be as fundamental as that of sameness, since in comparisons one thing is said to be the same or different only in relation to something else; yet it also seems to be true that relations can be the same or similar, for the essence of proportion or analogy lies in one thing’s being related to a second as a third is to a fourth. The sameness of two relationships is the object of the comparison.

Such considerations are sometimes called

“metaphysical” with an invidious tone. But no one, not even those who would eliminate metaphysical discussion as indulging in “vicious abstractions” or as verging on the meaningless, can easily avoid such notions as identity and diversity. It is not merely that ordinary speech, as well as scientific discourse, must use such words as “same” and “other” almost as frequently as the words “is” and “not” or “one” and “many.” Those who are critical of theorizing and who want to save discourse itself from becoming “too metaphysical” are still obliged to give some account of what it means for things to be the same or different and of how we know when they are.

Semantics currently has vogue as a critical instrument for safeguarding discourse from ambiguity and nonsense and perhaps also for spotting metaphysical legerdemain. But semantics itself cannot go far in its own analysis of words and meanings without having to explain how the *same* word can have *different* meanings or how the *same* meaning can be expressed by *different* words. It does not seem likely that an adequate explanation could be developed without some theory of sameness and otherness.

THE “SENSE OF SAMENESS,” says William James, “is the very keel and backbone of our thinking.” He is here speaking “of the sense of sameness from the point of view of the mind’s structure alone, and not from the point of view of the universe . . . Whether there be any *real* sameness in *things* or not, or whether the mind be true or false in its assumptions of it,” he goes on, the point remains that “the mind makes continual use of the *notion* of sameness, and if deprived of it, would

have a different structure from what it has . . . Without the psychological sense of identity, sameness might rain down upon us from the outer world forever and we be none the wiser. With the psychological sense, on the other hand, the outer world might be an unbroken flux, and yet we should perceive a repeated experience."

James distinguishes three principles of identity. In addition to the *psychological* law according to which we feel a later experience to be the same as an earlier one, he refers to the *ontological* principle which "asserts that every real thing is what it is, that *a* is *a*, and *b*, *b*"; and the *logical* principle which declares that "what is once true of the subject of a judgment is always true of that subject." James seems to think that "the ontological law is a tautological truism," whereas the logical and the psychological principles have further implications not immediately obvious. Locke appears to take a contrary view. He finds the identity of all *ideas* self-evident, while to him the real identity of *things* is much more difficult to grasp.

The principle of identity and its companion principle of contradiction are, according to Locke, expressed in the propositions 'Whatever is, is' and 'It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be'—"these two general propositions amounting to no more, in short, but this, that the same is the same, and the same is not different." But, Locke adds, "the mind, without the help of any proof or reflection on either of these general propositions, perceives so clearly, and knows so certainly, that 'the idea of white is the idea of white, and not the idea of blue,' and that 'the idea of white, when it is in the mind, is there and is not absent,' that the consideration of these axioms can add nothing to the evidence or certainty of its knowledge . . . I appeal to everyone's own mind, whether this proposition 'A circle is a circle' be not as self-evident a proposition as that consisting of more general terms 'Whatever is, is.'"

But unlike the comparing of an idea with itself, real identity, according to Locke, requires us to consider a thing "as existing at any determined time and place" and to "compare it

with itself existing at another time . . . When, therefore, we demand whether anything be the same or no? it refers always to something that existed at such a time in such a place, which, it was certain, at that instant, was the same with itself and no other; from whence it follows that one thing cannot have two beginnings of existence, nor two things one beginning, it being impossible for two things of the same kind to be or exist in the same instant in the very same place, or one and the same thing, in different places. That, therefore, that had one beginning is the same thing; and that which had a different beginning in time and place from that, is not the same, but diverse." In short, across a lapse of time a thing remains identical, in Locke's view, or maintains its identity, if existence having made it "one particular thing under any denomination, the same existence continued preserves it the same individual under the same denomination."

THIS UNDERSTANDING OF real identity Locke applies without difficulty to an atom of matter which, being at a given instant "what it is and nothing else . . . is the same and so must continue as long as its existence is continued; for so long it will be the same, and no other. In like manner, if two or more atoms be joined together into the same mass, every one of those atoms will be the same by the foregoing rule; and whilst they exist united together, the mass consisting of the same atoms, must be the same mass or the same body, let the parts be ever so differently jumbled. But," Locke continues, "if one of these atoms be taken away, or one new one added, it is no longer the same mass or the same body."

The problem of identity in living organisms Locke does not find so easy to solve. "In the state of living creatures," he says, "their identity depends not on a mass of the same particles, but on something else. For in them the variation of great parcels of matter alters not the identity; an oak growing from a plant to a great tree, and then lopped, is still the same oak; and a colt grown up to a horse, sometimes fat, sometimes lean, is all the while the same horse, though in both these cases there may be a manifest change of the parts,

so that truly they are not, either of them, the same masses of matter."

The problem of the real identity or continuity of living things through time and change is, as we shall see presently, only a special case of the larger problem of whether anything at all remains identical for more than an instant in the universal flux of things. But supposing that problem solved in favor of enduring substances, or things which somehow remain continuously the same while changing in this or that respect, the point of Locke's observation about living things still holds, for their identity does not seem to lie in the continuity or permanence of the matter—the particles—of which they are composed.

The familiar riddle about the pipe—whether it is in any respect the same after it has its broken bowl replaced by a new one, and then has a new stem added to the new bowl—may be propounded for living organisms. But in their case, Locke argues, a principle of identity can be found. A plant, he says, "continues to be the same plant as long as it partakes of the same life, though that life be communicated to new particles of matter vitally united to the living plant, in a like continued organization conformable to that sort of plant."

The principle, he thinks, applies to animals and men. "The case is not so much different in brutes but that anyone may hence see what makes an animal and continues it the same. Something we have like this in machines, and may serve to illustrate it. For example, what is a watch? It is plain it is nothing but a fit organization or construction of parts to a certain end, which, when a sufficient force is added to it, it is capable to attain. If we would suppose this machine one continued body, all whose organized parts were repaired, increased, or diminished by a constant addition or separation of insensible parts, with one common life, we should have something very much like the body of an animal . . . This also shows wherein the identity of the same man consists; *viz.*, in nothing but a participation of the same continued life by constantly fleeing particles of matter, in succession, vitally united to the same organized body."

IN THE CASE OF MAN, however, Locke thinks we must face the additional problem of personal identity. What makes a man the same person from moment to moment, sleeping and waking, remembering or not remembering his past? In what does the continuity of the self consist, on the identity of which, Locke insists, "is founded all the right and justice of reward and punishment"? His answer seems to be that, as a living organism is identical throughout one and the same life, it is the continuity of the same consciousness which "makes a man be himself to himself" and establishes his personal identity.

"Whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions," Locke writes, "is the same person to whom they both belong . . . That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing *can* join itself, makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else . . . If the same Socrates, waking and sleeping, do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates, waking and sleeping, is not the same person. And to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more right than to punish one twin for what his brother twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like that they could not be distinguished."

James also attributes the sense of personal identity to continuity of consciousness, but for him there still remains a problem of explaining that continuity. In the flow of consciousness from moment to moment, "continuity," he thinks, "makes us unite what dissimilarity might otherwise separate; similarity makes us unite what discontinuity might hold apart . . . The sense of our personal identity, then, is exactly like any one of our other perceptions of sameness among phenomena. It is a conclusion grounded either on the resemblance in a fundamental respect, or on the continuity before the mind, of the phenomena compared."

In his opinion, "*resemblance among the parts of a continuum* of feelings (especially bodily feelings) experienced along with things widely different in all other regards, *thus constitutes the real and verifiable 'personal identity' which we feel.* There is no other identity than this in

the 'stream' of subjective consciousness . . . Its parts differ, but under all their differences they are knit in these two ways; and if either way of knitting disappears, the sense of unity departs. If a man wakes up some fine day unable to recall any of his past experiences, so that he has to learn his biography afresh . . . he *feels* and he *says* that he is a changed person. He disowns his former me, gives himself a new name, identifies his present life with nothing from out of the older time. Such cases are not rare in mental pathology."

In the tradition of the great books, other solutions are offered to the problem of personal identity. Kant thinks, for example, that a "transcendental unity of apperception" is necessary to constitute "in all possible phenomena which may come together in our experience, a connection of all these representations according to laws. Unity of consciousness," he writes, "would be impossible if the mind, in the knowledge of the manifold, could not become conscious of the identity of function by which it unites the manifold synthetically in one knowledge. Therefore, the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of one's self is at the same time a consciousness of the equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all phenomena according to concepts."

Where Kant posits a transcendental ego to account for the experienced identity of the self, other philosophers who hold one or another theory of the soul as an imperishable substance or an unchanging principle seem to find no special subtleties in the problem of the identity of living organisms or persons. So far as such theories bear upon that problem, the consideration of them belongs to the chapter on SOUL. Here we are concerned with the notions of same and other as they apply to everything in the universe. Hence we must face all the problems of how two things can be the same, not merely the problem of self-sameness or the identity of a thing with itself.

THE WORD "IDENTICAL" is sometimes used as a synonym for "same," as when we say that two things are identical in a certain respect. But without the qualification expressed by "in a certain respect," it is seldom if ever said that

two things are identical, for if they can be discriminated from one another in any respect at all, they are two, not one, and therefore not identical. This seems to be the sense of Leibniz's principle of the identity of indiscernibles, concurred in by all who understand identity as the self-sameness of that which is one in number and existence. A plurality of things involves a numerical diversity—each of the many being an *other*. To this extent at least, the traditional discussion of same and other tends to merge with matters discussed in the chapter on ONE AND MANY.

For both Plato and Aristotle, the relation between these two pairs—*one and many* and *same and other*—seems to be much closer. In the comparison of two things, Aristotle appears to treat sameness as a kind of oneness, referring to the various ways in which two things can be "one and the same." Of sameness, he says that "it is a unity of the being, either of more than one thing or of one thing when it is treated as more than one"; and of the one he says that to it "belong . . . the same and the like and the equal, and to plurality belong the other and the unlike and the unequal."

The enumeration he gives of kinds of unity seems to be paralleled by his enumeration of kinds of similitude. As a thing may be one essentially or one by accident, so two things may be the same essentially or by accident. Aristotle's statement that "some things are one in number, others in species, others in genus, others by analogy," finds its counterpart in his statement that "'different' is applied to those which, though other, are the same in some respect, only not in number, but either in species or in genus or by analogy."

As indicated in the chapter on RELATION, a distinction is traditionally made between relationships which really exist among things apart from the mind, and logical relationships which occur in thought alone. This distinction seems to separate self-sameness or identity from all relations of similitude which obtain between two things. "The relation signified by the term *the same*," Aquinas says, "is a logical relation only if it is taken in regard to absolutely the same thing, because such a relation can exist

only in a certain order observed by reason as regards the order of anything to itself. The case is otherwise, however, when things are called the same, not numerically, but generically or specifically."

Nevertheless, identity seems to underlie all other relations of sameness, for among things or ideas lacking identity no comparisons can be made. Those who deny identity on the ground that everything is in flux, nullify all further discussion of sameness. The theory of a universal flux, which Plato attributes to Heraclitus, permits nothing ever to remain stationary or the same for an instant; and "the professed Heraclitean," Cratylus, went even further, according to Aristotle: he "criticized Heraclitus for saying that it is impossible to step twice into the same river; for *he* thought one could not do it even once."

In saying of men that "they are *nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions*, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement," Hume does more than deny personal identity. He affirms an utter diversity—"as if there were no manner of relation" at all—between distinct perceptions, each of which is for him a distinct existence. The opposite point of view affirms things which have an enduring existence and which can, as Aristotle says of substances, undergo change in many respects "while remaining numerically one and the same."

According to Wittgenstein, "We seem to have an infallible paradigm of identity in the identity of a thing with itself." But he goes on to say of the phrase, "a thing is identical with itself," that "there is no finer example of a useless proposition, which yet is connected with a certain play of the imagination. It is as if in imagination we put a thing into its own shape and saw that it fitted."

TIME AND CHANGE raise the question of how any one thing can be the same from moment to moment. The question of how two things can be one and the same in any respect arises from the simple fact that, at the instant of comparison, they are two. If they were the same only for the comparing mind, then their

sameness would be a logical and not a real relationship. For two things to be the same in reality seems to imply that, although two in number, they are one in some respect. To use Hegel's language, there is identity in diversity; or, in the language of Aquinas, a real community exists, according to which some one thing is common to two.

The problem of the sameness of two things can be stated in terms of the significance of what Hobbes, Berkeley, and Hume call common or general names. Denying that such words as "man" or "tree" or "stone" express abstract or general ideas, they seem to say that common names like these signify what is common to two or more individuals—whether things, perceptions, or ideas. Those who, like Aristotle, Aquinas, and Locke, take general or common names to signify abstract ideas, seem to say such ideas themselves signify that in reality two or more things have something in common. Still another view is that, apart from all individual things, real universals exist as the objects of the mind's conceptions.

If the latter alternative is chosen, then two individuals—two men, for example—may be thought alike only because both somehow resemble, as Plotinus suggests, the separate archetype Man. What is common to the two men lies in a third and separate reality, of which Plotinus says that it is "present in multiplicity," as if "in multi-impression . . . from one seal." But as Parmenides observes, in Plato's dialogue of that name, if a separate idea of Man is required to explain how two individuals are alike in being men, then still another idea is needed to account for the likeness between each individual man and the idea Man.

On the other hand, the view that the real sameness of two individuals, or the reality of the one kind to which both belong, resides in them—in their common possession of the same nature, quality, or other attribute—seems to lead to the difficulty already intimated, namely, the difficulty of understanding how distinct existences can have anything in common—how they can be two in number and yet also one in nature. If John and James are alike as men because they share a common

humanity, then can it be said that each has *his own* human nature? If their natures and properties are as individual as their existences, how can two things be *really the same* in any respect? Must not kinds or universals—or whatever is supposed to be common to many and the source of their sameness—exist only in the general meaning of words, or in the mind's abstract concepts, or as separate archetypes? But, then, what truth is there in the familiar statement that two individual things are in some respect *really* alike or the same?

THESE QUESTIONS indicate that the traditional discussion of the same and the other tends to involve not merely the theory of the one and the many, but also, in certain issues at least, the problem of the individual and the universal. As the chapter on UNIVERSAL AND PARTICULAR shows, the several positions traditionally taken with regard to universals afford different answers to the problem of how any sameness between two or more things exists. The factor of similitude in knowledge (the nature of the likeness between image or idea and its object) and the function of similitude in love (the attraction, or repulsion, of like by like) also extend the consideration of sameness in diversity into the field of problems dealt with in other chapters. Here attention must be given to the meaning of sameness itself, as that is affected by the distinction between the same and the similar, by the enumeration of various kinds or degrees of likeness, and by the range of opposite meanings in the notions of diversity and difference.

Discussing discrimination and comparison, James, for example, draws a sharp line between the simple and complex components of our experience. Simple impressions, he seems to think, are either absolutely alike or absolutely unlike. Here there can be no degrees of resemblance or similarity. "Two resembling things," he writes, "owe their resemblance to their absolute identity in respect to some attribute or attributes, combined with the absolute non-identity of the rest of their being. This, which may be true of compound things, breaks down when we come to simple impressions." The latter, apart from their numerical nonidentity

or otherness, are either the same in quality or diverse. But compound things may be more or less alike, varying in degree of similarity or difference according to the number of simple respects in which they are or are not the same.

"Similarity, in compounds," says James, "is partial identity," and he gives the following illustrations. "The moon is similar to a gas-jet, it is also similar to a foot-ball; but a gas-jet and a foot-ball are not similar to each other . . . Moon and gas-jet are similar in respect of luminosity and nothing else; moon and foot-ball in respect of rotundity, and nothing else. Foot-ball and gas-jet are in no respect similar—that is, they possess no common point, no identical attribute."

Other writers seem to agree on this distinction between the same and the similar, the diverse and the different. The latter in both cases combine elements of sameness and diversity to give degrees of likeness. Aquinas, for example, says that "we seek for difference where we also find resemblance. For this reason, things which differ must in some way be composite, since they differ in some respect and in some respect they resemble each other. In this sense, although all things that differ are diverse, yet all things that are diverse do not differ . . . For simple things are diverse through themselves, and do not differ from one another by differences as their components. For instance, a man and an ass differ by the difference of rational and irrational, but we cannot say that these again differ by some further difference."

The specific difference between man and ass with respect to rationality, accompanied by their generic sameness with respect to animality, makes them similar. If they were utterly diverse, *i.e.*, the same in no respect, they would not be said to differ; just as if they were identical in all respects except number, they would not be called similar. "The other and the same," writes Aristotle, "are thus opposed. But difference is not the same as otherness. For the other and that which it is other than need not be other in some definite respect . . . but that which is different is different from some particular thing in some particular respect, so that there must be something identical by which they differ."

But within the area of this agreement on fundamental terms, there seems to be some disagreement about whether two things can be utterly diverse. Since they are two, they cannot be the same in *all* respects—certainly not in number—but can they be totally incomparable? James appears to say Yes in his remark about the football and the gas jet having “no common point, no identical attribute.” Yet he also seems to hold that no two things are ever absolutely incomparable. They may not differ or be similar as the diverse species of the same genus, *e.g.*, man and ass; but regarding them as “‘thinkables’ or ‘existents,’” he writes, “even the smoke of a cigarette and the worth of a dollar bill are comparable—still more so as ‘perishables’ or as ‘enjoyables.’” The gas jet and the football would appear to be comparable also as ‘existents’ or ‘usables’—or even, perhaps, as ‘bodies.’

The question thus arises whether—all things being somehow comparable—they are all the same in genus, as, for example, all three-dimensional material things may be said to belong to the genus ‘body’ no matter how much else they differ as species or subordinate kinds within this genus. Kant answers this question by affirming a principle of ultimate homogeneity. According to this principle, “there are no different original and first *genera*, as it were isolated and separated from each other, but all diverse *genera* are divisions only of one supreme and general *genus*.” Kant states a correlative principle of variety or specification, according to which “every *genus* requires *species*, and these again *sub-species*, and as none even of these *sub-species* is without a sphere . . . reason in its utmost extension requires that no species or sub-species should in itself be considered as the lowest.”

Aristotle’s theory of species and genera appears to be exactly opposite to Kant’s on both points. For Aristotle, there is no single all-embracing genus, but rather a number of diverse yet supreme genera, such as substance, quantity, quality, etc. There is a finite, not an infinite variety of species. The lowest species is further divisible only into kinds which differ, as individuals of the same species do, in accidental, not essential respects, *e.g.*, white

man and red man differ in the same way as John and James do within the species ‘man,’ not as the species ‘man’ and ‘ass’ differ within the genus ‘animal.’ Furthermore, where Kant insists upon a third principle of continuity, according to which between any two species “there always remain possible intermediate species, differing from the first and the second by smaller degrees than those by which these differ from each other,” Aristotle seems to find no intermediates possible between the contrary species of a single genus. The order of species is for him a discontinuous series like the order of the whole numbers, between proximate members of which no fractions are admitted.

Does Aristotle’s position with respect to the *heterogeneity* of an animal and the color blue—the one in the genus ‘substance,’ the other in the genus ‘quality’—mean that such things, *absolutely diverse in genus*, are absolutely incomparable? His answer seems to be twofold. In one place he says that things which are diverse in genus may still be the same by analogy: “things that are one by analogy are not all one in genus.” In another, he gives us an example of analogical resemblance (between the soul and the hand): “As the hand is a tool of tools, so the mind is the form of forms and sense the form of sensible things.”

If the example seems inappropriate on the ground that the soul and the hand are of the same genus, *i.e.*, both substances or parts of the same substance *man*, it may be necessary to introduce the distinction between natural and logical genera. According to this distinction, a material and a spiritual substance can both be called “substances” as a matter of logical classification, but they are not in the same genus by their own natures. In this sense, Aquinas assigns a geometric solid and a physical body to the same logical genus ‘body’ but regards them as of heterogeneous natures; and Descartes, calling an extended and a thinking substance both “substances,” insists upon the utter diversity of their natures.

An easier example, however, may not be too difficult to find. A man and a number belong to different genera, according to Aristotle—one a substance, the other a quantity. But the

man can be related to his sons as the number one is related to any other whole number. The relation which is the same in both cases is that of priority, according to which the man and unity are the principles or generators respectively of his sons and other numbers. Here, then, we see two heterogeneous things—a substance and a quantity—which are, nevertheless, the same by analogy, *each standing to another in the same relationship*; both, therefore, can be called “principle” or “generator” analogically.

Aristotle's other indication that a special mode of similitude obtains between heterogeneous things, occurs in all those passages in which he says that terms like ‘being’ can be predicated of things in every category or genus. Just as James seems to think that any two things may be comparable as ‘thinkables’ or ‘existents,’ so Aristotle seems to hold that all things, though otherwise heterogeneous, are at least alike in *being*, *i.e.*, in having some mode of existence. Yet the term ‘being’ cannot be equated with Kant's single supreme genus. Though Aristotle agrees with Kant that every genus must be capable of division into species, he does not think that ‘being’ can be so divided by specific differences.

TWO POINTS MUST be observed concerning Aristotle's theory of the predication of a term like ‘being’ of everything in the universe.

First, he repeatedly asserts that ‘being’ is not said *in the same sense* of substances, quantities, qualities, and so forth. Hence when such heterogeneous things are all called ‘beings,’ the implication cannot be that, as beings, they are all the *same*. The point seems to be that they are somehow *at once both the same and diverse*. As, to use an example from Aristotle's *Physics*, a tone and a taste can both be sharp, though the sharpness of a tone is as diverse from the sharpness of a taste as tone and taste are qualitatively diverse from each other; so a man and a number can both have being, though their modes of being are as diverse as substance is from quantity. If the word “similarity” were to be used to signify not the combination of separable elements of sameness and diversity, but rather the inseparable

fusion of the two to constitute a *diversified sameness*, then heterogeneous things should be called *similar*, not the same, in being.

Second, Aristotle does not identify such similarity of heterogeneous things with the sameness by analogy which heterogeneous things can have. ‘Being’ is not a relative term and therefore it cannot be predicated analogically, as ‘principle’ or ‘generator’ can be. Terms which are predicated analogically, as ‘principle’ can be predicated of a father and the number one, may signify *similarity* (in the sense of *diversified sameness*) rather than simple sameness in a single respect. The relation of generation which creates the analogical similitude between the father and the number one seems to be the same relation in the two cases (between a father and his sons, and between one and other numbers); it is not, however, simply the same, for that relation is diversified according as the things related—substances in the one case, quantities in the other—are absolutely diverse in genus. But in Aristotle's analysis it does not follow that because some analogical predicates signify *diversified* rather than *simple* sameness, all do; or that because some instances of *diversified sameness* happen to be analogical (*i.e.*, sameness in a relation), all are.

The interest in Aristotle's separation of these two points lies in the fact that Aquinas combines them in a theory which states that, when being and other terms (which are not genera and yet are above all genera) are predicated of heterogeneous things, they must be predicated analogically of them. The existence which is found in all things, he says, “is common to all only according to some sort of analogy,” not “according to the same specific or generic formality.” This is most easily seen in the “likeness of creatures to God,” which is “solely according to analogy, inasmuch as God is essential being, whereas other things are beings by participation.”

Aristotle's statement that “things which are one by analogy are not all one in genus,” seems to be converted by Aquinas into the proposition that *things which are not one in genus, and yet are alike in some way, are all one by analogy*. For Aristotle, sameness by analogy may be

either simple sameness or diversified sameness (*i.e.*, similarity); and diversified sameness may or may not be analogical, that is, it may be the kind of similarity which two heterogeneous things have in respect to being or in respect to some relation in which they stand to other things. For Aquinas, on the other hand, whenever heterogeneous things are the same in any single respect, their diversified sameness is *always analogical*; and whenever the similitude between two things is truly analogical, then it is *always similarity*, that is, a diversified, not a simple sameness. Likeness in being, according to Aquinas, affords us the prime example of a similitude which is at once an analogical and a diversified sameness.

Aquinas applies his theory of the analogy of being to the great traditional issue, which puts all theories of similitude to the test—the question of the resemblance between God and creatures, or between infinite and finite being. Against the answer first given by Maimonides, and later expressed by Spinoza when, of all comparisons between God and man, he says that “His essence . . . could resemble ours in nothing except in name”; and against those,

on the other hand, who think that whatever names apply to both God and creatures (such as “being” or “good” or “one”), apply simply in the *same* sense, Aquinas seems to take the middle ground. The names which are properly applicable to both God and creatures, according to him, are said of them, not equivocally and not univocally, but analogically.

This threefold distinction of univocal, equivocal, and analogical names, especially as it concerns the names of God, is discussed in the chapter on SIGN AND SYMBOL. The theological problem of the similitude between God and creatures confronts us with three basic alternatives in man’s speculation about the sameness and diversity which exists among all things. We can say, (1) that infinite and finite being are utterly diverse, and have no similarity *even* in being. We can say, (2) that they are homogeneous—that, with respect to being, for example, they have the kind of sameness which things have when they belong to the same genus. Or we can say, (3) that they are only similar in the sense of a diversified sameness, whether such similarity is or is not always analogical in character.