

Universal and Particular

INTRODUCTION

ON such speculative problems as the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the infinity of time and space, or the limits of human knowledge, the conversation of philosophers seems to make contact with the discourse of scientists, the language of poets, and the speech of ordinary men. The philosophers usually begin at least by propounding questions which correspond to those asked by men who do not profess to be philosophers. But throughout the tradition of western thought, the problem of the universal, unlike these others, seems to have the character of a professional secret.

The various solutions of the problem of the universal are so many esoteric doctrines, each with its own sectarian name. The initiated can distinguish themselves from the novices by their proficiency in this area; and the outsider who overhears the discussion of professionals may be completely left behind, wondering as much about how the question arose as about the meaning of the conflicting answers.

No genuine philosophical problem, it seems reasonable to suppose, can be so remote from questions intelligible to common sense. If it is not just a specious riddle to amuse the experts, the problem of the universal, despite its technical appearance, should raise issues from which, in some form or other, no one can escape. Whether or not this is so can be tested by considering the various ways in which the problem occurs in other chapters under different guises and in different contexts.

In the chapter on SAME AND OTHER, we find the question how two individuals can be the same in some particular respect—how in spite of their separate existence they can share in the possession of a common nature or at-

tribute. Anyone who classifies things or tries to make definitions may be led to wonder whether classifications are entirely verbal and definitions fictions of the mind, or whether things themselves belong together in some real community based upon an inherent sameness or similarity.

In the chapter on ONE AND MANY, the question takes the form of asking how two or more things can be one in any way. Again, both science and common sense seem able to deal with an infinite number of individuals by applying a single name to them or apprehending them all under a single concept or notion. But it may be asked what justifies the denomination of many things by one name. What unity in the things verifies the tendency of thought to unify them conceptually? Does a real unity exist in things, by virtue of their being somehow one as well as many, or as a result of the many somehow participating in a one which exists separately from them?

In the chapters on DEFINITION and SIGN AND SYMBOL the same questions are at least implicit. In connection with the object of definition, one issue is whether what Aristotle calls "the formulable essence" exists as the common nature of many individuals, or whether, as Locke suggests, definitions formulate only the nominal, not the real, essences of things. As that and related issues are faced, anyone who acknowledges the familiar distinction between proper and common names may become involved in questioning what common or general names signify and how they get the meanings with which they are used in everyday discourse.

The problem of the sameness of things distinct from one another, the problem of the

one *in* the many or the one *and* the many, the problem of essences and common names, are other statements of the problem of the universal and the particular. Attention to the words themselves confirms this. The word "*universal*" connotes a unity—the one as opposed to the many, the common as opposed to the unique or special. The word "*particular*" connotes participation—the part as opposed to the whole, the member as opposed to the class. As the reference already made to essence and individual indicates, these are not the only pairs of terms which somehow correspond in significance to universal and particular, but others, like model and imitation, form and matter, abstract and concrete, are more obscure in meaning. The discussion of universal and particular throws light on them rather than gains clarity from them.

THE READER OF THE great books can witness the origin of the problem of the universal and particular as it occurs in a conversation, not between technical philosophers, but between Socrates and his friends. In the *Meno*, Socrates and Meno get into a discussion of how virtue is acquired. Socrates thinks it is necessary to inquire first what virtue is. Meno responds by enumerating different virtues, but Socrates is not satisfied. He wants a definition which will cover all the virtues. Even if Meno could say what justice or temperance is, that would not do, for each of these is, as Socrates says, *a* virtue, not *virtue*—a particular virtue or a part of virtue, not the whole of it.

"In searching after one virtue," Socrates tells Meno, "we have found many . . . but we have been unable to find the common virtue which runs through them all." To help Meno, who claims he is not able to follow Socrates in his "attempt to get at one common notion of virtue," Socrates shifts the discussion to colors and figures. He warns Meno that color cannot be defined by naming colors, and that, even if he could define a square, a circle, and all other figures, he would not be saying what *figure* is. To proceed in this way is to be "landed in particulars."

"Tell me then," Socrates says, "since you call them by a common name, and say that

they are all figures, even when opposed to one another, what is that common nature which you designate as figure?"

If Meno were to reply, "I do not know what you want," not much further explanation could be given. To someone who remained perplexed at this point, we could only say, Socrates suggests, "Do you not understand that we are looking for the same in the many?" Or, put in another form, we might ask, he says, "What is that [one in many] which you call figure, and which includes not only the round and straight figures, but all?"

Thus stated, the problem of the universal seems inescapable—a problem for everyone, not just for philosophers. But the philosophers complicate the problem almost as soon as it is stated. Giving his version of the history of philosophy, Aristotle offers an explanation of how the problem shifted to another level. Socrates, he writes, "was busying himself about ethical matters" and, "seeking the universal in these ethical matters, [he] fixed thought for the first time on definitions. Plato accepted his teaching, but held that the problem applied not to sensible things, but to entities of another kind—for this reason, that the common definition could not be a definition of any sensible thing, as they were always changing. Things of this other sort he called Ideas, and sensible things, he said, were all named after these, and in virtue of a relation to these; for the many existed by participation in the Ideas that have the same name as they."

It is at this point, according to Aristotle, that the great philosophical controversy begins. Whereas "the thinkers of old ranked particular things as substances, *e.g.*, fire and earth, not what is common to both, body," the Platonists or idealists—"the thinkers of the present day"—"tend to rank universal as substances, for genera are universal." Aristotle repeatedly tries to distinguish between the Socratic inquiry and what he regards as the Platonic doctrine—the theory of Ideas. "The first to raise the problem of universal definition . . . Socrates," he writes, "did not make the universals or the definitions exist apart; they, however,"—the Platonists—"gave them

separate existence, and this was the kind of thing they called Ideas."

As between Socrates and his disciple, Aristotle does not hesitate to take sides. "Socrates gave the impulse to this theory of ideas . . . but he did not *separate* universals from individuals; and in not separating them," Aristotle adds, "he thought rightly." The issue between Aristotle and his own teacher, Plato, cannot, however, be stated by so simple an affirmation and denial.

On Aristotle's side, it involves the fundamental principles of his metaphysics, especially his doctrine of substance, as well as his theory of what and how the intellect knows, as contrasted with the perceptions of the senses. On Plato's side, it involves many questions, concerning the intelligible and the sensible, being and becoming, the one and the many—questions the Aristotelian answers to which would not satisfy Plato.

Wherever the truth lies, Aristotle recognizes that on this issue, perhaps more than on any other, he is most sharply opposed to Plato. It is the one matter wherein he feels a conflict between devotion to his teacher and to the truth as he sees it. The consideration of the universal good, he declares in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is made difficult "by the fact that the Forms have been introduced by friends of our own," but "while both are dear, piety requires us to honor truth above our friends."

THE HISTORIANS OF PHILOSOPHY, beginning with Aristotle, attribute one solution of the problem of universals to Plato. That solution comes to be called "realism" because it affirms the independent reality of universals as separately existing Ideas or Forms. But all the commentators do not, like Aristotle, dissent from Plato's solution. In our own time, for example, Russell, treating of "the world of universals" in *The Problems of Philosophy*, says, "the problem with which we are now concerned is a very old one, since it was brought into philosophy by Plato. Plato's 'theory of ideas' is an attempt to solve this very problem, and in my opinion it is one of the most successful attempts hitherto made. The theory to be advocated in what follows is largely Plato's, with

merely such modifications as time has shown to be necessary."

For one thing, Russell thinks "the word 'idea' has acquired in the course of time many associations which are quite misleading when applied to Plato's 'ideas.' We shall, therefore," he writes, "use the word 'universal' instead of the word 'idea' to describe what Plato meant . . . We speak of whatever is given in sensation . . . as a *particular*; by opposition to this, a *universal* will be anything which may be shared by many particulars . . . Broadly speaking, proper names stand for particulars, while other substantives, adjectives, prepositions, and verbs stand for universals."

Russell here calls attention to another point which he thinks has too seldom been observed, namely, that universals are not exclusively signified by common nouns and adjectives, but that, in addition, there are relational universals signified by prepositions and verbs. This sort of universal, according to him, most readily shows that universals have being apart from particulars. It can also be shown, he argues, "that their being is not merely mental . . . that whatever being belongs to them is independent of their being thought of or in any way apprehended by minds."

If the word "existence" implies definite location in time and space, then, Russell concludes, in the sense in which "thoughts and feelings, minds and physical objects *exist* . . . universals do not exist." We must say instead that "they *subsist* or *have being*, where 'being' is opposed to 'existence' as being timeless. The world of universals, therefore, may also be described as the world of being. The world of being is unchangeable . . . The world of existence is fleeting . . . According to our temperaments, we shall prefer the contemplation of the one or the other. The one we do not prefer will probably seem to us a pale shadow of the one we prefer, and hardly worthy to be regarded as in any sense real. But the truth is that both have the same claim on our impartial attention, both are real, and both are important to the metaphysician. Indeed no sooner have we distinguished the two worlds than it becomes necessary to consider their relations."

What Russell calls timeless subsistence,

Whitehead calls eternal objects. "These transcendent entities," Whitehead writes, "have been termed 'universals.' I prefer to use the term 'eternal objects,' in order to disengage myself from presuppositions which cling to the former term owing to its prolonged philosophical history."

IT IS THIS CONSIDERATION which seems to be for Plato *the* problem of the universal—the central difficulty in the theory of Ideas or separate Forms. As indicated in the chapters on FORM and IDEA, the separation of the two worlds—the sensible world of becoming and the intelligible world of being—always calls for some explanation of their resemblance.

Socrates sometimes refers to the doctrine of Ideas as if its truth could be assumed, and sometimes argues the necessity of a realm of immutable and intelligible being as the object of thought, comparable to sensible, changing things as the object of perception. In the *Phaedo*, for example, he gets Cebes to admit that the ideas, "which in the dialectical process we define as essences or true existences," are not subject to change, but that they are "always what they are, having the same simple self-existent and unchanging forms." In contrast to absolute beauty or goodness, the many beautiful or good things "are always in a state of change." These, Socrates says, "you can touch and see and perceive with the senses, but the unchanging things you can only perceive with the mind. Let us suppose then," he adds, "that there are two sorts of existences—one seen, the other unseen."

Later in the same dialogue, Socrates repeats the assumption that "there is an absolute beauty and goodness and greatness and the like." No other assumption seems to him to provide as satisfactory an explanation of how particular things can be beautiful or good or have any other characteristics. "Nothing makes a thing beautiful," he declares, "but the presence and participation of beauty in whatever way or manner obtained; for as to the manner I am uncertain, but I stoutly contend that by beauty all beautiful things become beautiful."

In later Platonic dialogues, the question of

the manner comes to the fore. Though the Eleatic Stranger in the *Sophist* refers to the "endless conflict raging" between the materialists and the idealists concerning the existence of the unseen world of ideas, he himself seems to be doubtful only on the point of how the changing things of sense participate in the immutable forms. One answer is suggested in the *Timaeus*. According to the story of creation which Timaeus tells, the artificer of the world made its sensible particulars copy an eternal pattern. When many things seem to be of one nature or to share the same quality, they are so by virtue of imitating the eternal forms, which are not only absolute essences in themselves, but are also the models for created or generated things.

But in the *Parmenides* Socrates seems unable to defend the view that "the ideas are, as it were, patterns fixed in nature, and other things are like them, and resemblances of them—for what is meant by the participation of other things in the ideas, is really assimilation to them." Nor can he meet other objections which Parmenides raises, such as the difficulty of two or more individuals participating in one idea; for if the idea is wholly in one individual, it cannot be in another, and if each of the many partake of the idea only in part, then the idea cannot be one and indivisible. "In what way, Socrates," Parmenides asks, "will all things participate in ideas, if they are unable to participate in them as parts or wholes?"

In the course of the discussion Parmenides rebukes Socrates for being squeamish about positing absolute essences for "such things as hair, mind, dirt, or anything else which is vile and paltry," as well as for things which are beautiful and good. But his main intention seems to be to leave Socrates with an unresolved dilemma. On the one hand, the difficulties with the theory of Ideas make the denial of their separate existence reasonable; on the other, the denial of their existence seems to make thought and reasoning impossible, because it deprives the mind of its proper objects.

SOME OF ARISTOTLE'S arguments against the separate existence of universals repeat the ob-

jections raised by Parmenides, to which no answer is given in the dialogues of Plato. If it were not for the fact that Aristotle attributes to Plato himself the theory he criticizes, the dialogues would leave us in some doubt as to whether it is Plato or his followers, the Platonists, who hold that theory. But whether or not Aristotle's criticisms apply to Plato—and even if they involve some misunderstanding of his doctrine—the objections Aristotle raises help define his own position.

To say that the Forms "are patterns and that other things share in them," Aristotle writes, "is to use empty words and poetical metaphors." In his view, "the most paradoxical thing of all is the statement that there are certain things besides those in the material universe, and that these are the same as sensible things except that they are eternal while the latter are perishable." To posit the separate being of the forms of things seems to him a useless multiplication of existences. To say that "there must be Ideas of all things that are spoken of universally" is to make substances of ideas.

Those who say the Forms exist would be right, Aristotle concedes, "if they are substances." He does not think it is impossible to establish the existence of imperishable and insensible substances, but such substances, if they exist, would not stand in relation to sensible substances as universal to particular, or as one to many. His objection to the theory of Ideas is that, in speaking of absolute beauty or beauty-itself, of the idea Man or man-itself, the Platonists do no more than add words like "absolute" or "itself" to the names of sensible things, and posit the existence of these absolutes or universals over and above the existence of the sensible particulars having the same name.

Aristotle's own position seems to be that only individual substances exist, whether they are sensible or intelligible, perishable or eternal, and that "no universal can be a substance" or exist separately in and of itself. He does not thereby deny the reality of the universal. On the contrary, he holds that "without the universal it is not possible to get knowledge," *i.e.*, scientific knowledge in distinction from

mere sense perception. "All knowledge is of the universal and of the 'such,'" he writes; yet in adding that "substance is not a universal, but is rather a 'this,'" Aristotle indicates what is for him the central problem of the universal.

Aristotle's theory that the mind abstracts universal concepts from the particulars of sense-experience, and that such concepts are the terms of the universal propositions constituting scientific knowledge, leaves a question concerning the object of science. If science is knowledge of real existence, not of our own concepts, and if only individual things really exist, then how can the object of science be the universal, not the individual? What is the object apprehended by the universal concept 'man' or 'horse'?

Aristotle's answer seems to be that if the universal term 'man' can be truly predicated of an indefinite number of individuals, it must signify something common to them all. The common nature or properties shared by a number of individuals cannot be actually universal, however, since, in Aristotle's opinion, whatever exists in the individual—the form as well as the matter of the concrete substance—is itself individual. He finds it necessary to say, therefore, that the universal exists potentially, not actually, whenever a number of individuals have something in common.

The form which constitutes human nature, for example, is an individual form in Socrates and Callias; but it has the potentiality of being universal insofar as it is capable of being separated from the individual matter of these two men by the abstractive power of the mind. When the abstraction takes place and results in the universal concept 'man,' the form thus received in the mind becomes actually universal and enables the mind to apprehend the nature common to all individual men.

ARISTOTLE'S DOCTRINE THAT the universal exists potentially in individual things and actually in the abstract concepts of the mind, later comes to be called "moderate realism," in contrast to the extreme realism of the position which asserts the actual subsistence of universals, outside of minds as well as apart from individual things. It affirms that the universal

has what Russell calls "extra-mental reality," even though it severely qualifies the real being of the universal by saying it is neither actual nor subsistent.

As Aristotle denies unqualified reality to universals, later philosophers deny that they have any reality at all. Those who are sometimes called "conceptualists" admit the existence of universals only as abstract ideas in the mind. The "nominalist" position, taken by Hobbes and Berkeley, goes further and even denies abstract ideas or universal notions in the mind. It holds that universality is a property of words alone, which manifests itself in the meaning of general or common names.

In the progressive complication of the controversy, each of the theories which has acquired a traditional title undergoes modification as it is reformulated in different contexts. This is especially true of the two middle positions which tend to lean toward one or the other of the extremes.

Locke, for example, may be called a conceptualist because he thinks that general names derive their universal significance from the abstract ideas they signify. But though he denies that by means of our universal notions or abstract ideas we can know the real essences of things, he does not deny real essence. To this extent, he may lean toward moderate realism more than a philosopher like William of Ockham, or a psychologist like William James who says, "*We must decide in favor of the conceptualists*, and affirm that the power to think things, qualities, relations . . . isolated and abstracted from the total experience in which they appear, is the most indisputable function of our thought." Similarly, the development which Aquinas gives to Aristotle's views, especially in the point he adds concerning ideas in the mind of God—the "eternal exemplars"—may be a form of moderate realism which, more than Aristotle's, has some affinity with the theory of self-subsistent ideas as the eternal archetypes for sensible particulars.

Aquinas presents his own theory in the context of stating his understanding of the issue between Plato and Aristotle. "Plato supposed," he declares, "that the forms of natural things subsisted apart from matter, and conse-

quently that they are intelligible, for a thing is actually intelligible from the very fact that it is immaterial. And he called such forms *species* or *ideas*. From a participation in these, he said that even corporeal matter was formed, in order that individuals might be naturally established in their proper genera and species . . . But since Aristotle did not allow that the forms of natural things exist apart from matter, and since forms existing in matter are not actually intelligible, it follows that the natures or forms of the sensible things which we understand are not actually intelligible."

Aquinas speaks of the forms (which exist only in union with matter in individual things) as "universal forms," even though they are not actually intelligible. "We abstract universal forms from their particular conditions," he says, and by doing so we "make them actually intelligible." The Platonic error, in his opinion, consists in thinking that "the form of the thing known must be in the knower in the same manner as in the thing known." From the fact that "the form of the thing understood is in the intellect under conditions of universality, immateriality, and immobility," Plato concluded, erroneously, according to Aquinas, "that the things which we understand must subsist in themselves under the same conditions of immateriality and immobility."

As Aquinas states what he takes to be Aristotle's correction of this error, it consists in distinguishing two ways in which the universal can be considered. "First, the universal nature may be considered together with the intention of universality. And since the intention of universality—*viz.*, the relation of one and the same to many—is due to intellectual abstraction, the universal thus considered is subsequent, in our knowledge . . . Secondly, the universal can be considered according to the nature itself (for instance, *animality* or *humanity*) as existing in the individual." In the order of generation and time, the potential universal precedes the actual universal; that is, the universal form or common nature exists in individual things under conditions of particularity before it exists in the human mind under conditions of abstraction.

Even as forms exist in things (though they

are not actually universal prior to their existence as universal concepts of the mind), so they have a mode of being prior to their existence in things. Here Aquinas attributes to Augustine the correction of a pagan error and the substitution for it of a Christian truth. "Whenever Augustine, who was imbued with the doctrines of the Platonists," he writes, "found in their teaching anything consistent with the faith, he adopted it; and those things which he found contrary to faith, he amended."

Plato, positing "the forms of things subsisting of themselves apart from matter," had supposed that, "just as corporeal matter, by participating in the Idea of stone, becomes a stone, so our intellect, by participating in the same Idea, has knowledge of the stone." But, according to Aquinas, "it seems contrary to faith that the forms of things should subsist of themselves without matter outside the things themselves . . . Therefore, in place of the Ideas defended by Plato, Augustine said that the exemplars of all creatures existed in the divine mind. It is according to these that all things are formed, as well as that the human soul knows all things."

THE SOLUTION TO THE problem of universals which Aquinas proposes seems to involve a threefold distinction with respect to the being of forms: they are (1) in the human mind by abstraction from our experience of sensible particulars; (2) in individual things; and (3), prior to their existence in things, in the divine mind.

But Aquinas himself says that in God there is no distinction between universal and particular; nor does knowledge "exist in God after the mode of created knowledge, so as to be universal or particular." The divine ideas, whether considered as the exemplars by which God creates things or as the types and likeness by which God knows them, are not abstractions and so do not have the universality characteristic of human concepts. Whereas our abstract universals do not give us knowledge of individual things in their singularity, the divine ideas, according to Aquinas, are the principles whereby God at once knows the singular and the universal.

If the universal *as such* is not in the divine mind, neither, in Ockham's opinion, is it really in things—not even potentially. Everything that exists in an individual—its form and matter, all its parts and properties—is the unique and singular possession of that individual. If there were something common to two things, it would have to be one and two at the same time. As common to both, it would have to be somehow one and the same in both, yet as existing in each, it would have to be as singular in each as each individual thing in which it existed. But since Ockham regards this as impossible, he concludes that "no universal really exists outside the soul in an individual substance; nor is it of the substance or the being of things, but is only in the soul."

The old riddle thus returns in another form. If abstract concepts are in the mind—or if, as Ockham suggests, the logical "terms 'animal' and 'man' are universals because predicable of many, not through themselves, but for the things they signify"—then what in reality is the object signified by the universal term or concept? It cannot be the many unless the numerically distinct individuals are also alike as men or animals; and how can they be really alike, as opposed to being merely conceived as such, unless they have a common nature or attribute and to that extent are one and the same?

Locke puts the question another way. "Since all things are only particulars," he asks, "how come we by general terms, or where find we those general natures they are supposed to stand for?" He answers that "words become general, by being made the signs of general ideas; and ideas become general by separating from them the circumstances of time and place, and other ideas that may determine them to this or that particular existence. By this way of abstraction, they are made capable of representing more individuals than one; each of which having in it a conformity to that abstract idea is (as we call it) of that sort."

But if, as Locke goes on to say, general natures (or genera and species) are "nothing else but abstract ideas, more or less comprehensive, with names annexed to them," then in what way do the many individuals repre-

sented by one abstract idea have in them "a conformity to that abstract idea"? Locke's position seems to avoid this problem. "Abstract ideas," he writes, give us "no knowledge of existence at all." Only particular propositions are about real existences. "Universal propositions, of whose truth or falsehood we can have certain knowledge, concern not existence." Such propositions express nothing but "the agreement or disagreement of our abstract ideas."

In addition to denying their reference to reality, Locke regards abstract ideas as "fictions or contrivances of the mind," which are imperfect precisely to the extent that they succeed in being universal. The general idea of triangle, he observes, must be neither equilateral, isosceles, nor scalene, "but all and none of these at once. In effect, it is something imperfect, that cannot exist." Where Locke seems to mean only that there can be no counterpart in reality to our general ideas, Berkeley, observing the same "imperfection" in what are supposed to be abstract ideas, denies that they can exist even in the mind. "I deny," he writes, "that I can abstract from one another, or conceive separately, those qualities which it is impossible should exist so separated, or that I can frame a general notion by abstracting from particulars."

Berkeley admits that "a man may consider a figure merely as triangular, without attending to the particular qualities of the angles or relations of the sides. So far he may abstract; but this will never prove that he can frame an abstract, general, inconsistent idea of a triangle." He recognizes also that all our common names have general significance, but he rejects Locke's explanation of their general meaning. "A word becomes general," he says, "by being made the sign, not of an abstract general idea, but of several particular ideas, any one of which it indifferently suggests to the mind."

Does a nominalist like Berkeley escape the persistent riddle? Does it not reappear in the question which must be asked: what is there in this set of particular ideas, as opposed to some other set, which makes it possible for a general name to signify any one of them indifferently? If each particular idea were absolutely unique and had nothing in common with any other,

would the universal have any truth even on the level of names?

James thinks the nominalists are somehow forced to "admit a *quasi*-universal, something which we think *as if it were* universal, though it is not; and in all that they say about this something which they explain to be 'an indefinite number of particular ideas,' the same vacillation between the subjective and objective points of view appears. The reader never can tell," James continues, "whether an 'idea' spoken of is supposed to be a knower or a known. The authors themselves do not distinguish. They want to get something in the mind which shall *resemble* what is out of the mind, however vaguely, and they think that when that fact is accomplished, no farther questions will be asked."

SOME PHILOSOPHERS DEAL with the universal and particular in a manner which leads away from rather than into the traditional problem.

To Spinoza, for example, the universal terms, such as *man*, *horse*, *dog*, represent confused images drawn from sense-experience. They provide us with an inadequate knowledge of things. To know things adequately we must proceed "from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things." Quite opposite to the abstract universal (or indeterminate image from experience), the adequate idea is universal in the totally different sense of comprehending an infinite whole.

Hegel also distinguishes between abstract universality and "true infinity or concrete universality." The former is "something determinate; *i.e.*, being abstraction from all determinacy, it is itself not without determinacy; to be something abstract and one-sided constitutes its determinacy, its defectiveness, its finitude." The antithesis of the abstract universal is the particular, the determinate content implicitly contained in an abstract universal. The synthesis is the individual; not the particular individual, but the infinite individual which is the concrete universal.

The concrete universal is neither "the universal as a common characteristic, nor the

abstract universality which stands outside and over against the individual, the abstract identity of the Understanding." It is "the universality which has the particular as its opposite, but the particular which by its reflection into itself has been equalized with the universal. This unity is individuality, not individuality in its immediacy as a unit . . . but individuality in accordance with its concept." For Hegel, the concrete universal is the immanent Idea itself. It is the manifestation of the Absolute Spirit or God.

HOWEVER IT IS formulated and whether or not it is or can be solved, the problem of the universal seems to have a critical bearing on the discussion of many other great ideas. In addition to the chapters enumerated at

the beginning, we can now see that the universal, the particular, and the individual are implicated in the consideration of BEING and INFINITY, FORM and IDEA, MATTER and MIND, EXPERIENCE, INDUCTION, JUDGMENT, and SCIENCE. These chapters, in turn, do more than throw light on the various solutions proposed to the problem of the universal. They help us understand the importance of the problem—certainly to the philosophers of the western tradition. If in the broader context of connected issues, it is discovered that the proof of man's distinctive rationality, or even the possibility of an immortal soul, may depend on the affirmation or denial of universals, at least as concepts in the mind, then, perhaps, some tolerance and patience may be won for the burdensome technicalities of the problem.