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**William of Ockham,
From His *Summa of Logic*, Part
I: ADAM (OF WODEHAM'S)
PROLOGUE, OCKHAM'S
PREFATORY LETTER AND CHS. 1–
6, 8–13, 26–28, 30–31, 33, 63–66,
70, 72, WITH SUMMARIES OF CHS.
7, 29, 32.**

[The Prologue of Friar and Master Adam of England ¹]

10 (1) The authority of many experts teaches what great fruits the sci-
ence of language that we call “logic” brings forth for the followers of truth,
while reason and experience clearly confirm and prove [it].² Hence Aris-
totle, the main originator of this science, calls [it] now an introductory
method, now a way of knowing, now a science common to all [things] and
15 the way to truth. By these [phrases] he indicates that the entryway to wis-
dom is accessible to no one not educated in logic. Averroes too, the inter-
preter of Aristotle, says in his [*Commentary on the*] *Physics*³ that dialectic
is “the tool for distinguishing between the true and the false”. For it settles

¹ That is, Adam Wodeham, a contemporary of Ockham and possibly for a while his personal secretary.

² Adam is paraphrasing the opening lines of Boethius' *De divisione*, which say the same thing about the “science of dividing.” See Jacques-Paul Migne, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus ... series latina*, 221 vols., Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1844–1864, vol. 74, col. 875D. (This series is conventionally referred to as the *Patrologia latina*, and cited simply as the “PL.” I will follow this convention below.)

³ Averroes, *In Arist. Physicam* I, textus 35, ed. Juntina, iv, fol. 11^{vb}. **Note:** I am here and throughout following the references given in the critical edition of the *Summa logicae*, Gedeon Gál and Stephen F. Brown, eds., (“Opera philosophica,” vol. 1; St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1974). The editors used the “earlier” Latin “Juntina” edition of Averroes. There was also a “later” edition published a few years afterwards, which is much more readily available nowadays, mainly because it has been photoreprinted. The folio references are not at all the same. So those who want to look up these references will have to do some homework.

all doubts, [and] dissolves and penetrates [to the bottom of] all the difficulties of Scripture, as the distinguished teacher Augustine bears witness.⁴

(2) For since the actions of a wise [man] toward another [person] are two, “not to lie about what he knows, and to be able to show up a liar”, as is written in the *Sophistic Refutations*,⁵ but this cannot come about without distinguishing the true from the false, which only this [logical] method does, [therefore] it is quite apparent that it is a most useful [method] for one who speculates.

(3) This alone provides the ability to argue about every problem and teaches how to resolve every kind of sophism and to find the middle [term] of a demonstration. It frees the mind too from the chains by which (alas) it was constrained, and restores it to liberty. For just as chains bind the limbs of the body and prevent [them from performing] the tasks for which they were designed, so false and sophistical arguments tie up the mind, as Aristotle teaches.⁶

(4) Likewise, this art uncovers the darkness of errors and directs the acts of human reason like a kind of light. In fact, when compared to light, it is found to be prior. For just as, if physical light were blocked out, human actions would be either halted [altogether] or else random and often to the detriment of the doer, so [are] acts of human reason without skill in this faculty.

(5) For we see many [people] who, neglecting this science [and nevertheless] wishing to devote themselves to learning, wander about all over the place scattering various errors around in [their] teaching, making up opinions full of absurdity with no restraint or order, weaving and putting together scarcely intelligible statements, suffering from something like the dreams of sluggards and the fictions of poets, ignorant of the meaning of their own speech.⁷ They are all the more dangerously in error the more they regard themselves as wise in comparison with others, recklessly hurling falsehoods indiscriminately in place of truths at the ears of their listeners.

(6) And so, moved by a consideration of the abovementioned usefulness that logic serves, the distinguished Peripatetic philosopher Aristotle ingeniously put it together.⁸ [But] because of the obscurity of the Greek language [when] translated into Latin, one could scarcely follow [the text]

⁴ Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* II, 31 n. 48, PL 34, col. 58.

⁵ Aristotle, *Sophistic Refutations* 1, 165^a24–27.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 165^a13–17.

⁷ ‘ignorant ... speech’ = *vim propriae vocis ignorantes*. This could also mean “ignorant of the strength of their own voice,” but that seems less likely here.

⁸ At *Sophistic Refutations* 34, 183^b34–36, Aristotle in effect claims to have invented logic. Before his work, he says, nothing had been written on the topic.

without spending a great deal of time. For this reason, later [people] who were well enough educated in these matters showed those who were preoccupied [with other concerns] the easy way to [logic] by writing various works. Among these [people], I regard the preeminent one, certainly, [to be] the venerable Doctor Friar William, an Englishman by nationality, a “Minor” by orders,⁹ but exalted in the keenness of his ability and the truth of his teaching.¹⁰

(7) Indeed, this exceptional Doctor, often assailed by many [people’s] requests, put together an investigation of the whole of this [logical] method, clearly and transparently and earnestly, starting from terms (as from what is prior), and then proceeding to the rest until he arrived at the end. And so, directing his pen to the students who were repeating their requests for this splendid but succinct volume, and yet wishing to benefit all, he began by saying:

⁹ That is, he belonged to the “Order of Friars Minor,” the Franciscans.

¹⁰ There is a little word-play here. The point is that, although Ockham is a “Minor” in religious orders, he is by no means “minor” in these latter respects.

[William of Ockham's Prefatory Letter]

(1) In your recent letter, brother¹¹ and dearest friend,¹² you were anxious to persuade me to gather together certain rules of the art of logic into one treatise, and to send them to Your Honor.¹³ Since, therefore,
 5 moved by a love for your progress and for the truth, I cannot go against your requests, I shall try [to do] what you ask, and shall undertake a matter that is difficult for me but fruitful, I think, both for you and for me.

(2) For logic is the most useful tool of all the arts. Without it no science can be fully known. It is not worn out by repeated use, after the manner of material tools, but rather admits of continual growth through the diligent exercise of any other science. For just as a mechanic who lacks a complete knowledge of his tool gains a fuller [knowledge] by using it, so
 10 one who is educated in the firm principles of logic, while he painstakingly devotes his labor to the other sciences, acquires at the same time a greater skill at this art. Thus, I regard the common [saying], "The art of logic is a slippery art",¹⁴ as appropriate only for those pay no heed to the study of wisdom.

(3) Therefore, proceeding with the content of the investigation of logic, one must take one's beginning with terms, as from what is prior.
 20 Then there will follow the investigation of propositions, and finally of syllogisms and the other species of argumentation.

[Chapter 1]

(1) All those who treat logic try to show that arguments are put together out of propositions and propositions out of terms. Thus a term is

¹¹ 'brother' = *frater* = Friar. Ockham is writing to a fellow Franciscan. (The Dominicans were also called "friars," but it is unlikely Ockham is referring to a Dominican here.)

¹² One manuscript of the *Summa logicae* describes Ockham's Preface as directed to "his student mentioned above" — that is, to Adam Wodeham, who wrote the preceding Prologue. But another manuscript says that it was written to a certain "Friar William of Ambersbergh [Ambusbergh?] of the Order of [Friars] Minor from the English province." I know nothing about that "Friar William."

¹³ 'Your Honor' = *tuae dilectioni*, a polite form of address. As far as I know, it is not an indication of any official rank or status.

¹⁴ I have never encountered this "common saying." Ockham's editors (p. 6 n. 1) cite Raymond Lull, *De venatione substantiae accidentis et compositi*: "Because logic is a difficult science, slippery and extensive ..." I doubt that that is what Ockham was thinking of, but I can suggest nothing better. The exact sense of the saying is not clear.

nothing else but a proximate part of a proposition. For Aristotle, when defining a term in *Prior Analytics* I,¹⁵ says “I call a term [that] into which a proposition¹⁶ is resolved, such as a predicate and that of which it is predicated,¹⁷ whether being or non-being is added or taken away.”¹⁸

5 (2) But although every term is part of a proposition, or can be, nevertheless not all terms are of the same kind. So in order to have a complete knowledge of terms, we must first get familiar with certain divisions among terms.

10 (3) Now you have to know that just as, according to Boethius on *De interpretatione* I,¹⁹ there are three kinds of language, namely written, spoken and conceived, [the last] having being only in the intellect, so [too] there are three kinds of term, namely written, spoken and conceived.

15 (4) A written term is a part of a proposition written down on some physical object, which [proposition] is seen by the bodily eye, or can be [so] seen.

 (5) A spoken term is a part of a proposition spoken by the mouth and apt to be heard by the bodily ear.

20 (6) A conceived term is an intention or passion of the soul naturally signifying or consignifying something [and] apt to be a part of a mental proposition and to supposit for the same thing [that it signifies]. Thus, these conceived terms and the propositions put together out of them are the “mental words” that Blessed Augustine, in *De trinitate* XV,²⁰ says belong to no language because they abide only in the mind and cannot be uttered outwardly, although utterances are pronounced outwardly as signs subordinated to them.

25 (7) Now I say that utterances are signs subordinated to concepts or intentions of the soul, not because, taking the word ‘signs’ in a proper sense, these utterances always signify those concepts of the soul primarily

¹⁵Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* I, 1, 24^b16–18.

¹⁶Aristotle has ‘premise’ (= *protasis*) here. The Latin is ‘*propositio*’, which sometimes means “premise” but came also — as here — to mean “proposition” more generally.

¹⁷That is, the subject.

¹⁸The last clause is simply a long-winded way of saying “whether it is affirmative or negative.”

¹⁹Boethius, *In librum De interpretatione*, ed. 2^a, I, PL 54, col. 407B. In the Middle Ages, the *De interpretatione* was divided into two books. Boethius wrote two commentaries on the *De interpretatione*. It is the second one that Ockham is citing here.

²⁰Augustine, *De trinitate* xv, 10, 19; 12, 22; 27, 50 (PL 42, cols. 1071, 1075, 1097).

and properly, but rather because utterances are imposed²¹ to signify the same things that are signified by the concepts of the mind, so that the concept primarily signifies something naturally, and the utterance secondarily signifies the same thing, to such an extent that once an utterance is instituted²² to signify something signified by a concept in the mind, if that concept were to change its significate, the utterance itself would by that fact, without any new institution, change its significate.

(8) The Philosopher says as much when he says that utterances are “the marks of the passions that are in the soul”.²³ Boethius too means the same thing when he says that utterances “signify” concepts.²⁴ And, in general, all authors, when they say that all utterances “signify” passions [of the soul] or are the “marks” of those [passions], mean nothing else but that the utterances are signs secondarily signifying what are primarily conveyed by passions of the soul (although some utterances do primarily convey passions of the soul or concepts that other intentions in the soul nevertheless convey secondarily, as will be shown below²⁵).

(9) What was [just] said about utterances with respect to passions or intentions or concepts is to be maintained in the same way, analogously, for present purposes, for [terms] that are in writing with respect to utterances.

(10) Now certain differences are found among these [kinds of] terms. One is that a concept or passion of the soul signifies naturally whatever it signifies. But a spoken or written term signifies nothing except according to arbitrary institution. From this there follows another difference, namely that a spoken or written term can change its significate at [the user’s] will, but a conceived term does not change its significate for anyone’s will.

(11) But because of impudent quibblers, you have to know that ‘sign’ is taken in two senses. In one sense, [it is taken] for everything that, when apprehended, makes something else come into cognition, although it does not make the mind come to a first cognition of it, as is shown elsewhere,²⁶ but to an actual [cognition] after a habitual [one] of it. In this sense, an utterance does naturally signify, just as any effect naturally signi-

²¹ “Imposition” is the act of assigning spoken (and written) expressions to the mental correlates they express. See also n. 22 below.

²² ‘Institution’ in this sense is just another term for imposition. See n. 21 above.

²³ Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 1, 16^a3–4.

²⁴ Boethius, *op. cit.* PL 64, col. 407C.

²⁵ See Ch. 11, below.

²⁶ William of Ockham, *Scriptum in I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 9, (“Opera theologica,” II; St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1970), pp. 544ff.

fies at least its cause, and just as the barrel-hoop signifies wine in the tavern.²⁷ But I am not talking here about ‘sign’ that generally.

(12) In another sense, ‘sign’ is taken for that which makes something come into cognition and is apt to supposit for it, or [for what is apt] to be added to such a thing in a proposition — for instance, syncategoremata and verbs and the parts of speech that do not have a definite signification — or that is apt to be put together out of such things, like an expression. Taking the word ‘sign’ in this sense, an utterance is not a natural sign of anything [at all].

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[Chapter 2]

(1) You have to know that the name ‘term’ is taken in three senses. In one sense, everything is called a term that can be the copula or an extreme of a categorical proposition (that is, its subject or predicate), or also a determination of an extreme or of the verb [in such a proposition]. In this sense, even a proposition can be a term, just as it can be a part of a proposition. For “‘A man is an animal’ is a true proposition’,²⁸ is true. In it, the whole proposition ‘A man is an animal’ is the subject and ‘true proposition’ is the predicate.

(2) In another sense, the name ‘term’ is taken insofar as it is contrasted with ‘expression’.²⁹ In this sense, every non-complex [word] is called a term. I was talking about ‘term’ in this sense in the preceding chapter.

(3) In a third sense, ‘term’ is taken precisely and more strictly for that which, taken significatively, can be the subject or predicate of a proposition. In this sense no verb, conjunction, adverb, preposition or interjection is a term. Many names³⁰ also are not terms [in this sense], such as

²⁷ This was a common symbol of wine for sale, much as a striped barber’s pole is a symbol for a barber shop today. (There’s a story worth telling about that, but I won’t go into it here.)

²⁸ I have punctuated the sentence according to modern philosophical quotation-conventions. It should be noted that mediaeval Latin had no quotation marks, so that the claim that the *proposition* ‘A man is an animal’, and not a *name* of that proposition, is the subject of the sentence is easier to see in the Latin. (It is also easier to see in English is you think in terms of spoken rather than written language.) Please note that this is *not* a use/mention confusion on Ockham’s part. The theory of “material supposition,” to be discussed in Ch. 64, below, makes all the necessary distinctions.

²⁹ ‘expression’ = *oratio*. The term is a piece of mediaeval logical vocabulary meaning any word-string.

³⁰ “Names” in mediaeval grammatical theory included what we would call adjectives as well as nouns. Sometimes pronouns were also included.

syncategorematic names.³¹ For even though such [words] can be the extremes of propositions if they are taken materially or simply,³² nevertheless when they are taken significatively they cannot be the extremes of propositions. Thus the expression “‘Reads’ is a verb’ is well-formed and true if the verb ‘reads’ is taken materially. But if it were taken significatively it would be unintelligible. It is the same for such cases as “‘Every’ is a name’, “‘Once’ is an adverb’, “‘If’ is a conjunction’, “‘From’ is a preposition’. The Philosopher takes ‘term’ in this sense when he defines a term in *Prior Analytics* I.³³

10 (4) Now not only can one non-complex [word] be a term, taking ‘term’ in this [third] sense. A composite of two non-complex [words] — such as the composite of an adjective and a substantive, and even the composite of a participle and an adverb, or a preposition with its object — can also be a term, just as it can be the subject or predicate of a proposition. For
15 in the proposition ‘Every white man is a man’, neither ‘man’ nor ‘white’ is the subject, but rather the whole [expression] ‘white man’. Likewise ‘Running quickly is a man.’³⁴ Here neither ‘running’ nor ‘quickly’ is the subject, but rather the whole [expression] ‘running quickly’.

20 (5) You have to know that not only can a name taken in the nominative be a term, but an oblique [form] can also be a term. For it can be the subject of a proposition, and a predicate too. Yet an oblique [form] cannot be a subject with respect to just any verb. For ‘A man’s sees the ass’ is not well-formed, although ‘A man’s is the ass’³⁵ is well-formed. But how and with respect to which verbs an oblique [form] can be the subject, and with
25 respect to which ones not — that belongs to the grammarian, whose job is to consider the constructions of words.

[Chapter 3]

(1) Now that we have seen the equivocation in the name ‘term’, we must follow up with the division of the non-complex term. Thus, not only is

³¹ Ockham is probably thinking of quantifiers like ‘every’.

³² That is, in material of simple supposition. See the discussion in Chs. 63–64, below.

³³ Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* I, 1, 24^a16–18.

³⁴ ‘Running quickly is a man’ = *Currens velociter est homo*. The sense is just ‘A man is running quickly’, but Ockham wants to turn it around to get the composite of participle and adverb in subject-position.

³⁵ ‘A man’s is the ass’ = *Hominis est asinus*. The sense is that the ass belongs to a man. The previous sentence, ‘A man’s sees the ass’ = *Hominis videt asinum*, which makes no sense at all, either in Latin or in English.

the non-complex term divided into the spoken, written and conceived term. Each branch is also subdivided by similar divisions.³⁶ For, just as some utterances are names, some are verbs, some belong to the other parts of speech (for some are pronouns, some participles, some adverbs, some conjunctions, some prepositions), and the case is similar for written [terms], so
 5 [too] some intentions of the soul are names, some [are] verbs, [and] some belong to the other parts of speech (for some are pronouns, some adverbs, some conjunctions, some prepositions).

(2) But a doubt can arise whether there are certain intentions, distinct from [mental] verbs, corresponding in the mind to spoken and written participles. [The doubt arises] insofar as there appears [to be] no great need to maintain such a plurality of mental terms. For a verb and the verb's participle taken together with the verb 'is' always seem to be equivalent in signifying. For this reason, just as we do not find the multiplication of synonymous names because of the needs of signification, but rather for the decoration of speech or [some] other similar accidental cause (for whatever is signified by [several] synonymous names can be expressed well enough by one of them), and therefore a multitude of concepts does not correspond to such a plurality of synonyms, so [too] it seems that we do not find the
 15 distinction between spoken verbs and participles because of the needs of expression. For this reason, it seems that there need not be distinct concepts in the mind corresponding to spoken participles.³⁷ A similar doubt could arise about pronouns.³⁸

(3) Now there is a difference between mental and spoken names. For
 25 although all the grammatical accidents³⁹ that belong to mental names also belong to spoken names, it does not go the other way around. Rather, some [grammatical accidents] are common to the latter as well as to the former, but others are proper to spoken and written names. (For whatever belongs to spoken [names] also [belongs] written ones, and conversely.)

(4) The accidents common to spoken and mental names are case and
 30 number. For, just as the spoken propositions 'A man is an animal' [and] 'A

³⁶ That is, they are similar to one another, not to the division into spoken, written and conceived.

³⁷ Of course, the argument might just as well go the other way. Why have mental verbs if participles could do just as well?

³⁸ Ockham has in mind the use of pronouns as stand-ins for nouns. Why have the pronouns when the nouns would do just as well? Presumably this doubt does *not* apply to demonstrative pronouns ('*That* is Socrates'), or to certain uses of *relative* pronouns. For example, in 'Some man is knocking at the door, and he is shouting very loudly', there seems to be no plausible way to do without the relative pronoun.

³⁹ The notion of "grammatical accidents" will be made clear in the following lines.

man is not animals' have distinct predicates, one of which is singular and the other plural, so the [two] mental propositions — by one of which the mind, before [making] any utterance, says that a man is an animal, and by the other it says that a man is not animals — have distinct predicates [too],
 5 one of which can be said to be in the singular number, and the other in the plural. Similarly, just as the spoken propositions 'A man is a man' and 'A man is not a man's' have distinct predicates that vary in case, so analogously [the same thing] must be said for the corresponding propositions in the mind.

10 (5) Now the accidents proper to spoken and written names are gender and declension.⁴⁰ For such accidents do not belong to names on account of the needs of signification. Thus also it sometimes happens that two names are synonyms, and yet are of different genders and sometimes in different declensions. For this reason, one need not attribute such a multiplicity [of genders and declensions] to natural signs.⁴¹ Thus, any plurality and variety of such accidents as can belong to synonymous names can be
 15 rightly dispensed with in mental [names].

(6) Now as for comparison,⁴² a difficulty can arise whether it belongs only to names instituted by convention.⁴³ But I pass over that, because it is of no great use. A similar difficulty could arise over quality,⁴⁴
 20 which I shall treat exhaustively elsewhere.⁴⁵

(7) From what has been said above, the careful [reader] can plainly infer that, although sometimes one proposition can be verified and another one falsified by a mere variation of the terms' accidents (namely, case,

⁴⁰ "Declension" does not here mean "case." We saw above that case is common to spoken, written and mental names. Here "declension" means, for example, belonging to the third declension rather than second. Since English lacks declensions, the point cannot be illustrated very well in translation.

⁴¹ That is, to concepts.

⁴² That is, comparative and superlative degrees. In Latin as in English, comparatives and superlatives are sometimes constructed by changing the form of the word — thus, 'long/longer/longest', 'good/better/best' — and sometimes by adding the distinct words 'more' or 'most' to the positive degree. Ockham's point here is that if mental language contains analogues for 'more' and 'most', then it doesn't need to have separate comparative and superlative forms for each adjective and adverb.

⁴³ That is, spoken and written names.

⁴⁴ I am not sure exactly what Ockham has in mind here. The term 'quality' sometimes refers to the mood of a verb, but that is treated separately below. Ockham's editors (p. 13 n. 3) suggest the distinction between proper names and "appellative" or common names. But I hardly think Ockham would want to do without that distinction in mental language, or that there could be much doubt about it.

⁴⁵ I know of no passage where Ockham does this.

number and comparison), but on account of the thing signified,⁴⁶ nevertheless this never happens with gender and declension. For, even though you often have to consider gender in order to have well-formedness of an expression (for example, ‘*Homo est albus*’ is well-formed, and ‘*Homo est alba*’ is not well-formed’,⁴⁷ and this comes about from a difference of gender alone), nevertheless, assuming well-formedness, it does not matter which gender or which declension the subject or predicate belongs to. But one certainly does have to consider which number or case the subject or predicate is in, in order to know whether the proposition is true or false. For ‘A man is an animal’ is true, and ‘A man is animals’ is false, and so on for other cases.

(8) Just as there are certain [grammatical] accidents proper to spoken and written names, and certain [others] common to [spoken and written names] and to mental names, one must say a similar thing about the accidents of verbs. The common ones are mood, number, tense, voice and person. This is clear with mood. For one mental expression corresponds to the spoken expression ‘Socrates reads’ and another one to ‘Would that Socrates read’. It is [also] clear with voice. For one mental expression corresponds to the spoken expression ‘Socrates loved’ and another one to ‘Socrates is loved’. Yet there are only three voices in the mind.⁴⁸ For we do not find spoken deponents⁴⁹ and common [verbs]⁵⁰ on account of the needs of signification, since common verbs are equivalent to active ones and passive ones, and deponents [are equivalent] to middle ones and active ones.

⁴⁶ ‘on account of the thing signified’. The apparatus in the edition (p. 13) does not show any textual funny business at this point. Nevertheless, I would be much happier if the phrase did not exist. The only sense I can make of it is that it is not the variation of grammatical accidents all by themselves that affects the truth value, but rather the *semantic consequences* of that variation. But, I must admit, if that is all Ockham meant here, he certainly picked an awkward way to say it.

⁴⁷ I’m sorry, but the point cannot be made in English very well. The sentences (or at least the first one, which is well-formed) means ‘A man is white’. ‘Homo’ is a masculine noun, and so requires the masculine form of the adjective ‘albus’, not the feminine form ‘alba’. Note that, although ‘homo’ is masculine, it does *not* refer only, or even primarily, to the male of the species. Latin has a separate word ‘vir’ for the male.

⁴⁸ In addition to the usual active and passive voice, Ockham is perhaps thinking of the Greek “middle” voice, which Latin does not have. (Nevertheless, how much Ockham knew about Greek is unclear.) The Greek middle voice is frequently (but by no means always) reflexive in meaning.

⁴⁹ A deponent verb is a verb that is passive in form but active or reflexive (= middle, see n. 48 above) in meaning. Deponent verbs are not at all uncommon in Latin.

⁵⁰ A common verb, as explained later in the sentence, is a verb that has the same grammatical forms for both the active and passive senses. I have no idea which verbs these would be.

(9) It is also clear with number. For distinct mental expressions correspond to ‘He reads’ [and] ‘They read’. The same thing is clear with tense. For distinct mental expressions correspond to ‘You read’ [and] ‘You have read’. The same thing is clear with person. For example, different [mental expressions] correspond to ‘He reads’ [and] ‘I read’.

(10) That we have to posit such mental names, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions can be shown from the fact that to every spoken expression there corresponds a mental [expression] in the mind. Thus, just as the parts of the spoken proposition that are imposed⁵¹ because of the needs of signification are distinct, so [too] the corresponding parts of the mental proposition are distinct. For this reason, just as spoken names, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions are necessary for different spoken propositions and expressions, so that it is impossible to express everything by means of names and verbs alone that can be expressed by means of them together with the other parts of speech, so too similar distinct parts are necessary for mental propositions.

(11) The accidents proper to instituted⁵² verbs are conjugation⁵³ and inflection.⁵⁴ Yet sometimes verbs in different conjugations can be synonymous, and similarly verbs of different inflections.

(12) From what has been said [above], the careful [reader] will easily recognize what he has to say, analogously, about the other parts of speech and their accidents.

(13) No one should be surprised that I say that some names and verbs are mental. Let him first read Boethius’s [Commentary] on the *De interpretatione*,⁵⁵ and he will find it there. Thus, when Aristotle defines the name as well as the verb in terms of an utterance,⁵⁶ he is taking ‘name’ and ‘verb’ more strictly there, namely, for the *spoken* name and verb.

⁵¹See n. 21, above.

⁵²See n. 22 above.

⁵³That is, belonging to different conjugations. See n. 40 above.

⁵⁴‘inflection’ = *figura*. I am not sure what the difference is between conjugation and inflection here. The distinctions among the various persons, numbers, tenses, etc., of the verb are all preserved in mental language, as Ockham has just said.

⁵⁵Boethius, *In librum De interpretatione*, ed. 2^a, I, PL 64, cols. 405–414.

⁵⁶Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 2, 16^a19–21: “A name is an utterance significative by convention, no part of which is separately significative.” Also, *ibid.* 3, 16^b6–7: “Now a verb is what signifies time, [no] part of which signifies anything externally.” I translate from the Boethian Latin version, L. Minio-Paluello, ed., *Aristoteles Latinus* II.1–2, (Bruges–Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965).

[Chapter 4]

(1) The term, both the spoken and the mental one, is divided in still another way. For some terms are categorematic, others are syncategorematic. Categorematic terms have a definite and fixed signification. For instance, the name ‘man’ signifies all men, and the name ‘animal’ signifies all animals, and the name ‘whiteness’ signifies all whitenesses.

(2) But syncategorematic terms, such as ‘every’, ‘none’, ‘some’, ‘whole’, ‘besides’, ‘only’, ‘insofar’ and the like, do not have a definite and fixed signification. Neither do they signify any things distinct from the things signified by categoremata. Indeed just as, in Arabic notation,⁵⁷ zero put by itself signifies nothing, but when added to another digit makes the latter signify,⁵⁸ so [too] a syncategorema does not signify anything, properly speaking, but rather when added to another [term] makes it signify something, or makes it supposit in a determined way⁵⁹ for some thing or things, or exercises some other function with respect to the categorema.

(3) Thus, the syncategorema ‘every’ does not have any fixed significate. But when added to ‘man’, it makes the latter stand or supposit actually, that is, confusedly and distributively,⁶⁰ for all men. When added to ‘stone’, however, it makes the latter stand for all stones. And when added to ‘whiteness’, it makes the latter stand for all whitenesses. And just as for the syncategorema ‘every’, so we have to hold the same thing analogously for the others, although distinct jobs belong to distinct syncategoremata, as will be shown for certain [syncategoremata] below.⁶¹

(4) If someone quibbles that the word ‘every’ is significative, [and] therefore signifies something, it has to be said that it is not called “significative” because it determinately signifies something, but rather because it makes [something] else signify or supposit or stand for something, as was explained. And just as the name ‘every’ determinately and fixedly

⁵⁷ ‘Arabic notation’ = *algorismo*. That is, so called “Arabic numerals.”

⁵⁸ Better, “*affects* the latter’s signification.” The other digit (unless it too is a zero) has a signification of its own. The point also applies to categoremata and syncategoremata. The latter do not *make* the former signify, as though categoremata did not already have a signification of their own. Syncategoremata only *affect* the signification of categoremata.

⁵⁹ This just means “in a definite way.” It is not a reference to “determinate” supposition as defined in Ch. 70, below.

⁶⁰ See Ch. 70, below.

⁶¹ The editors refer to *Summa logicae* II, 4. But in fact much of the rest of Part II also in effect treats this topic.

signifies nothing [whatever], according to Boethius' manner of speaking,⁶² so [too] for all syncategoremata and for conjunctions and prepositions generally.

- 5 (5) The situation is different, however, for certain adverbs. For some of them do determinately signify things that categorematic names signify, although they convey [those things] by another mode of signifying.

[Chapter 5]

10 (1) But, setting aside the other parts of speech, we must talk about names. First, we have to discuss the division of the name into concrete and abstract.

15 (2) You must observe that a concrete [name] and its [corresponding] abstract [form] are names that have a similar beginning vocally, but do not have similar endings. For example, it is plain that 'just' and 'justice', 'strong' and 'strength', 'animal' and 'animality' begin with a similar letter or syllable, but do not end alike. The abstract [form] always, or [at least] frequently, has more syllables than [does] the concrete [form], as is apparent in the above examples. Also, in many cases the concrete [form] is an adjective and the abstract [form] a substantive.

20 (3) Now there are many kinds of concrete and abstract [names]. Sometimes the concrete [form] signifies some thing (or connotes it or conveys [it] or gives [one] to understand it), and even supposits for it, which the abstract [form] in no way signifies or consequently supposits for in any way. 'Just' and 'justice', 'white' and 'whiteness', and the like are related in this way. For 'just' truly⁶³ supposits for a man when someone says 'The just⁶⁴ is virtuous'. It cannot supposit for justice, because justice, even though it is a virtue, is nevertheless not virtuous. But the name 'justice' supposits for the quality and not for a man. It is for this reason that it is impossible to predicate such a concrete [term] of the [corresponding] abstract [term]. For such a concrete [term] and the [corresponding] abstract [term] always supposit for distinct things.

30 (4) For present purposes, there are three kinds of such names, three inferior species as it were.⁶⁵ The first [kind] occurs when (a) the abstract

⁶² Boethius, *In librum De interpretatione*, ed. 2^a, IV, PL 64, cols. 552f.

⁶³ 'Truly' here does not imply that the proposition is true, but that, *in* that proposition, the term really does supposit for a man.

⁶⁴ That is, someone who is just.

⁶⁵ The species are inferior to the first main subdivision of concrete and abstract names, described in para. 3. The second, third and fourth main subdivisions are treated in Chs. 6–7, 8 and 9, respectively.

supposits for an accident or [for] any form whatever that really inheres in a subject, and the concrete supposits for the subject of the same accident or form, or (b) conversely. The first way (a) holds for ‘whiteness/white’, ‘heat/hot’, ‘knowing/knowledge’ (speaking about creatures⁶⁶), and so on for
 5 other cases. In all such cases, the abstract supposits for an accident inhering in a subject, and the concrete supposits for the subject of the same accident. But (b) it happens the other way around in ‘fire/fiery’. For ‘fire’ supposits for the subject, and ‘fiery’, which is the concrete [form, supposits] for its
 10 accident. For we say that heat is fiery, and not [that it is] fire. Similarly, we say that knowledge is human and not [that knowledge is] a man.

(5) The second [kind] of such names occurs when the concrete supposits for a part and the abstract [supposits] for the whole, or conversely. For example, in ‘soul/besouled’⁶⁷. For man is besouled and not a soul. So ‘besouled’ supposits for a man, and ‘soul’ [supposits] for a part of him. But
 15 in ‘A soul is human’ and ‘A soul is not a man’, ‘man’, which is the abstract,⁶⁸ supposits for the whole, and ‘human’ for the soul, which is a part.

(6) Now notice that sometimes the same concrete [name] is taken equivocally. For sometimes it belongs to the first as well as [to] the second kind. For example, the name ‘besouled’ can supposit for a whole, because
 20 we say that a man is besouled.⁶⁹ It can also supposit for a subject that receives a soul, because we say that a body, which is the other part of the [human] composite, is besouled.⁷⁰ And just as with this name, so with many other [names] that can be taken equivocally [in this way].

(7) The third kind of such [concrete and abstract] names arises when
 25 the concrete and the abstract supposit for different things, neither of which is the subject or a part of the other. This can happen in many ways. For such things are sometimes related as cause and effect (for example, we say that this work is human, and not [that it is] a man), sometimes as sign and signified (for example, we say that the [specific] difference of man is an essential difference,⁷¹ not because it is an essence but because it is a sign of
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⁶⁶ In the case of God, the “knowing” one (= the knower) and the knowledge are identical, since God is simple and does not consist of metaphysically distinct ingredients.

⁶⁷ ‘besouled’ = *animatum* = animate.

⁶⁸ Note that ‘man’ may be an abstract form with respect to ‘human’, but it is a concrete form with respect to ‘humanity’ (see Ch. 6, below). (‘Humanity’ is presumably also an abstract form with respect to the concrete ‘human’.) So the same term may be both abstract and concrete, but with respect to different other terms. See the end of para. 9 below.

⁶⁹ In this case, it belongs to the first kind, as in para. 4.

⁷⁰ In this case, it belongs to the second kind, as in para. 5.

⁷¹ This is a reference to the classical notion of species as being defined by genus + difference. Thus, man = animal + rational.

some part of the essence⁷²), sometimes as location and located (for example, we say that he is English, and not [that he is] England). This can also happen in many other way, which I leave it to clever people to discuss.

5 (8) Just as, in the first two cases, some concrete [term] supposits for a part or for a form and the abstract [form supposits] for the whole or the subject, and sometimes it happens the other way around, so [too] in the present case. For sometimes the concrete [form] supposits for the effect or the significate and the abstract [form] for the cause or the sign, and sometimes the other way around. So [too] for the other [subdivisions] under this mode.

10 (9) Just as it can happen that the same name is a concrete [form] in [each of] the first two modes, but then it is taken equivocally,⁷³ so it can happen that the same concrete [term] is concrete in the first mode and the third. Indeed, it can be concrete in all three modes. Therefore, these three modes inferior to the first principal mode⁷⁴ are not distinguished in such a way that the one of them is universally denied of the other, but in such a way that each of them is separated from the other by particular cases. This suffices for the distinction among such modes. Similarly, there is nothing wrong with the same name's being [both] concrete and abstract, with respect to different things.

20 (10) You should know that sometimes we have the equivalent of a concrete [term], for which there is nevertheless no corresponding abstract [form] because of the poverty of names. This is the case for the name 'zealous', when it is taken for the virtuous.⁷⁵

[Chapter 6]

25 (1) In addition to the above mode of concrete and abstract names, there are many others. One of these [other modes] is that the concrete name and the [corresponding] abstract are sometimes synonymous. But, in order not to proceed in an ambiguous way, you have to know that the name 'synonym' is taken in two senses: *strictly* and *broadly*. Those synonyms are strictly so called which all users intend to use for the same [thing]. I am not talking about synonyms in this sense here. Those synonyms are broadly so

⁷²Ockham is here thinking of the *term* 'rational', which signifies part of the essence.

⁷³See para. 6.

⁷⁴The first principal mode is described in para. 3. See n. 65 above.

⁷⁵Just take Ockham's word for it that you can do this in Latin. The word is '*studiosus*'. The point is that '*studiosus*' can mean "virtuous," but the abstract form '*studium*' cannot mean "virtue." Neither of these is included among the range of meanings given by my dictionaries, but Ockham knew the Latin of his day better than I do.

called which simply signify the same [thing] in all ways, so that nothing is signified in any way by the one [synonym] unless it is signified in the same way by the other, even though not all users believe them to signify the same [thing] but rather, under a deception, they judge something to be signified by the one that is not signified by the other. For example, if someone should judge that the name ‘God’ conveyed a whole and ‘deity’ a part of it.⁷⁶ I intend to use the name ‘synonym’ in this second sense in this chapter and in many others.

(2) I say that a concrete [name] and the [corresponding] abstract [name] are sometimes synonyms. For example, according to the Philosopher’s view,⁷⁷ ‘God’ and ‘deity’, ‘man’ and ‘humanity’, ‘animal’ and ‘animality’, ‘horse’ and ‘horsehood’. It is for this reason that we have many names like these concrete [terms], but not [many] like the abstract [terms]. For although the authoritative [writers] often use the name ‘humanity’ and the name ‘animality’, and sometimes the name ‘horsehood’ (which correspond as abstracts to the names ‘man’, ‘animal’, ‘horse’ [respectively]), nevertheless names like ‘cowship’, ‘asininity’, ‘goathood’, ‘whitenesshood’, ‘blacknesshood’, ‘colorship’, ‘sweetnesshood’ are rarely or never found — even though we frequently use the names ‘cow’, ‘ass’, ‘goat’, ‘whiteness’, ‘blackness’, ‘sweetness’, ‘color’.

(3) Indeed, just as among the ancient philosophers the names ‘heat/hotness’, ‘cold’⁷⁸/coldness’ are synonyms, so [too] ‘horse/horsehood’, ‘man/humanity’ were synonyms for them. They did not bother in such cases to distinguish between concrete and abstract names with respect to their signification, even though the one [of the terms] had more syllables and the [syntactical] form of abstract [names] in the first of the above senses,⁷⁹ and the other one did not but instead [had] more the [syntactical] form of concrete [names] in the first of the above senses.⁸⁰ They employed a diversity of such names only for the sake of decorating their speech or for some other accidental reason, just as [they employed] synonyms [only for some such accidental reason].

⁷⁶ That is, if someone were to think that ‘divinity’ did not signify God, but only the essence or nature of God. For Ockham, this is an erroneous distinction, and the terms ‘God’ and ‘divinity’ signify the same thing in every way.

⁷⁷ But see Ch. 7.

⁷⁸ ‘cold’ = *frigus*, i. e., the noun rather than the adjective.

⁷⁹ Presumably this refers to the kind of concretes and abstracts discussed in Ch. 5, para. 3, above.

⁸⁰ Ditto.

(4) According to the Philosopher's and the Commentator's⁸¹ view, under this mode of concrete and abstract names there are included all names of substances and the abstract [forms that are] constructed from them and supposit neither for an accident nor for a part nor for the whole of what is conveyed by the name [that is] concrete in form nor for anything disparate from [that whole]. According to those [people], 'animality', 'horsehood', and such are like this. For 'animality' does not supposit for any accident of an animal, or for a part [of an animal], or for any whole such that part of it is an animal, or for any extrinsic thing totally distinct from an animal.

(5) All abstract names grouped together in the category of quantity, and all names that are the proper attributes⁸² of what are contained in the category of quantity, are also contained under [this] same mode. This [is true] according to the view of those who maintain that quantity is not a thing other than substance and quality,⁸³ but not according to the view of those who maintain that quantity is an absolute thing really distinct from substance and from quality. Thus, according to the former view, 'quantum' and 'quantity' are synonymous, and likewise 'long' and 'length', 'broad' and 'breadth', 'deep' and 'depth', 'plural' and 'plurality', and so on.

(6) All concrete and abstract names that pertain to shape are reduced to [this] same mode, according to the view of those who maintain that shape is not a thing other than quantity (that is, than substance and quality),⁸⁴ and so [too] for the other species of quantity. Thus, they have to maintain that 'shape' and 'shaped', 'straight' and 'straightness', 'curved' and 'curvedness', 'hollow' and 'hollowness', 'snub' and 'snubness', 'angular' and 'angle', 'convex' and 'convexity', and the like, are synonymous names. All these [claims] are to be understood [as holding only] if none of these names equivalently⁸⁵ includes some word that the other one [of its pair] does not include.

(7) Not only concrete and abstract names like these are synonyms, as those who hold such a view have to say, but also, according to the view of those who maintain that a relation is not another thing really distinct from absolute things,⁸⁶ concrete and abstract relative [terms] are synonymous names. For example, 'father' and 'fatherhood', 'like' and 'likeness', 'cause' and 'causality', 'potency' and 'potentiality', 'risible' and 'risibility',

⁸¹ The "Commentator" on Aristotle is Averroes.

⁸² 'proper attributes' = *propriae passiones*.

⁸³ Ockham himself maintains this.

⁸⁴ Again, this is Ockham's own view.

⁸⁵ That is, implicitly.

⁸⁶ Again, this is Ockham's own view.

‘capable’ and ‘capacity’, ‘double’ and ‘doubleness’, ‘calective’ and ‘calectivity’, and so on.

5 (8) Nevertheless, those who hold this view of relation could keep such concrete and abstract [terms] from being synonymous names by maintaining that the abstract [form] supposit for two [things] at once. For example, that ‘similitude’ supposit for two similar things. In that sense, ‘A similar is a similitude’ would be false, and yet ‘Similar is a similitude’ would be true.

10 (9) In [another] way too, all those who hold the above views⁸⁷ could keep it so that no such concrete and abstract names are synonymous. This will be discussed below.⁸⁸ In that case, they could say that in such instances it is always false to predicate the concrete [form] of the abstract [form]. But those who hold the above views and refuse⁸⁹ to adopt the manner of speaking below,⁹⁰ ought in all such cases — if they are speaking consistently —
15 to grant the concrete’s being predicated of the abstract, and conversely.

(10) Thus, those who hold the first view⁹¹ have to grant the following predications: ‘A man is a humanity’, ‘An animal is an animality’. Consequently, they have to grant: ‘A humanity runs’, ‘An animality is white’, and so on. [Those who] hold the second [view]⁹² also have to grant such
20 propositions as ‘A substance is a quality’, ‘A substance is a quantity’, ‘A substance is a length’, ‘A quality is a breadth’. Consequently, ‘A quantity runs’, ‘A length argues’, ‘A breadth speaks’, and so on, [must likewise be granted]. [Those who] hold the third [view]⁹³ have to grant ‘A relation is a substance’, ‘A quality is a relation’, ‘A man is a relation’, ‘A likeness runs’,
25 ‘A fatherhood is a filiation’, ‘A likeness is a doubleness’, and so on.

(11) Now it will be shown later⁹⁴ how those [people] who grant the bases of the former views could deny such propositions. In that way too, they could deny propositions like ‘Matter is a privation’, ‘Air is a shadow’, ‘A man is a blindness’, ‘A soul is original sin’, ‘A soul is an ignorance’, ‘A
30 man is a negation’, ‘The body of Christ is a death’ — despite the fact that

⁸⁷In para. 4–8.

⁸⁸See Ch. 8, below.

⁸⁹Conjecturing ‘*volunt*’ for the edition’s ‘*volunt*’ (line 83).

⁹⁰That is, in Ch. 8.

⁹¹In para. 4, above.

⁹²In para. 5–6, above.

⁹³In para. 7–8, above.

⁹⁴See Ch. 8, below.

some people⁹⁵ would grant that ‘privation’, ‘shadow’, ‘blindness’ and the like do not convey anything on the part of reality distinct in any way from [their] subject — that is, from a man, matter, and the like.

[Chapter 7]

5 [Ch. 7 argues that not *all* concrete substance terms and their abstract correlates are synonymous according to the truth of theology. The difference concerns certain propositions pertaining to the doctrine of the Incarnation. I have not translated this chapter here.]

10 [Chapter 8]

(1) Now that we have treated certain matters that seemed irrelevant to our principal concern,⁹⁶ but necessary nevertheless, we shall return to our plan and treat of another mode of concrete and abstract names. Some of what was said above⁹⁷ can be made clear on the basis of this [mode].

15 (2) For there are certain abstract names, or there can be at the pleasure of those who institute [words],⁹⁸ that equivalently include some syncategoremata or some adverbial or other determinations, in such a way the abstract [form] is equivalent in signifying to the concrete [form], or to another term taken with some syncategorema or some other word or words.
20 For users can, if they want, use one word in place of several. For example, in place of the whole ‘every man’, I could use the word ‘*a*’, and in place of the whole ‘only man’, I could use the consonant ‘*b*’, and so on. If this were done, it would be possible that a concrete [term] and the [corresponding] abstract [term] would not supposit for distinct things or signify distinct
25 things, and yet it would be false to predicate the one of the other, and something would be predicated of the one and not of the other. For if the abstract [term] ‘humanity’ were equivalent in signifying to the whole ‘man insofar as he is a man’ or ‘man inasmuch as he is a man’, [then] ‘A man runs’ would be true, and ‘A humanity runs’ [would be] false, just as ‘A man

⁹⁵ Including Ockham himself. See his *Summa Physicorum*, Pars I, c. 10: “Yet first it must be shown that a privation is not anything imaginable outside the soul [and] distinct from matter and form and the composite [of the two].” (Ed. Rome, 1637, 12.)

⁹⁶ The reference is to Ch. 7, which digressed on certain theological matters.

⁹⁷ See Ch. 6, para. 6, and the end of Ch. 6, para. 9, above.

⁹⁸ The so called “impositor” imposes or institutes words arbitrarily to perform certain linguistic tasks.



insofar as he is a man runs' is false. Likewise, if the name 'humanity' were equivalent to the whole 'man necessarily', so that the word 'humanity' were put in place of the whole 'man necessarily', [then] 'A humanity is a man' would be false, just as 'A man necessarily is a man' is false. For no man is necessarily a man, but only contingently.⁹⁹ In the same way, 'A humanity is white' is false, just as 'A man necessarily is white' is false.

(3) In this way, whenever one wishes, he can keep it so that a concrete [term] and [its corresponding] abstract [term] do not signify distinct things or supposit for distinct things, and nevertheless that it is simply false to predicate the one of the other, and that something is predicated of the one that is not predicated of the other. So some [people]¹⁰⁰ could say that quantity is not a thing distinct from substance and quality, and yet each of 'A substance is a quantity' [and] 'A quality is a quantity' is false. For if the name 'quantity' were equivalent in signifying to the whole [expression] 'necessarily a quantum as long as it remains in the natural world', or something like that, [then] 'A substance is a quantity' would be false, even when maintaining the [above] opinion, just as 'A substance necessarily is a quantum as long as it remains in the natural world' is false. What is said about this example can be said about many others [too], both in divine matters and in the case of creatures.

(4) For in some such way one could keep it so that the divine essence and understanding and will are in no way distinguished in God, and [yet] 'God understands by [his] intellect' would be true and 'God understands by [his] will' [would be] false. Likewise, it could be said that the soul is in no way distinguished from the intellect and the will, and yet 'The understanding understands' would be true and 'The will understands' would not. And so on for many other cases.

(5) Thus, in such cases I think there is more a verbal difficulty that depends on logic [for its solution] than [there is] a real [difficulty]. For this reason, those who know no logic have uselessly filled up innumerable volumes concerning such matters, making a difficulty where there is none, and forsaking the difficulty they ought to be investigating.

(6) But notice that, even though in common speech such abstract [terms] equivalent in signifying to many such words rarely or never have [any] place, nevertheless in the sayings of the philosophers and saints, familiar abstract [terms] are frequently found to be taken in this way. Thus, Avicenna, *Metaphysics* V,¹⁰¹ takes [the term 'horsehood'] like this when he

⁹⁹ This is not to suggest that the man might be *something else*, but only that his existence at all is a contingent affair.

¹⁰⁰ Including Ockham himself. See Ch. 44.

¹⁰¹ Avicenna, *Metaphysics* V, c. 1 (ed. Venice 1508, fol. 86^{va}).

says, “Horsehood is nothing other than horsehood only; for by itself it is neither one nor many, neither existing in these sensibles nor in the soul.” He meant nothing else than that ‘horse’ is not defined by ‘one’ or by ‘many’, or by ‘being in the soul’ or by ‘being in external reality’, so that none of these [expressions] occurs in its definition. And so he meant that the name ‘horsehood’, as he was then using it, would be equivalent in signifying to many words, whether they are uttered all together or with a verb and copula in between. Thus, he did not mean that horsehood would be some thing, and nevertheless that this thing would not really be one or many, neither actually¹⁰² outside the soul nor in the soul. For that is impossible and absurd. Rather he meant that nothing like that¹⁰³ occurs in its definition. That this *is* what he meant is clear enough to anyone who looks at his words. Thus, he says,¹⁰⁴

15 Since this (understand “universal”) is man or horse, it is an intention other [than and] beyond the intention of universality, and is humanity or horsehood. For the definition of horsehood is over and above the definition of universality. Neither is universality contained in the definition of horsehood. For horsehood has a definition that does not need universality.

20

(7) From these and other words of his, which I omit for the sake of brevity, it is clear enough that he means no more than that nothing like this occurs in the definition of ‘horse’ or ‘horsehood’. Thus, he means that in the above quotation the name ‘horsehood’ is equivalent in signifying to many words. For otherwise it would not follow: “One and many and the like do not occur in the definition of horsehood; therefore, horsehood is not one”, just as it does not follow: “White does not occur in the definition of man; therefore, a man is not white.”

25

(8) From what has been said above, the following mode of arguing, which appears to be syllogistic, can be blocked, according to one view¹⁰⁵: “Every absolute thing is a substance or a quality; quantity is an absolute thing; therefore, quantity is a substance or a quality”, just as the mode of arguing: “Every *B* is *A*; *C* is *B*; therefore, *C* is *A*” can be blocked when these

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¹⁰² ‘actually’ = *in effectu*. The phrase is derived from the Latin translations of the Muslim philosophers.

¹⁰³ That is, like ‘one’ or ‘many’, like ‘being outside the soul’ or ‘being in the soul’.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* The parenthetical insertion is Ockham’s.

¹⁰⁵ Ockham’s own. See Ch. 44.



letters are instituted in another way. For if ‘*B*’ signifies the same as [does] ‘man’, and ‘*A*’ the same as [does] ‘animal’, and ‘*C*’ the same as the whole ‘only a risible’, so that it is always permissible to put the letter ‘*C*’ in place of the whole ‘only a risible’, and conversely, then, just as it does not follow:

5 “Every man is an animal; only a risible is a man; therefore, only a risible is an animal”, so [too] it does not follow: “Every *B* is *A*; *C* is *B*; therefore, *C* is *A*.” And so by means of this mode of [analyzing] abstract names, many sayings of the authoritative [writers] can be preserved, although they seem to be false literally.

10 (9) Now not only can an abstract [term] be equivalent in signifying to many words in this way. This [feature] can also belong to concrete [terms] and to other words. Thus, those skilled in logic grant that the sign ‘whole’ includes its distributable, so that it is equivalent to saying ‘any part’ when it is taken syncategorematically. Hence, ‘The whole Socrates is less

15 than Socrates’ is equivalent to ‘Any part of Socrates is less than Socrates’.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, the sign¹⁰⁷ ‘anything’ includes its distributable, so that it is equivalent to ‘every being’. For otherwise ‘Anything is a man or a non-man’ would be unintelligible. It is the same way too for many verbs. For

20 when one says ‘*curro*’,¹⁰⁸ the first-person pronoun is implicit. So the verb ‘*curro*’ is equivalent to itself and the pronoun. The same thing holds in many other cases. It is necessary above all to know this in order to get at the meaning of the authoritative [writers].

(10) Not only is one word sometimes equivalent in signifying to many words, but also, when added to [something] else, the whole that results is equivalent to a composite [made up] of several [words]. Among

25 [these components] what is added is sometimes changed, either in case or in mood or tense. But sometimes it has to be simply removed in resolving and finally explicating what is conveyed by the expression. Thus, when one says ‘The whole Socrates is less than Socrates’, if ‘whole’ is taken syncategorematically, [the proposition] is equivalent to ‘Any part of Socrates is

30 less than Socrates’, where in place of the nominative ‘Socrates’ there occurs the oblique form ‘of Socrates’,¹⁰⁹ and in place of the word ‘whole’ there occur the two words ‘any part’. Thus some [people] would say,¹¹⁰ that the proposition ‘Generation of a form is in an instant’ is equivalent to ‘One part

¹⁰⁶ So taken, the proposition is of course true.

¹⁰⁷ That is, quantifier.

¹⁰⁸ I have to do it in Latin, since the point rests on the inflection of Latin verbs for person. The word means ‘I run’.

¹⁰⁹ This is in the genitive in the Latin.

¹¹⁰ Including Ockham himself. See his *Summa Physicorum*, Pars IV, c. 1 (*ed. cit.*, pp. 85f.).

of a form is not produced before another, but rather all at once', where the copula 'is' is removed.¹¹¹

5 (11) So [too], some [people] can say that 'Quantity is an absolute thing' is equivalent to 'Distance between parts, and extension, if it were not a substance or a quality, would be an absolute thing, if it were in the natural world'. If this were so, it would be plain that the following argument would not be valid: "Every absolute thing is a substance or a quality; quantity is an absolute thing; therefore, quantity is a substance or a quality."

10 (12) Suppose it is said that in this way I could prevent any syllogism [whatever], by saying that some such [syncategorema] is included in one of [its] terms. It must be said [in reply to this] that, in order to know when an argument is valid, you have to presuppose the significates of the words, and it is in accordance with this [knowledge] that you must [then] judge whether the argument is a good one or not. Because for many terms it is
15 certain that, according to everyone's usage, nothing like that is equivalently included, therefore it has to be simply granted that the syllogism is valid or not valid, in accordance with the traditional rules.

(13) Yet for any proposed argument, the logician could judge whether it is valid by resolving [its] terms into their nominal definitions.
20 When this is done, he can recognize plainly, by rules that are certain, what is to be said about it.

(14) All privative and negative abstract [terms] can be reduced to the above mode of abstract names, and also all verbal [names] and many others. We shall investigate that below. By means of this mode [of abstract names], all the following propositions could easily be denied: 'Matter is a
25 privation', 'Air is a shadow', 'A soul is a sin', and the like. By means of this mode too, the following can be kept: 'God does not make a sin', 'God is not the author of evil', and the like. It will be shown in the tract on fallacies¹¹² how inferences like this are not valid: "This is an evil; God makes
30 this; therefore, God makes an evil."



[Chapter 9]

(1) We still have to discuss another mode of concrete and abstract names. Thus, there are certain abstract [names] that only supposit for many [things] taken together, although the concrete [forms] can be verified for

¹¹¹ The 'is' in the English 'is not produced' does not appear in the Latin, which has a pure passive form here.

¹¹² Ockham, *Summa logicae* III-4, c. 6.



one [thing] alone. For example, ‘people’ and ‘popular’, ‘*plebs*’¹¹³ and ‘plebeian’ are related [in this way]. Even though any man can be plebeian and popular, nevertheless no man can be the *plebs* or [be] the people. Those¹¹⁴ who maintain that number is not a thing other than the numbered things should include among such names all the abstract and concrete names of numbers, if any concrete and abstract [forms] are found among such [names]. Thus, according to such a view, it should be granted that men are a number, and many animals are a number, and that angles are ternary or quaternary, and so on — unless perhaps they want to deny such a predication by saying that such terms are equivalent in signifying to many words, in the way stated in the preceding chapter.

(2) Let all this suffice about concrete and abstract [names], even though perhaps other modes of concrete and abstract names could be given. And let no one reproach me if I pass over some [things] in the present work, because I do not promise that I shall discuss all [things], and [so] leave nothing for the diligent to investigate. Rather, I am going to run through some brief matters for the usefulness of simple [people].

[Chapter 10]

(1) After discussing concrete and abstract names, we now have to speak about another division among the names scholastics often use. Thus, you have to know that certain names are merely absolute [and] others are connotative. Merely absolute names are those that do not signify something principally and [something] else, or even the same [thing], secondarily. Rather, whatever is signified by the name is signified equally primarily [by it]. For example, it is clear with the name ‘animal’ that it does not signify [anything] but cattle, asses and men, and so on for other animals. It does not signify one [animal] primarily and another one secondarily in such a way that something has to be signified in the nominative and [something] else in an oblique [case]. Neither in the definition expressing what the name means¹¹⁵ do there have to occur such distinct [terms] in different cases, or an adjectival verb.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ That is, the common people. I have to leave it in Latin in order to make the relation to ‘plebeian’ plain.

¹¹⁴ Including Ockham himself. See the end of Ch. 44.

¹¹⁵ ‘definition expressing what the name means’. That is, the “nominal definition.” ‘What the name means’ = *quid nominis*, literally, the “what of the name.”

¹¹⁶ An adjectival verb is any verb besides the forms of ‘to be’.



(2) In fact, properly speaking, such¹¹⁷ names do not *have* a definition expressing what the name means. For, properly speaking, for a name that has a definition expressing what the name means, there is [only] *one* definition explicating what the name means — that is, in such a way that for
 5 such a name there are not *several* expressions expressing what the name means [and] having distinct parts, one of which signifies something that is not conveyed in the same way by some part of the other expression. Instead, such names,¹¹⁸ insofar as what they mean is concerned, can be explic-
 10 ated after a fashion by several expressions that do not signify the same things by their¹¹⁹ parts. And so none of those [expressions] is properly a *definition* expressing what the name means.

(3) For example, ‘angel’ is a merely absolute name (at least if it is not the name of a job, but of the substance¹²⁰ only). For this name there is not some one definition expressing what the name means. For one [person]
 15 explains what this name means by saying “I understand by an angel a substance abstracted from matter”, another [person] by “An angel is an intellectual and incorruptible substance”, and [yet] another [person] by “An angel is a simple substance that does not enter into composition with [anything] else”.¹²¹ The one [person] explains what the name means just as
 20 well as the other [person] does. Nevertheless, some term occurring in the one expression signifies something that is not signified in the same way by [any] term of the other expression. Therefore, none of them is properly a definition expressing what the name means.

(4) And so it is for merely absolute names that, strictly speaking,
 25 none of them has a definition expressing what the name means. Such names are like the following: ‘man’, ‘animal’, ‘goat’, ‘stone’, ‘tree’, ‘fire’, ‘earth’, ‘water’, ‘heaven’, ‘whiteness’, ‘blackness’, ‘heat’, ‘sweetness’, ‘smell’, ‘taste’, and the like.

(5) But a connotative name is one that signifies something primarily
 30 and something secondarily. Such a name does properly have a definition expressing what the name means. And often you have to put one [term] of that definition in the nominative and another [term] in an oblique case. This

¹¹⁷ That is, merely absolute.

¹¹⁸ Ditto.

¹¹⁹ That is, the expressions’.

¹²⁰ Etymologically, ‘angel’ just means “messenger.” Ockham’s point is that we want a name here for a certain kind of substance, not a job description that that kind of substance happens to fill.

¹²¹ Unlike human souls, which are also simple substances, but which do enter into composition with something else, namely, the human body. The result is the composite substance we call a human being.

happens for the name ‘white’. For ‘white’ has a definition expressing what the name means, in which one word is put in the nominative and another one in an oblique case. Thus, if you ask what the name ‘white’ signifies, you will say that [it signifies] the same as [does] the whole expression ‘something informed by¹²² a whiteness’ or ‘something having a whiteness’.

5 It is clear that one part of this expression is put in the nominative and another [part] in an oblique case.

(6) Sometimes too a verb can occur in the definition expressing what a name means. For instance, if you ask what the name ‘cause’ signifies, it can be said that [it signifies] the same as [does] the expression ‘something from the being of which [something] else follows’ or ‘something able to produce [something] else’, or something like that.

10

(7) Now such connotative names include all concrete names of the first kind (these were discussed in Ch. 5). This is because such concrete [names] signify one [thing] in the nominative and another in an oblique case. That is to say, in the definition expressing what the name means there should occur one nominative term, signifying one thing, and another oblique term, signifying another thing. This is clear for all [names] like ‘just’, ‘white’, ‘animate’, ‘human’, and so on.

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(8) Such [connotative] names also include all relative names. For in their definition there always occur different [terms] signifying [either] the same [thing] in different ways or else distinct [things]. This is clear for the name ‘similar’. For if ‘similar’ is defined, it should be put like this: “The similar is something having such a quality as [something] else has”, or it should be defined in some [other] way like that. I do not care much about the examples.

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(9) It is clear from this that the common [term] ‘connotative name’ is superior to the common [term] ‘relative name’. This is so taking the common [term] ‘connotative name’ in the broadest sense.

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(10) Such [connotative] names also include all names pertaining to the category of quantity, according to those¹²³ who maintain that quantity is not another thing than substance and quality. For example, ‘body’, according to them, should be held [to be] a connotative name. Thus, according to them, it should be said that a body is nothing but “some thing having [one] part distant from [another] part according to length, breadth and depth”. And continuous and permanent quantity is nothing but “a thing having [one] part distant from [another] part”, in such a way that this is the definition expressing what the name means.

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¹²² ‘informed by’. That is, having the form of.

¹²³ Including Ockham himself. See Ch. 44.



(11) These [people] also have to maintain that ‘figure’, ‘curvedness’, ‘rightness’, ‘length’, ‘breadth’ and the like are connotative names. Indeed, those who maintain that every thing is [either] a substance or a quality have to hold that all the contents in categories other than substance and quality are connotative names. Even certain [names] in the category of quality are connotative, as will be shown below.¹²⁴

(12) Under these [connotative] names there are also included all such [names as] ‘true’, ‘good’, ‘one’, ‘power’, ‘act’, ‘intellect’, ‘intelligible’, ‘will’, ‘volible’,¹²⁵ and the like. Thus, in the case of ‘intellect’, you have to know that for the meaning of the name it has this: “An intellect is a soul able to understand.” So the soul is signified by the nominative [name], and the act of understanding [is signified] by the other part. On the other hand, the name ‘intelligible’ is a connotative name and signifies the intellect both in the nominative and in an oblique case. For its definition is “An intelligible is something apprehensible by an intellect.” Here the intellect is signified by the name ‘something’. And the intellect is also signified by the oblique [form] ‘by an intellect’.¹²⁶

(13) The same thing must be said about ‘true’ and ‘good’. For ‘true’, which is held [to be] convertible with ‘being’,¹²⁷ signifies the same [thing] as [does] ‘intelligible’.¹²⁸ ‘Good’ too, which is convertible with ‘being’,¹²⁹ signifies the same [thing] as [does] the expression ‘something volible or lovable according to right reason’.

[Chapter 11]

(1) Now that we have set out the divisions that can belong both to terms signifying naturally and also to terms instituted by convention, we

¹²⁴*Ibid.* For that matter, certain names in the category of substance can be connotative too. For example, all the names of fictitious or impossible substances, like ‘goat-stag’, ‘chimera’, and so on.

¹²⁵That is, something that can be an object of the will.

¹²⁶‘by an intellect’. This is one word in the ablative case in Latin.

¹²⁷That is, ‘true’ in the “transcendental” sense. In this sense, truth does not belong exclusively to propositions. In this sense, we speak of “a true friend,” “a true coin” (as opposed to a counterfeit), and so on. In this “transcendental” sense, everything whatever is a true something or other, so that ‘true’ is convertible with ‘being’. Of course, Ockham also recognizes the narrower sense of ‘true’ that applies only to propositions.

¹²⁸This is a traditional but significant claim, going back at least to Parmenides. Everything that is is (at least in principle) intelligible, and conversely.

¹²⁹‘Good’ was also held to be one of the so called “transcendental” terms. They were “transcendental” because they “transcended” or went beyond the distinction among the categories. They “cut across” all the categories.

have to talk about certain divisions that belong [only] to terms instituted by convention.

(2) The first such division is: Some names signifying by convention are names of first imposition, and others are names of second imposition. 5 Names of second imposition are names imposed to signify (a) signs instituted by convention and (b) the [things] that follow on such signs — but only while they are signs.

(3) Nevertheless, the common [term] ‘name of second imposition’ can be taken in two senses. [In the first sense, it is taken] broadly. In that 10 sense everything that signifies utterances instituted by convention, but only when they are instituted by convention, is a name of second imposition, whether that name is also common to intentions of the soul, which are natural signs, or not. Names like ‘name’, ‘pronoun’, ‘conjunction’, ‘verb’, ‘case’, ‘number’, ‘mood’, ‘tense’, and the like, are like this — taking these 15 words in the way the grammarian uses them. These names are called “names of names”, because they are imposed to signify only parts of speech, and this only while these parts [of speech] are significative. For names that are predicated of utterances just as much when they are not sig- 20 nificative as when they are significative are not called names of second imposition. Therefore, names such as ‘quality’, ‘pronounced’, ‘utterance’, and the like, even though they signify utterances instituted by convention and are verified of them, nevertheless because they would signify those [utterances] just as much if they were not significative as they do now, therefore they are not names of second imposition. But ‘name’ is a name of 25 second imposition, because the utterance ‘man’ (or any other) was not a name before it was imposed to signify. Likewise, ‘man’s’, before it was imposed to signify, had no case.¹³⁰ And so on.

(4) But in the strict sense, what signifies only signs instituted by convention, in such a way that it cannot be applied to intentions of the soul, 30 which are natural signs, is called a “name of second imposition”. ‘Inflection’,¹³¹ ‘conjugation’, and such, are like this.

(5) All names other than these, namely, those that are *not* names of second imposition either in the one sense or the other, are called “names of first imposition.”

(6) Nevertheless, ‘name of first imposition’ can be taken in two 35 senses. [In the first sense, it is taken] broadly, and in that sense all names that are not names of second imposition are names of first imposition. In

¹³⁰ It is in the genitive in the Latin.

¹³¹ ‘inflection’. See n. 54, above.

this sense, syncategorematic signs like ‘every’, ‘no’,¹³² ‘some’, ‘any’, and the like, are names of first imposition. [‘Name of first imposition’] can be taken in another sense [too], and in that sense only categorematic names that are not names of second imposition are called names of first imposition, and syncategorematic names [are] not.

(7) Now names of first imposition, taking ‘name of first imposition’ strictly, are of two kinds. Some [of them] are names of first intention, and others are names of second intention. The names that are precisely imposed to signify (a) intentions of the soul, or precisely (b) intentions of the soul, which are natural signs, and [also] other signs instituted by convention, or the [things] that follow on such signs, are called “names of second intention”. All [names] like ‘genus’, ‘species’, ‘universal’, ‘predicable’,¹³³ and so on, are such names. For these names signify only (a) intentions of the soul, which are natural signs, or else (b) signs voluntarily instituted [to signify].

(8) Thus, it can be said that the common [term] ‘name of second intention’ can be taken in a strict sense and in a broad sense. In the broad sense, what signifies intentions of the soul, which are natural signs, whether or not it also signifies signs instituted by convention ([but] only while they are signs), is called a “name of second intention”. In this sense, some name of second intention and of first imposition is also a name of second imposition. But in the strict sense, only what precisely signifies intentions of the soul, which are natural signs, is called a “name of second intention”. Taken [in] in that sense, no name of second intention is a name of second imposition.

(9) All other names than those mentioned are called “names of first imposition”, namely, those that signify some things that are not signs or the [things] that follow on such signs. All [names] like ‘man’, ‘animal’, ‘Socrates’, ‘Plato’, ‘whiteness’, ‘white’, ‘being’, ‘true’, ‘good’, and such, are like this. Some of these signify precisely things that are not signs apt to supposit for other [things], [and] others signify such signs and other things along with that.

(10) From all these [distinctions], it can be gathered that certain names signify precisely signs instituted by convention, and only while they are signs. But others precisely signify things that are not such signs [and] that are parts of a proposition. Some indifferently signify such things as are not parts of a proposition or of an expression, and also [signify] such signs [too]. Names like ‘thing’, ‘being’, ‘something’, and such, are like this.

¹³² That is, the universal negative quantifier, as in ‘No man is an island’.

¹³³ That is, the five Porphyrian “predicables” described in his *Isagoge*.

[Chapter 12]

(1) Because it was said in the preceding chapter that some names are of first intention and some of second intention, and [because] ignorance of the significations of words is for many [people] an occasion for error, therefore we must see in passing what a first intention is and what a second [intention is], and how they are distinguished.

(2) Now first you have to know that [there is] a certain [something] in the soul, apt to signify [something] else, [and] called an “intention of the soul”. Thus, as was said earlier,¹³⁴ in the [same] way that an inscription is a secondary sign with respect to utterances (because among all the signs instituted by convention utterances stand in the first rank), so [too] utterances are secondary signs of the [things] of which intentions of the soul are the primary signs. Aristotle said as much, that utterances are “the marks of the passions that are in the soul.”¹³⁵

(3) Now what exists in the soul and is a sign of a thing, [and is such that] a mental proposition is put together out of it in the [same] way that a spoken proposition is put together out of utterances, is sometimes called an “intention of the soul”, sometimes a “concept of the soul”, sometimes a “passion of the soul”, sometimes a “likeness of a thing”. In his commentary on the *De interpretatione*, Boethius calls it an “understanding”.¹³⁶ Thus, he says that a mental proposition is put together out of “understandings” — not, of course, out of the “understandings” that are really intellective souls, but rather out of the “understandings” that are certain signs in the soul that signify other [things] and [are such that] a mental proposition is put together out of them.

(4) Hence, whenever someone utters a spoken proposition, he first forms within [his mind] a mental proposition that belongs to no [spoken] language. [This is so] to the extent that many [people] often form propositions within [their minds] that nevertheless they do not know how to express, because of a defect of [their] language. The parts of such mental propositions are called “concepts”, “intentions”, “likenesses [of things]” and “understandings”.

(5) But what is it in the soul that *is* such a sign?

¹³⁴ See Ch. 3, above.

¹³⁵ Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 1, 16^a3–4.

¹³⁶ Boethius, *In librum De interpretatione*, ed. 1^a, I, PL 64, cols. 297f., and ed. 2^a, PL 64, col. 407. Note that ‘understanding’ in this sense does not mean the *faculty* or *power* of understanding, but rather an *act* of understanding, or the result of such an act. See the immediately following lines.



(6) It must be said that on this point there are different opinions. Some [people] say that it is nothing but a certain [something] contrived¹³⁷ by the soul. Others [hold] that it is a certain quality subjectively existing in the soul [and] distinct from the act of understanding. [Still] others say that is the act of understanding. On the side of these last [people], there is the argument that “it is idle to bring about through several means what can be brought about through fewer”. Now all that can be preserved by maintaining [that the concept is] something distinct from the act of understanding can be preserved without [any] such distinct [thing], insofar as suppositing for [something] else and signifying [something] else can belong just as much to the act of understanding as [it can] to another sign. Therefore, one does not have to posit anything else besides the act of understanding.

(7) We will investigate these opinions below.¹³⁸ Therefore, let it suffice for now that an “intention” is something in the soul that is a sign naturally signifying something for which it can supposit or that can be part of a mental proposition.

(8) Now such a sign is of two kinds. One kind is a sign of some thing that is *not* such a sign, whether it signifies such a sign along with this or not. This is called a “first intention”. The intention of the soul that is predicable of all men is like this, and similarly the intention [that is] predicable of all whitenesses and [the one predicable of all] blacknesses, and so on.

(9) Nevertheless, you have to know that ‘first intention’ is taken in two senses. In the broad sense, every intentional sign existing in the soul that does not signify intentions or signs precisely is called a “first intention”, whether it is a “sign” taking ‘sign’ strictly for what signifies in such a way that it is apt to supposit in a proposition for its significate, or whether it is a “sign” taking ‘sign’ broadly in the sense in which we say syncategoremata signify. In this sense, mental verbs and mental syncategoremata and conjunctions and the like can be called “first intentions”. But, strictly, [it is] the mental name that is apt to supposit for its significate [that] is called a “first intention”.

(10) Now a “second intention” is one that is a sign of such first intentions. For example, such intentions as ‘genus’, ‘species’, and the like. For just as one intention common to all men is predicated of all men by saying ‘This man is a man’, ‘That man is a man’, and so on, so [too] one intention common to all intentions that signify and supposit for things is predicated of them by saying ‘This species is a species’, ‘That species is a

¹³⁷ ‘contrived’ = *fictum*. This is the famous “*fictum*”-theory of concepts.

¹³⁸ See Chs. 14–15 & 40.



species', and so on. Likewise, by saying 'Stone is a genus', 'Animal is a genus', 'Color is a genus', and so on, one intention is predicated of intentions in the way in which in 'Man is a name', 'Ass is a name' 'Whiteness is a name', one name is predicated of different names.

5 (11) Therefore, just as names *of* second imposition signify by convention names *of* first imposition, so [too] a second intention naturally signifies a first [intention]. And just as a name *of* first imposition signifies other [things] besides names, so [too] a first intention signifies other things than intentions.

10 (12) It can also be said that 'second intention' can be taken strictly for an intention that signifies precisely first intentions, or broadly for an intention that signifies intentions and [also] signs instituted by convention, if there is any such [intention].

[Chapter 13]

15 (1) After the above, [we must] treat the division of terms instituted by convention into equivocal, univocal and denominative [terms]. Now although Aristotle in the *Categories*¹³⁹ treats of equivocals, univocals and denominatives, nevertheless for the present I intend to treat only of univocals and equivocals, because denominatives were discussed above.¹⁴⁰

20 (2) First, you must know that only an utterance or other sign instituted by convention is equivocal or univocal. Therefore, an intention of the soul, or concept, is neither equivocal nor univocal, properly speaking.

 (3) Now an utterance is "equivocal" if it signifies several [things and] is not a sign subordinated to one concept, but is instead a sign subordinated to several concepts or intentions of the soul. This is what Aristotle means¹⁴¹ when he says that the common name is the same but the substantial notion is different. That is, the concepts or intentions of the soul (such as descriptions and definitions and even simple concepts) are different, but the utterance is one. This is clear explicitly in the case of a word that belongs to different languages. For in the one language it is imposed to signify the same [thing] that is signified by such and such a concept, and in the other [language] it is imposed to signify the same [thing] that is signified by another concept. And so it is subordinated in signifying to several concepts or passions of the soul.

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¹³⁹ Aristotle, *Categories*, 1, 1^a1–15.

¹⁴⁰ See Chs. 5–10, above. Nevertheless, Ockham does discuss denominatives at the end of the present chapter. See para. 12, below.

¹⁴¹ Aristotle, *Categories* 1, 1^a1–2.

(4) Now such an equivocal [term] is of two kinds. One kind is equivocal by chance, namely, when an utterance is subordinated to several concepts and [is subordinated] to the one as if it were not subordinated to the other, and signifies one [significate] as if it did not signify the other.
 5 This happens with the name ‘Socrates’, which is imposed on several men.

(5) Another kind is equivocal by custom, when an utterance is first imposed on some thing or things and is subordinated to one concept, and later on, on account of some likeness of the first significate to something else or on account of some other reason, it is imposed on that other [thing],
 10 in such a way that it would *not* be imposed on that other [thing] unless because it was first imposed on the former. This is the case with the name ‘man’. For it was first imposed to signify all rational animals in such a way that it was imposed to signify all that is contained under the concept ‘rational animal’. But later on, the users, seeing a likeness between such a
 15 man and the image of a man, sometimes used the name ‘man’ for such an image, so that unless the name ‘man’ had first been imposed on men, the name ‘man’ would not be used or imposed to signify or to stand for such an image. For this reason, it is called “equivocal by custom”.

(6) Now everything that is subordinated to one concept is called
 20 “univocal”, whether it signifies several [things] or not. Nevertheless, properly speaking, it is not “univocal” unless it signifies, or is apt to signify, several things equally primarily, yet in such a way that it does not signify those several [things] except because one intention of the soul signifies them, so that it is a sign subordinated in signifying to one natural sign that
 25 is an intention or concept of the soul.

(7) This division, however, not only belongs to names but also to verbs, and in general to every part of speech. In fact, something can even be equivocal insofar as it can belong to different parts of speech — for example, [it can be] both a name and a verb, or both a name and a participle or
 30 an adverb, and so on for the other parts of speech.

(8) Now you have to understand that this division of terms into equivocal and univocal is not simply [a division] into opposites so that ‘Some equivocal is univocal’ is false. Indeed, it is true. For the same utterance is really and truly [both] equivocal and univocal, but not with respect
 35 to the same [things], just as the same [man] is [both] a father and a son, but not with respect to the same [man], and the same [thing] is [both] like and unlike, but not [like and unlike] the same thing in the same respect.

(9) Thus, if there is some word that belongs to different languages, it is plain that it can be univocal in both languages. Hence, one who knew
 40 only the one language would not [have to] distinguish any proposition in which [the word] occurred. But to one who knows both languages, it is

equivocal. Thus, those who know both languages would in many cases distinguish propositions in which such a word occurred. So the same term is univocal to one [person] and equivocal to another.

5 (10) From the above it can be gathered that a univocal [term] does not always have one definition. For it is not always properly defined [at all]. Therefore, when Aristotle says¹⁴² that “univocals are those [things] for which the name is in common and the substantial notion [is] the same”, he is taking ‘notion’¹⁴³ for the intention of the soul to which the utterance is subordinated as to a primary sign.

10 (11) Now you have to know that ‘univocal’ is taken in two senses. [In one sense, it is taken] broadly, for every utterance or sign instituted by convention [and] corresponding to one concept. In another sense it is taken strictly, for something like that that is predicable *per se* in the first mode¹⁴⁴ of some [things] to which it is univocal, or [predicable] of a pronoun indicating some thing.

15 (12) ‘Denominative term’, however, can for present [purposes] be taken in two senses. [In one sense, it is taken] strictly, and in that sense a term that begins as an abstract [term] begins but does not have a similar ending and that signifies an accident is called a “denominative term”. For example, ‘strong’ from ‘strength’, ‘just’ from ‘justice’. In another sense, a term that has beginning like an abstract [term] but not a similar ending, whether it signifies an accident or not, is called [a “denominative term”] in the broad sense. For example, ‘besouled’ is said from ‘soul’.¹⁴⁵

20 (13) Let these [points] suffice for the divisions of terms. Some things omitted in the above will be filled in below.¹⁴⁶

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[Chapter 26]

(1) Since not only do logicians use the above words of second intention,¹⁴⁷ but also many other terms of second intention, and also of sec-

¹⁴² Aristotle, *Categories* 1, 1^a6–7.

¹⁴³ ‘notion’ = *rationem*. The term ‘ratio’ frequently means “definition.” Ockham is claiming that it does not mean that in this Aristotelian passage.

¹⁴⁴ On the various “modes” of *per se* predication, see Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I, 4, 73^a34–^b24.

¹⁴⁵ I’m sorry, but in English ‘besouled’ does *not* begin the same way ‘soul’ does. The words are ‘animatus’ and ‘anima’ in the Latin. Those do begin the same way.

¹⁴⁶ See *Summa logicae* III–4, 2–4, on the various kinds of equivocation.

¹⁴⁷ In the preceding chapters, Ockham discussed the terms ‘universal’ and ‘singular’ (Chs. 14–17), the five Porphyrian “predicables” in general (Ch. 18), and then

ond imposition, often come into use, [therefore,] I now want to treat some of them briefly, in order that students not be slowed down in their search for truth on account of ignorance of the signification of these [terms].

5 (2) Among the terms logicians use, some are common to all universal [terms], others are proper to some of them, some belong to some of them taken together, others belong to one [universal term] with respect to another one. The terms that belong to several [universal terms] taken together are ‘definition’ and ‘description’.

10 (3) ‘Definition’ is taken in two senses. One kind is a *real* definition,¹⁴⁸ and the other kind is a *nominal* definition.¹⁴⁹

(4) ‘Real definition’ is taken in two senses. [In one sense, it is taken] broadly, and in this sense it includes the [real] definition taken strictly, and also the descriptive definition. In another sense, the name ‘[real] definition’ is taken strictly, and in this sense it is a *brief discourse expressing the whole nature of the thing and not indicating anything extrinsic to the defined thing*.

20 (5) This can come about in two ways. Sometimes in such a discourse there occur oblique cases [of names] expressing the essential parts of the thing. For example, when I define man by saying ‘A man is a substance composed of a body and an intellective soul’. For the oblique [forms] ‘of a body’ and ‘of an intellective soul’¹⁵⁰ express the parts of the thing. This [kind of definition] can be called a “physical definition”.

25 (6) There is another [kind of] definition in which no oblique case occurs, but instead the genus is put in the nominative, and likewise the difference or differences expressing the parts of the defined thing, in the way in which ‘white’ expresses whiteness, are put in the nominative. Therefore, just as ‘white’, even though it expresses a whiteness, nevertheless does not supposit for a whiteness but rather only for the subject of a whiteness, so [too] the differences [in a definition like this], even though they express parts of the thing, nevertheless do not supposit for the parts of the thing, but rather [supposit] precisely for the whole composed of those parts. The definition of man: ‘rational animal’, or ‘rational sensitive’¹⁵¹ besouled sub-

each of the five in turn: ‘individual’ (Ch. 19), ‘genus’ (Ch. 20), ‘species’ (Chs. 21–22, Ch. 22 is on the comparison of genus to species), ‘difference’ (Ch. 23), ‘property’ (Ch. 24), and ‘accident’ (Ch. 25).

¹⁴⁸ ‘real definition’ = *definitio exprimens quid rei* = “definition expressing what the thing is.” See n. 149 below.

¹⁴⁹ ‘nominal definition’ = *definitio exprimens quid nominis* = “definition expressing what the name means.” On this notion, see Ch. 10, above.

¹⁵⁰ These are both in the genitive in Latin.

¹⁵¹ ‘sensitive’. That is, having sensation.

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stance' is like this. For the differences 'besouled', 'sensitive', [and] 'rational' supposit for a man, because a man is rational, besouled and sensitive. Nevertheless, they convey part of the man, just as the abstract [terms] corresponding to them convey a part or parts of a man — although not in
 5 the same way. This [kind of definition] can be called a "metaphysical definition", because the metaphysician would define man in this way.

(7) There can be no other [kind of] definition besides these two, except perhaps the [kind such that] each part of it is in more [than the defined] and the whole [is] equal [to the defined].¹⁵² Therefore, what some [people] say is ridiculous, that one kind of definition of man is logical, another kind
 10 physical, [and] another kind metaphysical. For the logician, since he does not treat of man insofar as he does not treat of things that are not signs, does not have to define man. Rather he has to teach how the other sciences that do treat of man should define him. Therefore, the logician should not give
 15 any definition of man, except perhaps by way of example. And in that case the definition that is given by way of example should be [either] a physical one or a metaphysical one.

(8) And just as it is pointless to say that one kind of definition is physical, another kind metaphysical, [and] another kind logical, so [too] it
 20 is pointless to say that one kind of man is physical, another kind metaphysical, [and] another kind logical.

(9) Likewise, even though it could be said that one kind of definition of man is physical [and] another kind metaphysical, on account of the difference in the parts of these expressions, nevertheless it is completely unreasonable and false to claim that one kind of man is physical [and] another
 25 kind [is] metaphysical. For if one kind of man is physical [and] another kind [is] metaphysical, either (a) [this] is understood [in the sense] that there is some thing outside the soul, some true substance, that is a physical man, and another true substance that is a metaphysical man, or else (b) it is
 30 understood [in the sense] that some concept of the mind or utterance is a physical man and another one is a metaphysical [man].

(10) The first [alternative] cannot be granted, because I ask how those [two] men, who are substances, are distinguished. Either (i) the one is a part of the other, or (ii) they are certain wholes [that are] in themselves
 35 wholly distinct, or (iii) something is a part of both [of them], even though not everything that is a part of the one is a part of the other. The first and

¹⁵² That is, each part of the definition has an extension that includes more than the defined, but the combination of all the parts exactly fits the defined. On such definitions, see Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* II, 13, 96^a24–^b14. It is not clear to me that this really constitutes a third kind of real definition.

second [alternatives] cannot be granted, as is plainly clear. Neither can the third [alternative] be said, because since a physical man is composed only of matter and form, it would have to be the case that either matter or form would not be a part of the other of those [two] men. And in that case the one of them, that is, the metaphysical [man] or the physical one, would be only matter or only form, which is absurd.

(11) It does no good to say that the metaphysician considers man in one way, and the natural [philosopher] in another, and for this reason man considered by the metaphysician is distinguished from man considered by the natural [philosopher]. For even if that were the case, it would not follow from this that one man would be a metaphysical [man] and another a physical [man]. Rather, it would follow that there would be only a different consideration of the same man. If Sortes¹⁵³ sees Plato clearly and Socrates [does so] obscurely, [then] even though the one's vision is different from the other's, nevertheless the seen Plato is not different. So [too], even though the natural [philosopher's] and the metaphysician's consideration of man are different, nevertheless the man considered is not different. So, therefore, there is not one thing that is a physical man and another that is a metaphysical man.

(12) Neither can it be said that the concept or utterance is different.¹⁵⁴ For the concept will either be a definition or a part of a definition or something predicable of man. And it is clear that whichever [alternative] is given, it is beside the point.¹⁵⁵

(13) From all of this, it is established that definitions can be distinct even though the defined is the same. Yet, granted that the definitions are distinct, nevertheless those definitions *signify* the same, and whatever is signified by the one, or by part of the one, is signified by the other, or by part of the other, even though the parts differ in [their] *mode* of signifying because some part of the one [definition] is in another case than [is the corresponding] part of the other.

(14) Now you have to know that, even though the defined taken significatively is predicated of whatever the definition taken significatively is predicated of, and conversely, and even though a hypothetical proposition made up of the definition and the defined is necessary, and even [a proposition] about the possible or [a proposition] equivalent to such [a proposition] — for example, 'If it is a man, it is a rational animal' is neces-

¹⁵³ 'Sortes'. This is the usual mediaeval form for 'Socrates'. But in the present example, "Sortes" and "Socrates" and plainly meant to be two different people.

¹⁵⁴ Alternative (b) in para. 9, above.

¹⁵⁵ The same argument is meant to apply to utterances.

sary, and conversely, and likewise ‘Every man can be a rational animal’ (taking the subject for what *can* be a man) [is necessary], and conversely — nevertheless no such¹⁵⁶ affirmative merely assertoric proposition merely about the present is necessary. Thus, ‘A man is a rational animal’ is simply
 5 contingent, as is ‘A man is a substance composed of a body and an intellectual soul’. This is because if no man existed, each such [proposition] would be false. Nevertheless Aristotle, who claims that ‘A man is an animal’, [and] ‘An ass is an animal’ are necessary,¹⁵⁷ would maintain that such [propositions] are necessary.

10 (15) From the above it can be gathered that the definition is not the same as the defined. For, according to everyone, the definition is a discourse, either mental or spoken or written. Consequently, it is not really the same as the thing, or with one word.¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, a definition *signifies*
 15 the same [things] as [does] the defined. Those who speak correctly understand it in this sense when they say that a definition and the defined are really the same — that is, they *signify* the same.

(16) Now you have to know that there is no definition, taken strictly in this sense, except of a substance only (as the thing expressed by the definition). Therefore, taking ‘defined’ for the name convertible with the
 20 definition, there is such a definition only of names, not of verbs or of the other parts of speech.

(17) A nominal definition, on the other hand, is an expression that reveals explicitly what is conveyed by a word. For example, someone who
 25 wants to teach [someone] else what the name ‘white’ signifies says that it signifies the same as [does] the expression ‘something having a whiteness’. There can be this [kind of] definition not only for names of which ‘to be’ can be truly verified in reality,¹⁵⁹ but also [for names] of [things] of which such predication is impossible. Thus ‘vacuum’, ‘non-being’, ‘impossible’, ‘infinite’, [and] ‘goat-stag’ have definitions. That is, there correspond to
 30 these names certain expressions that signify the same [things] that these words [do].

(18) It follows from this that, taking ‘definition’ in this sense, sometimes it is impossible to predicate the definition of the defined by means of the verb ‘is’, when both [the definition and the defined] are taken significatively. Thus, ‘A chimera is an animal composed of a goat and an ox’ (let
 35

¹⁵⁶ That is, put together out of the definition and the defined.

¹⁵⁷ See, for example, Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* I, 15, 34^b16–17: “For of necessity man [is an] animal.” For Aristotle, of course, the world is eternal, and species like man and ass are not contingent things.

¹⁵⁸ That is, the term defined.

¹⁵⁹ That is, for names of things that really exist.

that be its definition¹⁶⁰) is impossible. This [is so] because of an impossible implication, namely, [the one] by which it is implied [by this proposition] that something *is* composed of a goat and an ox. Nevertheless, the proposition “Chimera” and “animal composed of a goat and an ox” signify the same [things]’, in which the terms supposit materially, is true. By the first [proposition] speakers generally understand this second one, even though properly speaking it is another [proposition entirely]. Thus, just as, according to Priscian, one word is often put for another, as he illustrates in *Constructions I*,¹⁶¹ so [too] one expression is often put for another. Nevertheless, the conditional made up of such a defined and [its] definition is true. For ‘If something is a chimera, it is composed of a man and a lion’,¹⁶² and conversely, is true.

(19) Now not only names can be defined by such a [nominal] definition, but also all the parts of speech can be defined in this way — namely, verbs, conjunctions, etc. Adverbs like ‘where’, ‘when’, ‘as many’, [as well as] conjunctions and such are defined in this way. In that case, the definition should not be predicated of the defined by means of the verb ‘is’ when both [the definition and the defined] are taken significatively. Rather the whole [expression] ‘to signify the same’, or something like that, should be verified of those [terms] taken materially, or else another expression should be verified of [the defined] when it is taken materially, by saying [for example] ‘Where is an interrogative adverb of place’, ‘When is an interrogative adverb of time’, and so on.

[Chapter 27]

(1) A description is a brief discourse made up of accidents and properties. Hence Damascene says in his *Logic*, Ch. 14¹⁶³: “A description is made up of accidents, that is of properties and accidents. For example, ‘Man is risible, walks upright, [and] has broad nails’. For all these [features]

¹⁶⁰ No one seems to have been completely sure just what a chimera was supposed to be. Various definitions like the one here are found in the literature. See, for instance, the definition at the end of this chapter.

¹⁶¹ Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae*, xvii, c. 23, nn. 168–172 (ed. A. Keil, II, pp. 89–94).

¹⁶² See n. 160 above.

¹⁶³ John Damascene, *Dialectica*, in Jacques-Paul Migne, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus ... series graeca*, 162 vols., Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857–1866. vol. 94, col. 554B (this series is conventionally referred to as the *Patrologia graeca*, and referred to simply as the “PG” — I will do so below); Robert Grosseteste’s Latin version, Ch. 14, (Owen A. Colligan, ed., St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1953), p. 16.



are accidental. Thus, it is also called a “description”¹⁶⁴ as foreshadowing, and not making plain the substantial existence of the subject but the consequences [of it].”

5 (2) From the words of this authority it is evidently given to be understood that nothing should occur in a description that is predicated *in quid* or *per se* in the first mode of the described. In this respect a description differs from a definition.

10 (3) Second, from the cited authority it follows that ‘accident’ is [here] taken not only for some thing inhering in another but [also] for [what is] contingently predicable of another, as was said above.¹⁶⁵ For since, according to the Doctor mentioned, a description is made up of accidents of the subject, and a description is not made up [of anything] but [what are] predicable of the subject, one has to call “accidents” these [items] predicable of the described, which can only be concepts or utterances or inscriptions.
15

(4) It follows, third, from the aforesaid that a description and the described are not always convertible. For since accidents are contingently predicated of something, the described [term] can be predicated of something even though the description is not predicated of it. Nevertheless, this
20 does not happen except because of an imperfection of what the described [term] is predicated of. Thus man can be described as follows: “Man is a biped having two hands”, adding to it some other [items] that can belong only to man. When this is done, the description can be denied of someone lacking hands, [and] yet the described [term] is predicated of him. But this
25 is because of the fact that the individual [man] is not imperfect.

¹⁶⁴ That is, a “describing.”

¹⁶⁵ The distinction Ockham is drawing here is between the metaphysical and the logical senses of ‘accident’. See *Summa logicae*, I, 25.2–8, 15–17, 27–30, 34–37: “Philosophers define accident as follows: ‘An accident is what is present and absent without corruption of the subject’. To make this definition plain, one has to know that ‘accident’ can be taken in four senses. In one sense an accident is said [to be] some thing really inhering in a substance, in the way in which heat is really in fire and whiteness in a wall. And taking ‘accident’ in this sense, the stated definition is made true. ... In another sense everything [x] is called an accident that can be contingently predicated of something [y] in such a way that, keeping the truth of the proposition in which being is said of the subject [y], [x] can be predicated and not predicated of [y]. ... In the third sense an accident is said [to be] something predicable that is contingently predicated of something, and can be affirmed and denied in succession of the same thing either through a change in what is conveyed by the subject or through a change in something else. ... Fourth, an accident is said [to be] something predicable that does not convey any absolute thing inhering in a substance, but can be contingently predicated of it, but only through a change in what is conveyed by the subject.”

(5) Nevertheless, it can be said that “description” can be taken in two senses, namely: (a) broadly. And this Doctor is talking in this sense about description. Or it can be taken (b) strictly. And in this sense it is not made up of accidents but of properties. And in that sense a description and the described are always converted.

[Chapter 28]

(1) Now a “descriptive definition” is a blend of substantial and accidental [terms]. For example, ‘Man is a rational animal, walks upright [and] has broad nails’, according to Damascene as above.¹⁶⁶ From this it follows that one kind of discourse is made up of [terms] predicable *per se* in the first mode, and that is a definition. Another kind [is made up] of what are not predicated *per se* in the first mode, and sometimes that is a description. Another kind is made up of both, and it is a descriptive definition. Yet because every definition and every description and every descriptive definition is a discourse, therefore no such [definition, description or descriptive definition] is really the same as the defined or the described, although they signify the same.

[Chapter 29]

[Ch. 29 distinguishes two senses of the terms ‘defined’ and ‘described’: (a) the *real thing* defined or described, and (b) the *word* defined or described.]

[Chapter 30]

(1) Now that we have talked about terms that are not applicable to any one universal [term] — like ‘definition’, ‘description’, and the like (because no one universal [term] is a definition or description, but rather each definition and description is put together out of several universal [terms]) — we now have to talk about terms that are consequent¹⁶⁷ on any universal [term]. ‘Subject’, ‘predicate’ and the like are such terms.

¹⁶⁶ See n. 163 above.

¹⁶⁷ I am not sure in what sense the following terms are “consequent” on universal terms.

(2) As for ‘subject’, first you have to know that, as Damascene says in his *Logica*, Ch. 8¹⁶⁸ :

5 ‘Subject’ is said in two senses, one with respect to existence and the other with respect to predication. With respect to existence, as a substance is subjected to accidents. For they have being in it, and outside it they do not substand. But with respect to predication, the subject is a particular.

10 (3) It can be gathered from this that something is called a “subject” because it really substands another thing that inheres in it and really accrues to it. In this sense, ‘subject’ is taken in two ways. [In one way, it is taken] strictly, and in that sense a “subject” is so called with respect to the accidents really inhering in it, without which it is able to subsist. But every thing that substands [something] else, whether the thing it substands is a really inhering accident or whether it is a substantial form informing the thing to which it accrues, is called a “subject” in the broad sense. In this sense, matter is called a “subject” with respect to substantial forms.

15 (4) But ‘subject’ is said in another sense [too]. For [in this other sense] it is the part of a proposition that precedes the copula, of which something is predicated. For instance, in the proposition ‘Man is an animal’, ‘man’ is the subject, because ‘animal’ is predicated of ‘man’. And ‘subject’ so taken can be taken in many senses: (a) In one sense, everything that can be put in subject position in any proposition whatever, true or false, is called a “subject” in a broad sense. Thus, any universal [term] can be a subject with respect to [any] other, as is plain with propositions like ‘Every animal is an ass’, ‘Every whiteness is a crow’, and so on.

20 (5) (b) ‘Subject’ can be taken in another sense, strictly. In this sense, what is put in subject position in a true proposition where there is direct predication¹⁶⁹ is called a “subject”. In this sense ‘man’ is a subject with respect to ‘animal’, but not the other way around.

25 (6) (c) In a third sense, more strictly, what is the subject¹⁷⁰ in a demonstrated conclusion that is known, or is apt to be known, by a science properly so called is called a “subject”. Taking ‘subject’ in this sense, there are as many subjects grouped together in a science as there are conclusions

¹⁶⁸John Damascene, *Dialectica*, Ch. 16, PG 94, col. 582A; Robert Grosseteste’s Latin version, Ch. 8, (Owen A. Colligan, ed., St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1953), p. 10.

¹⁶⁹In direct predication a superior is predicated of its inferior.

¹⁷⁰In senses (a) or (b).

having distinct subjects.¹⁷¹ Thus, in logic there are many subjects, and likewise in metaphysics and in natural philosophy.

(7) (d) ‘Subject’ is taken most strictly in [yet] another sense, for something that is first (by some kind of primacy) among such subjects.¹⁷² In this sense, sometimes the most common subject among such subjects is called the “subject” [of the science], and sometimes the one that is the more perfect, and so on for other ways of being primary.

(8) Nevertheless, this is common to all [these kinds of subject],¹⁷³ that each of them is a subject by predication.

10

[Chapter 31]

(1) Just as the part of a proposition that precedes the copula is called the “subject”, so [too] the part of a proposition that follows the copula is the “predicate”. Yet some [people] want to say that the predicate is the copula together with what follows it. But, because this controversy depends on the signification of the word [‘predicate’], which is a matter of the user’s conventions, therefore I pass over it now.

(2) However ‘predicate’ is said,¹⁷⁴ it is taken in many senses. In one sense, everything that is the one extreme of a proposition and is not the subject [is called the “predicate”]. In this sense, every term that can be predicated in a true or false proposition can be a predicate.

(3) In another sense, ‘predicate’ is taken [for] what is predicated in a true proposition in which there is direct predication.¹⁷⁵ In this sense, ‘animal’ is a predicate with respect to ‘man’, but not with respect to ‘stone’.

(4) In a third sense, what is predicated of some subject by direct predication, of which subject there can be science properly so called, is called a “predicate”. The Philosopher takes ‘predicate’ in this sense in *Topics I*,¹⁷⁶ where he distinguishes four [kinds of] predicates, namely genus, definition, property and accident (and includes difference under genus). Species is not counted here because, although a species is predicated of individuals, nevertheless because individuals cannot be the subjects in propositions known by science properly so called, therefore species is not counted among such predicates.

¹⁷¹Ditto.

¹⁷²That is, among subjects in sense (c).

¹⁷³That is, kinds (a)–(d).

¹⁷⁴That is, in whichever of the ways described in para. 1.

¹⁷⁵See n. 169 above.

¹⁷⁶Aristotle, *Topics I*, 5–6, 101^b38–103^a5.

(5) Now the verb that joins the predicate with the subject is called the “copula”.

[Chapter 32]

5 [Ch. 32 in on how the predicate can be said to “inhere” in or “be in” the subject. Ockham analyzes propositions about the predicate’s “being in” or “inhering in” the subject in terms of the predicate’s being *predicated* of the subject.]

[Chapter 33]

10 (1) ‘To signify’ is taken in many senses among logicians. In one sense a sign is said to “signify” something when it supposits, or is apt to supposit, for it — in such a way, that is, that the name is predicated by means of the verb ‘is’ of a pronoun pointing to it. Thus, ‘white’ signifies Socrates. For ‘He is white’ is true, pointing to Socrates. Thus [too], ‘rational’ signifies a man. For ‘He is rational’ is true, pointing to a man.
15 And so on for many other concrete [terms].

(2) ‘To signify’ is taken in another sense when the sign can supposit for the [thing] in some proposition about the past or about the future or about the present, or in some true proposition about a mode. In this sense, ‘white’ not only signifies what is now white, but [also] what *can* be white.
20 For in the proposition ‘A white¹⁷⁷ can run’, taking the subject for what *can* be, the subject supposits for the [things] that can be white.

(3) Taking ‘to signify’ in the first sense, and [the term] ‘significate’ corresponding to it, an utterance (and even a concept) often falls away from its significate through only a change in the thing. That is, something ceases to be signified that was signified earlier. [But] taking ‘to signify’ in the second sense, and [the term] ‘significate’ corresponding to it, an utterance or concept does not fall away from its significate through only a change in the external thing.
25

(4) ‘To signify’ is taken in [yet] another sense, when that from which the utterance is imposed is said to be signified, or what is signified in the first sense by a principal concept or a principal utterance.¹⁷⁸ In this sense, we say that ‘white’ signifies a whiteness because ‘whiteness’ signi-
30

¹⁷⁷ That is, a white thing. Latin often uses the neuter forms of adjectives as though they were nouns.

¹⁷⁸ ‘Principal’ here seems to mean something like ‘absolute’. See the examples.

fies a whiteness. Nevertheless, the sign ‘white’ does not supposit for this whiteness. So [too], ‘rational’, if it is a difference, signifies the intellectual soul.

5 (5) In another sense, ‘to signify’ is taken most broadly when some sign that is apt to be a part of a proposition, or is apt to be a proposition or expression, conveys something, whether principally or secondarily, whether in the nominative or in an oblique case, whether it gives [one] to understand it, or connotes it, or signifies it in any way whatever, or signifies it affirmatively or negatively. For example, the name ‘blind’ signifies sight, because
10 [it does so] negatively, and the name ‘immaterial’ signifies matter negatively, and the name ‘nothing’ or ‘non-something’ signifies something, but negatively. Anselm talks about this way of signifying in *On the Fall of the Devil*.¹⁷⁹

15 (6) ‘To signify’, therefore, in one or another signification of [the word], belongs to any universal [term whatever]. For “a universal”, according to Damascene in his *Logic*, Ch. 48,¹⁸⁰ “is what signifies many [things] — for instance, ‘man’, ‘animal’.” For every universal [term] either signifies several [things] in the first sense or the second, because every universal is predicated of several [things], either in an assertoric proposition about the
20 present, or in a proposition about the past or future or a mode.

(7) From this it is clear that those [people] are in error who say that the utterance ‘man’ does not signify all men. For, since the universal ‘man’, according to the above Doctor,¹⁸¹ signifies several [things], and it does not signify several things that are not men, [therefore] it has to signify several
25 men. This is to be granted, because nothing is signified by ‘man’ except a man, and no one man any more than another.

(8) Every universal, therefore, signifies several [things]. But a universal that is a genus or species, which is predicated of a pronoun pointing to some thing, does not signify several [things] except by taking ‘to signify’
30 in the first sense or the second sense. But the remaining universals signify several [things] in the first sense or the second, and some [things] too in the third sense or the fourth. For every other universal signifies something in the nominative and something in an oblique case. This is clear with ‘rational’ and ‘risible’, and so on.

¹⁷⁹ Anselm, *De casu diaboli*, Ch. 11. See Jasper Hopkins & Herbert Richardson, trs., *Anselm of Canterbury: Truth, Freedom, and Evil. Three Philosophical Dialogues*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967), pp. 163–168.

¹⁸⁰ John Damascene, *Dialectica*, Ch. 65, PL 94, col. 659A; Latin translation of Robert Grosseteste, Ch. 48, *ed. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁸¹ That is, Damascene, *ibid.*

[Chapter 63]

(1) Now that we have talked about the signification of terms, it remains to talk about supposition, which is a property that belongs to a term, but only when [it occurs] in a proposition.

(2) Now first, you must know that supposition is taken in two senses, namely, broadly and strictly. Taken broadly, it is not distinguished from appellation. Rather, appellation is contained under supposition. In another sense it is taken strictly, insofar as it is distinguished from appellation. But I do not intend to speak about supposition in that sense, but rather only in the first sense. Thus, both the subject and the predicate supposit. And in general, whatever *can* be the subject or predicate of a proposition supposits.

(3) Supposition is so called as, so to speak, a “positing for another”,¹⁸² in such a way that when a term in a proposition stands for something, so that we use the term for something of which (or of a pronoun pointing to it) that term (or the nominative of that term, if it is in an oblique case) is verified, it supposits for that [thing]. At least this is true when the suppositing term is taken significatively.

(4) So in general, a term supposits for that of which (or of a pronoun pointing to it) the predicate is denoted by the proposition to be predicated, if the suppositing term is the subject. But if the suppositing term is the predicate, it is denoted that the subject is in subject position with respect to it (or with respect to a pronoun pointing to it) if the proposition is formed.¹⁸³ For example, it is denoted by ‘A man is an animal’ that Socrates truly is an animal, so that ‘This is an animal’, pointing to Socrates, is true if it is formed. But it is denoted by ‘Man is a name’ that the utterance ‘man’ is a name, [and] therefore in this [proposition] ‘man’ supposits for the utterance [itself]. Likewise, it is denoted by ‘A white¹⁸⁴ is an animal’ that the thing that is white is an animal, so that ‘This is an animal’, pointing to the thing that is white, is true. For this reason, the subject “supposits” for that thing.

(5) So, analogously, it must be said in the case of the predicate. For it is denoted by ‘Socrates is white’ that Socrates is this thing that has a whiteness.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, the predicate supposits for this thing that has a

¹⁸² ‘*Suppositio*’ = ‘*sub*’ + ‘*positio*’ = literally, “putting under.”

¹⁸³ Propositions are *tokens* for Ockham, so that their existence is very much a contingent matter.

¹⁸⁴ That is, a white thing.

¹⁸⁵ Ockham is implicitly assuming that the proposition is true.

whiteness. And if no thing but Socrates had a whiteness, then the predicate would supposit precisely for Socrates.

5 (6) Therefore, there is a general rule that a term never supposits for anything in any proposition, at least when it is taken significatively, except for what it can be truly predicated of.

10 (7) It follows from this that what some ignorant [people] say is false, [namely,] that a concrete [term] on the part of the predicate supposits for a form. That is, that in ‘Socrates is white’, [the term] ‘white’ supposits for whiteness. For ‘A whiteness is white’ is simply false, however the terms supposit. Therefore, such a concrete [term] never supposits for such a form signified by its [corresponding] abstract [term], according to Aristotle’s view.¹⁸⁶ But this is quite possible for other concrete [terms], which we have talked about [above].¹⁸⁷

15 (8) In the same way, in ‘A man is God’, [the term] ‘man’ truly supposits for the Son of God, because he is truly a man.¹⁸⁸

[Chapter 64]

(1) Now you must know that supposition is first divided into personal, simple and material supposition.

20 (2) Personal supposition, in general, is that [which occurs] when a term supposits for its significate, whether that significate is (a) a thing outside the soul, whether it is (b) an utterance, or (c) an intention of the soul, whether it is (d) an inscription, or anything else imaginable. So whenever the subject or predicate of a proposition supposits for its significate in such a way that it is taken significatively, the supposition is always personal.

¹⁸⁶ See Ch. 5, above. The remark is odd, and would seem to go more properly with the following sentence of the text. The kind of concrete/abstract pairs referred to by the ‘such’s in this paragraph is the kind discussed in Ch. 5 above. But Aristotle is not mentioned there at all. He *is* mentioned in Ch. 6 in connection with certain pairs of concrete and abstract terms, mainly in the category of substance. For those terms, the claim rejected in this paragraph would hold. (See also Ch. 7, where Ockham departs from the Aristotelian view for certain theological statements.)

¹⁸⁷ In Ch. 6, above. See n. 186 above.

¹⁸⁸ The point rests on the theology of the Incarnation. The term ‘man’ here is taken to supposit for a *person*, not for a nature. According to the doctrine, God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, is Jesus the man. This one person has two natures, divine and human. If ‘man’ here supposited for the human *nature*, the proposition would be false, because *that* is not God. The example does not quite fit the topic, however, since we were talking about concrete terms on the part of the *predicate*. (See para. 7.) But the same point can be made about the predicate here. If ‘God’ supposited for the divine *nature*, the proposition would be false, since no human is the divine *nature* (even though there is one human who is a divine *person*).

- (3) [Here is] an example of the first case, (a): In saying ‘Every man is an animal’, ‘man’ supposits for its significates. For ‘man’ is imposed only to signify these men. For it does not properly signify anything common to them, but rather the men themselves, according to Damascene.¹⁸⁹
- 5 (4) [Here is] an example of the second case, (b): In saying ‘Every spoken name is a part of speech’, ‘name’ supposits only for utterances. But because it is imposed to signify those utterances, therefore it supposits personally.
- 10 (5) [Here is] an example of the third case, (c): In saying ‘Every species is a universal’ or ‘Every intention of the soul is in the soul’, either subject supposits personally. For it supposits for the [things] it was imposed to signify.
- 15 (6) [Here is] an example of the fourth case, (d): In saying ‘Every written word is a word’, the subject supposits only for its significates, that is, for inscriptions. Therefore, it supposit personally.
- (7) It is clear from this that those who say personal supposition occurs when a term supposits for a thing¹⁹⁰ are not describing personal supposition sufficiently. Instead, this is the definition: that personal supposition occurs when a term supposits for its significate and [is taken] significatively.
- 20 (8) Simple supposition occurs when a term supposits for an intention of the soul, but is not taken significatively. For example, in saying ‘Man is a species’, the term ‘man’ supposits for an intention of the soul, because that intention is a species. Yet the term ‘man’ does not properly speaking
- 25 signify that intention. Rather, the utterance and the intention of the soul are only signs subordinated in signifying the same [thing], in the manner explained elsewhere.¹⁹¹
- 30 (9) From this it is clear that those [people’s] opinion is false who say generally that simple supposition occurs when a term supposits for its significate.¹⁹² For simple supposition occurs when a term supposits for an in-

¹⁸⁹ John Damascene, *Dialectica*, Ch. 10, PG 94, col. 571A; Latin version by Robert Grosseteste, Ch. 2, n. 8, *ed. cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ For example, William of Sherwood. See his *Introduction to Logic*, Ch. 4, Kretzmann, tr., p. 107: “It is personal, however, when a word supposits what it signifies, but for a thing that is subordinate [to what it signifies], as in ‘a man is running’ (*homo currit*); for running is in man because of some individual (*Cursus enim inest homini gratia alicuius singularis*).” (Kretzmann’s insertions.)

¹⁹¹ See Ch. 1, above. The point is not well put here. It is not that *both* the utterance and the intention of the soul are “subordinated” signs. Rather, the former is subordinated *to* the latter.

¹⁹² For example, Walter Burley, *The Longer Treatise on the Purity of the Art of Logic*, Tract. 1: “On the Properties of Terms,” Part 1, Ch. 3, Spade tr., para. 27–41

tention of the soul that is not properly a significate of the term. For such a term signifies true things and not intentions of the soul.¹⁹³

(10) Material supposition occurs when a term does not supposit significatively but supposits for an utterance or for an inscription. This is clear in ‘Man is a name’. ‘Man’ supposits for itself, and yet it does not signify itself. Likewise, in the proposition ‘Man is written’ the supposition can be material, because the term supposits for what is written.

(11) You have to know that, just as this threefold supposition belongs to a spoken utterance, so [too] can it belong to an inscribed utterance. Thus, if the four propositions ‘A man is an animal’, ‘Man is a species’, ‘Man is a monosyllabic utterance’, ‘Man is a written word’ are written down, each of them can be verified, but only for different things. For what is an animal is in no way a species or a monosyllabic utterance or a written word. Likewise, what is a species is not an animal or a monosyllabic utterance, and so on. In the last two propositions the term [‘man’] has material supposition.

(12) But [material supposition] can be subdivided, insofar as [a term in material supposition] can supposit for an utterance or for an inscription. If there were names imposed [for this purpose], supposition for an utterance and for an inscription could be distinguished [from one another] just as supposition for a significate [is distinguished from supposition] for an intention of the soul, the one of which we call personal and the other simple. But we do not have such names.

(13) Now just as such a diversity of [kinds of] supposition can belong to a spoken and a written term, so too can it belong a mental term. For an intention can supposit for what it signifies, for itself, for an utterance and for an inscription.

(14) Now you have to know that supposition is not called “personal” because it supposits for a person, or “simple” because it supposits for [something] simple, or “material” because it supposits for matter. Rather, [they are so called] for the reasons stated. Therefore, the terms ‘material’, ‘personal’, ‘simple’ are used equivocally in logic and in the other sciences. Nevertheless, they are not often used in logic except with ‘supposition’ added.

(forthcoming). See also William of Sherwood, *loc. cit.*: “It is simple when a word supposits what it signifies for what it signifies (*supponit significatum pro significato*), as in ‘man is a species.’” (Kretzmann’s insertion.)

¹⁹³Of course, some terms do signify intentions of the soul. For example, the term ‘intention of the soul’. Ockham is speaking very broadly here.

[Chapter 65]

(1) It is to be noted too that a term always, in whatever proposition it occurs, can have personal supposition unless it is restricted to another [kind of supposition] by a voluntary [agreement] among the users, just as an equivocal term can supposit in any proposition for any of its significates unless it is restricted to a definite significate by a voluntary [agreement] among the users. But a term cannot in every proposition have simple supposition or material, but only in a [proposition] where such a term is matched with another extreme that pertains to an intention of the soul or to an utterance or an inscription.

(2) For example, in the proposition ‘A man runs’, [the term] ‘man’ cannot have simple or material supposition. For ‘to run’ does not pertain to an intention of the soul or to an utterance or inscription. But in the proposition ‘Man is a species’, since ‘species’ signifies an intention of the soul, therefore it can have simple supposition. And [in that case] the proposition has to be distinguished with respect to the third mode of equivocation,¹⁹⁴ insofar as the subject can have simple or personal supposition. In the first sense the proposition is true, because then it is denoted that one intention of the soul, or concept, is a species, and that is true. In the second sense, the proposition is just false, because then it is denoted that some thing signified by ‘man’ is a species, and that is plainly false.

(3) In the same way ‘Man is predicated of several [things]’, ‘Risible is an attribute of man’, ‘Risible is predicated first¹⁹⁵ of man’ have to be distinguished. They have to be distinguished both on the part of the subject and on the part of the predicate. Likewise, ‘Rational animal is the definition of man’ has to be distinguished. For if [‘rational animal’] has simple supposition, [the proposition] is true; if personal, it is false. So too for many [other] such cases. For instance, for ‘Wisdom is an attribute of God’, ‘Creative is an attribute of God’, ‘Goodness and wisdom are divine attrib-

¹⁹⁴ The three modes of equivocation are given by Aristotle at *Sophistic Refutations* 4, 166^a14–21. The third mode occurs “when words that have a simple sense taken alone have more than one meaning in combination; e.g., ‘knowing letters’. For each word, both ‘knowing’ and ‘letters’, possibly has a single meaning: but both together have more than one — either that the letters themselves have knowledge or that someone else has it of them” (Oxford translation).

¹⁹⁵ This sense of “first” is derived from the Aristotelian notion of a “first subject” of an attribute. See *Posterior Analytics* I, 4, 73^b25–74^a3.

utes', 'Goodness is predicated of God', 'Unbegottenness is a property of the Father', and the like.¹⁹⁶

(4) Similarly, when a term is matched [in a proposition] with some extreme that pertains to an utterance or an inscription, the proposition has to be distinguished insofar as the term can have personal or material supposition. In this way, 'Socrates is a name', 'Man is a monosyllabic utterance', 'Paternity signifies a characteristic of the Father' have to be distinguished. For if 'paternity' supposits materially, then 'Paternity signifies a characteristic of the Father' is true,¹⁹⁷ because the name 'paternity' does signify a characteristic of the Father. But if it supposits personally, [the proposition] is false, because paternity [either] *is* a characteristic of the Father or else [just] is the Father himself.¹⁹⁸ In this way too, 'Rational animal signifies the quiddity of man', 'Rational signifies a part of man', 'White man signifies an accidental aggregate', 'White man is a composite term', and so on for many [other] such cases, [all] have to be distinguished.

(5) Therefore, the following rule can be given: When a term [that is] able to have the above threefold supposition is matched with an extreme common to non-complex or complex [expressions], whether spoken or written, the term can always have material or personal supposition and such [a proposition] has to be distinguished. But when it is matched with an extreme signifying an intention of the soul, [the proposition] has to be distinguished insofar as [the subject] can have simple or personal supposition. When it is matched with an extreme common to all the above, then [the proposition] has to be distinguished insofar as [the term] can have personal, simple or material supposition. Thus 'Man is predicated of several [things]' has to be distinguished. For if 'man' has personal supposition, [the proposition] is false, because then it is denoted [by the proposition] that some thing signified by the term 'man' is predicated of several [things]. If [the term] has simple or material supposition, [the latter] either for an utterance or for an inscription, [then the proposition] is true, because the common intention, as well as the utterance and what is written down, is predicated of several [things].

¹⁹⁶ Presumably the point is that terms like 'attribute' (= *attributum*, *passio*) and 'property' (= *proprium*) signify universals — which for Ockham means that they signify universal *concepts*.

¹⁹⁷ It would also be true if it supposited simply, since concepts signify too for Ockham.

¹⁹⁸ The alternative is added in case you are worried about introducing a distinction into the divine simplicity by suggesting that the characteristic is something the Father *has*. In either case, the point is that paternity, in this sense, does not *signify* a characteristic of the Father.

[Chapter 66]

(1) But many kinds of objections can be raised against the above [claims].

5 (2) (a) First, as follows: ‘Man is the worthiest creature among creatures’¹⁹⁹ is true. I ask which kind of supposition ‘man’ has [there]. Not personal, because each singular [of the proposition] is false. Therefore, it has simple supposition.²⁰⁰ But if simple supposition were for an intention of the soul, [the proposition] would be false, because an intention of the soul is not the most worthy of creatures. Therefore, simple supposition is not for an
10 intention of the soul.

(3) Moreover, (b) ‘Color is the first²⁰¹ object of sight’ is true. But if ‘object’ [there] has personal supposition, each singular [of the proposition] is false. Therefore, [the term] has simple supposition.²⁰² But if it supposed for an intention of the soul, [the proposition] would be false, because no
15 intention of the soul is the first object of sight (for no intention is seen). Therefore, simple supposition is not for an intention of the soul.

(4) Likewise, ‘Man is the first²⁰³ risible’ is true. And [it is not true] for a singular thing or for an intention of the soul. Therefore, [it is true] for something else.²⁰⁴

20 (5) The same [thing] can be argued for ‘Being is first²⁰⁵ one’ [and] ‘God is first²⁰⁶ a person’. For each of them is true, and [it is] not [true] for a singular thing or for an intention of the soul. Therefore, [it is true] for something else. Yet the subject has simple supposition. Therefore, simple supposition is not for an intention of the soul.

25 (6) Moreover, (c) an utterance is not predicated of an utterance, and an intention is not [predicated] of an intention. For in that case every proposition like ‘A man is an animal’ would be just false.²⁰⁷

(7) To (a) the first of these, it must be said that the opinion of those who say that in ‘Man is the most worthy of creatures’ the subject has simple

¹⁹⁹The odd phrase simply means “the worthiest creature of them all.”

²⁰⁰It goes without saying that it does not have material supposition here.

²⁰¹See n. 195 above.

²⁰²Again, material supposition is not a real alternative here.

²⁰³See n. 195 above.

²⁰⁴And that something else is presumably the universal or common nature *man*.

²⁰⁵Again, see n. 195 above.

²⁰⁶Ditto.

²⁰⁷Because it is not true that the *utterance* ‘man’ is the *utterance* ‘animal’, or that the *intention* “man” is the *intention* “animal.”



supposition is just false. Indeed, ‘man’ in this [proposition] has personal supposition only.

5 (8) Neither is their reasoning valid. Instead it counts against them. For they prove that if ‘man’ had personal supposition, [the proposition] would in that case be false, because each [of its] singulars is false. But this reasoning counts against them. For if ‘man’ stands simply in this [proposition], and not for any singular, therefore [it stands] for something else. Consequently, *that* would be the most worthy of creatures. But that is false, because in that case *it* would be nobler than any man.

10 (9) This plainly does count against them. For a common [entity] or a species is never nobler than its singular, because, according to their manner of speaking, the inferior always includes its superior and more [besides]. Therefore, the common form, since it is a part of this man, is not nobler than this man. So if the subject in ‘Man is the most worthy of creatures’
15 supposed for something other than a singular man, [the proposition] would be just false.

(10) Therefore, it has to be said the ‘man’ [in this proposition] supposes personally, and [that the proposition] is literally false, because each [of its] singulars is false. Nevertheless, it is true according to the meaning of
20 those who maintain [the proposition]. For they do not mean that a man is nobler than any creature in general, but that he is nobler than any creature that is not a man. And this is true among corporeal creatures, although it is not true for intellectual substances.²⁰⁸

25 (11) So it is often the case that authoritative magisterial propositions are false literally, and true in the sense in which they were made. That is, [the speakers] meant true propositions by them. That is so in the present case.

(12) To (b) the second [objection], it must be said that every [proposition] like ‘Color is the first object of sight’, ‘Man is the first risible’, ‘Being is first one’, [and] likewise ‘Man is the first rational animal’,
30 ‘The triangle first has three angles’, ‘Sound is the first and adequate object of hearing’, and many other such [propositions], is just false literally, although the [propositions] the Philosopher meant by them are true.

35 (13) Thus, you must know that just as the Philosopher and others often take a concrete [term] for the [corresponding] abstract [form] and the other way around, [and] likewise sometimes take the plural for the singular and the other way around, so [too] they often take the exercised act for the signate²⁰⁹ act and the other way around. Now an “exercised act” is one that

²⁰⁸ That is, for angels, which are nobler than human beings.

²⁰⁹ ‘signate’ = *signato*. The sense is just “signified.”

is conveyed by the verb ‘is’, or something like that, which does not just *signify* that something is predicated of something but [actually] *exercises* [that predication], by predicating one [thing] of another and saying ‘A man is an animal’, ‘A man runs’, ‘A man argues’, and so on. But a “signate” act
 5 is one that is conveyed by the verb ‘to be predicated’ or ‘to be in subject position’ or ‘to be verified’ or ‘to belong to’ and the [other] such [verbs] that signify the same [thing as these do].

(14) For example, in saying ‘Animal is predicated of man’, animal is not predicated here of man. For in this proposition ‘animal’ is in subject
 10 position, and [so] is not predicated. Therefore, the act [here] is a signate one. Saying ‘Animal is predicated of man’ is not the same as saying ‘A man is an animal’, for the one is multiple²¹⁰ and the other is not. So too, saying that ‘genus’ is predicated of the common [term] ‘man’ is not the same as saying that the common [term] ‘man’ is a genus.²¹¹ Neither is saying
 15 ‘Genus is predicated of species’ or ‘The utterance “animal” is predicated of the utterance “man”’ the same as saying ‘A species is a genus’ or ‘The utterance “man” is the utterance “animal”’. For the first two²¹² are true and the second two²¹³ are false. Yet, despite this, the Philosopher sometimes takes the exercised act for the signate act, and sometimes the other way
 20 around. So do many other [writers]. This makes many [people] fall into errors.

(15) It is like this in the present case. For the proposition ‘Man is the first risible’ (taking ‘first’ as the Philosopher takes it in *Posterior Analytics* I²¹⁴) is as false as is ‘A species is a genus’. But nevertheless, the signate act
 25 in place of which [this proposition] occurs is a simply true one. For example, ‘Of man the predicate “risible” is first predicated’ is true. In this signate act both ‘man’ and ‘risible’ supposit simply for the intention of the soul. For of this intention of the soul [“man”] there is first predicated [the intention] “risible”, not for itself but for its singulars. This [signate] act should be
 30 exercised as ‘Every man is risible and nothing other than a man is risible’.²¹⁵ So, in the signate act ‘man’ supposits simply and for an intention. But in the corresponding exercised act, ‘man’ supposits personally and for singular things. For no thing is able to laugh except a singular thing. There-

²¹⁰ That is, equivocal. The equivocal one is ‘Animal is predicated of man’, for the reason given in Ch. 65, para. 2.

²¹¹ The common term ‘man’ is a species, not a genus. But that makes no difference for the success of the example.

²¹² Rather, the first of each pair.

²¹³ Rather, the second of each pair.

²¹⁴ See n. 195 above.

²¹⁵ In other words, it should *not* be exercised as ‘Man is the first risible’.

fore, in the signate act the non-complex [word] ‘first’ occurs correctly, but in the corresponding exercised act ‘first’ should not occur. And because ‘first’ means the same as “being predicated universally of something and of nothing but what it is predicated of”,²¹⁶ therefore *two* exercised acts should correspond to such a signate act.²¹⁷

(16) It is like this [too] for ‘Sound is the first and adequate object of hearing’. For it is literally false, because ‘sound’ either supposits for a singular thing or for a common thing. If [it supposits] for a singular thing, then [the proposition] is false because each [of its] singulars is false. If [the term supposits] for a common thing, then it is still false because, according to these [people], no common thing is apprehended by sensation. Therefore, [the proposition] is simply false literally.

(17) Nevertheless perhaps, among those who speak in general and understand correctly, by this [proposition] a signate act is understood, and it is: ‘Of sound there is first predicated being apprehensible by hearing.’ For that predicate is first predicated of this common [term ‘sound’], not for itself but for [its] singulars. For in such a proposition, where the common [name] ‘sound’ is in subject position and the predicate ‘apprehensible by a power of hearing’ is predicated, ‘sound’ does not supposit for itself and simply but rather supposits for singulars. For example, in ‘Every sound is apprehensible by a power of hearing’, the common [name] ‘sound’ is in subject position, although not for itself but rather for singulars. So in the signate act ‘sound’ supposits simply and for the intention of the soul. But in the exercised act both [terms]²¹⁸ supposit personally and for singulars — that is, for their significates.

(18) There is a plain example of the above from theology. For ‘A complete intellectual substance that does not depend on [any] other suppositum²¹⁹ is first a person’ is true for the same reason that ‘Man is the first risible’ is true. For the one has the same structure as does the other. I ask then: Does the subject of this proposition supposit personally and for singulars? In that case it is false, because each [of its] singulars is false. [This] is clear by induction. Or does it supposit simply and for a common form? In

²¹⁶As it stands, the second part of this is trivially true. What Ockham means is something more like “being predicated universally of something, and of nothing but that.”

²¹⁷As in the example earlier in the paragraph, ‘Every man is risible and nothing other than a man is risible’.

²¹⁸That is, ‘sound’ and ‘apprehensible by a power of hearing’.

²¹⁹‘Suppositum’ is used here in the metaphysical sense, for an entity in which other entities inhere (for example, accidents in a substance, matter and form in the composite), but which does not itself inhere in any other entity. The term comes from the theology of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

that case it is false, because no common form is — either first or not first — a person. For the notion of a person is inconsistent with every common [entity], even according to them.

5 (19) It is the same for ‘The singular is first one in number’, ‘The individual is first distinguished from the common’, and so on for many such [propositions] that are literally false, and yet the corresponding signate acts are true.

10 (20) Thus the error of all those who believed there to be something in reality besides the singular, and that humanity, which is distinct from singulars, is something in individuals and belongs to their essence, led them into these and many other logical errors. But it is not the logician’s job to consider this, as Porphyry says in [his] prologue.²²⁰ Rather, the logician only has to say that simple supposition is not [a term’s supposition] for its significate. When the term is a common one, [the logician] has to say that
15 simple supposition is for something common to its significates. But whether what is common is [something] in reality or not, that is not his business.

(21) To (c) the third [objection], it must be said that an utterance is predicated of an utterance, and likewise an intention of an intention, not for itself but for a thing. Therefore, by a proposition like ‘A man is an animal’,
20 even though an utterance is predicated of an utterance or an intention of an intention, it is not denoted that the one utterance *is* the other, or that the one intention *is* the other. Rather, it is denoted [by the proposition] that what the subject stands or supposits for is what the predicate stands or supposits for.

25 (22) But suppose it is still objected against what was said above that ‘Pepper²²¹ is sold here and at Rome’ is true, and yet no singular [of that proposition] is true. [The proposition] is not true except insofar as ‘pepper’ supposits simply. And [the term] does not supposit for an intention.²²² Therefore, simple supposition is not for an intention.

30 (23) [To this] it must be said that the proposition is simply false if it has a coupled extreme,²²³ because each [of its] singulars is false. It is also false according as [the term ‘pepper’] has simple supposition, because no one wants to buy the general pepper, whether that is in external reality or in the soul. Rather everyone means to buy some singular thing that he does not have.

²²⁰ That is, it is not the job of the logician to solve the problem of universals. See Porphyry, *Isagoge*, Paul Vincent Spade, tr., (Stillwater, OK: Translation Clearing House, 1986), p. 1 lines 14–23.

²²¹ To get the force of this example, you have to realize that ‘pepper’ is not a mass noun here. It means “a pepper.”

²²² The *intention* is not sold both here and at Rome.

²²³ That is, if it has the compound predicate ‘sold here and [sold] at Rome’.

(24) But the proposition is true if it is a copulative [proposition], namely, [with the sense] “Pepper is sold and pepper is sold at Rome”. For both parts are true for different singulars. Thus ‘Pepper is sold here and at Rome’ is not more true than ‘A singular pepper is sold here and at Rome’.

5

[Chapter 70]

(1) Personal supposition can be divided first into discrete and common supposition. Discrete supposition is [the kind] in which a proper name of something supposits, or a demonstrative pronoun taken significantly.
 10 This kind of supposition makes a proposition singular. For example, ‘Socrates is a man’, ‘This man is a man’, and so on.

(2) If it is said that ‘This herb grows in my garden’ is true, and yet the subject does not have discrete supposition, it must be said [in reply] that the proposition is literally false. But there is understood by it a proposition
 15 like ‘*Such* an herb grows in my garden’, where the subject supposits determinately. Thus, you must observe that when some proposition is literally false, but yet has some true sense, [then] when it is taken in that [true] sense, [its] subject and predicate should have the same supposition they have in the [proposition] that is literally true.

20 (3) Common personal supposition occurs when a common term supposits, as in ‘A man runs’, ‘Every man is an animal’.

(4) Common personal supposition is divided into confused supposition and determinate [supposition]. Determinate supposition occurs when one can descend to singulars by some disjunctive [proposition]. For example,
 25 it correctly follows: “A man runs; therefore, this man runs, or that [man runs]”, and so on. Therefore, supposition is called “determinate” because by such supposition it is denoted that the proposition is true for some determinate singular. This determinate singular all by itself, without the truth of another singular, is enough to verify the proposition. For example, for the
 30 truth of ‘A man runs’ it is required that some definite singular be true. Any one suffices, even assuming that every other one would be false. Yet often many or even all [of them] are true.

(5) Therefore, there is a fixed rule that when one can descend to singulars under a common term by a disjunctive proposition, and from each
 35 singular the [original] proposition is inferred, then the term has determinate personal supposition. Therefore, in the proposition ‘A man is an animal’, both extremes have determinate supposition. For it follows: “A man is an animal; therefore, this man is an animal, or that [man is an animal]”, and so

on. Likewise it follows: “This man is an animal” — pointing to any [man] whatever — “therefore, a man is an animal.” Likewise, it follows: “A man is an animal; therefore, a man is *this* animal or [a man is] *that* animal or [a man is]²²⁴ *that one*”, and so on. And it correctly follows: “A man is *this* animal” — pointing to any animal — “therefore, a man is an animal.” Therefore, both ‘man’ and ‘animal’ have determinate supposition.

(6) Confused personal supposition is every personal supposition of a common term that is not determinate [supposition]. It is divided, because one kind is merely confused supposition, and another kind is confused and distributive supposition.

(7) Merely confused personal supposition occurs when a common term supposits personally and one cannot descend to singulars by a disjunctive [proposition] without making a change on the part of the other extreme, but [one *can* descend to singulars] by a proposition with a disjoint predicate, and one can infer [the original proposition] from any singular. For example, in ‘Every man is an animal’, ‘animal’ supposits merely confusedly, because one cannot descend under ‘animal’ to its contents by a disjunctive [proposition]. For it does not follow: “Every man is an animal; therefore, every man is *this* animal, or every man is *that* animal, or every man is [that] *other* animal”, and so on. But one is quite able to descend to a proposition with a disjoint predicate [made up] of singular [terms]. For it correctly follows: “Every man is an animal; therefore, every man is *this* animal or *that one* or *that one*”, and so on. And it is plain that this predicate is truly predicated of every man. Therefore, the universal [proposition] is simply true. Likewise, the [original proposition] is inferred from any content under ‘animal’. For it correctly follows: “Every man is *this* animal” — pointing to any animal whatever — “therefore, every man is an animal.”

(8) Confused and distributive supposition occurs when one can descend in some way copulatively, if [the term] has many contents, and from no one [of them] is [the original proposition] formally inferred. For example, in ‘Every man is an animal’, the subject supposits confusedly and distributively. For it follows: “Every man is an animal; therefore, *this* man is an animal and *that* man is an animal,” and so on. And it does not formally follow: “*This* man is an animal” — pointing to any [man] whatever — “therefore, every man is an animal.”

²²⁴The insertions in square brackets are absolutely essential here. Ockham is being compressed to the point of being misleading. Without the insertions, the inference as it stands would characterize *merely confused* supposition, not determinate supposition. See para. 7, below.

(9) I said “one can descend *in some way* copulatively”.²²⁵ I said this because one cannot always descend in the same way. For sometimes one can descend without making any changes in the propositions except that in the first one²²⁶ a common term is in subject or predicate position, and afterwards²²⁷ singulars [of that common term] are taken, as is clear in the above example. But sometimes one can descend [only] after making some change — in fact, [sometimes only] after removing something in the one proposition that occurs in the other [and] that is neither a common term nor contained under a common term. For example, in saying ‘Every man besides Socrates runs’, one can correctly descend copulatively in some way to some singulars. For it correctly follows: “Every man besides Socrates runs; therefore, Plato runs, and Cicero runs,” and so on for [men] other than Socrates. But in these singulars something is omitted that occurred in the universal [proposition and] that was neither a common term nor a sign²²⁸ distributing it, namely, the exceptive word together with the part taken out.²²⁹ So one cannot descend in the same way under ‘Every man besides Socrates runs’ and under ‘Every man runs’, and one cannot descend to all the same [things] either.

(10) The first kind of confused and distributive supposition²³⁰ is called “confused and distributive mobile supposition”. The second kind²³¹ is called “confused and distributive immobile [supposition]”.

[Chapter 72]

(1) Doubts can be raised about the above. (a) First, how does ‘man’ supposit in ‘Socrates was a man’? (Assume that Socrates does not [now] exist.) Likewise, how do the terms supposit in [propositions] about the past and in [propositions] about the future and about the possible, and in other propositions about a mode?

²²⁵ See the preceding paragraph.

²²⁶ That is, the one *from* which one is descending.

²²⁷ That is, in the proposition *to* which one descends.

²²⁸ That is, a quantifier.

²²⁹ This is a bit of technical jargon. The “exceptive word” is of course the syncategorema ‘besides’. The “part taken out” (= *pars extra capta*) is the object of the proposition ‘besides’. Here it is ‘Socrates’. It is “taken out” in the sense that it is excluded from the claim in the rest of the proposition.

²³⁰ That is, the kind in ‘Every man runs’.

²³¹ That is, the kind in ‘Every man besides Socrates runs’.

(2) The reason for the doubt is that it was said earlier²³² that a term never supposit for anything except [for that] of which it is verified. But ‘man’, if Socrates does not exist, is not verified of Socrates, because ‘Socrates is a man’ is false then. Therefore, it does not supposit for Socrates, and consequently it does not supposit determinately.

(3) (b) Second, there is a doubt about ‘A white man is a man’, ‘[The one] singing the Mass is a man’, ‘The creating is God’, assuming that no one is white and that no one is singing the Mass and that God does not create.²³³ What do the subjects supposit for? For it seems that [they supposit] for no thing,²³⁴ because they are not verified of any such [thing]. Neither [do they supposit] for themselves, because in that case they would not have personal supposition. Therefore, they do not determinately supposit for anything. Consequently, they do not have determinate supposition.

(4) (c) The third doubt is how the subject supposits in ‘A horse is promised to you’, [or] ‘Twenty pounds are owed to you’. The reason for the doubt is that if the [subject] term supposits for its contents,²³⁵ [the propositions] seem false, since each [of their] singulars is false. So if the subject term supposits determinately, the proposition is false.

(5) (d) The fourth doubt is about ‘He is deprived of sight’, ‘He is naturally apt to have sight’, and so on for many others.

(6) (e) Fifth, what [kind of] supposition does the predicate have in ‘Genera and species are second substances’?

(7) (f) Sixth, [there is a doubt] about ‘An action is a thing outside the soul’, ‘A relation is a true thing’, ‘Creation is really the same as God’, and many such [propositions].

(8) (g) The seventh [doubt] is about ‘He twice was white’. For it seems that ‘white’ does not supposit determinately [there].

(9) (h) The eighth doubt: How do the subject and predicate supposit in ‘Only an animal is a man’.

(10) (i) Again, [there is a doubt] about ‘The Apostle says this’, ‘England fights’, ‘Drink the cup’, ‘The prow is in the sea’, ‘Your goodness acts mercifully’, ‘The clemency of the prince governs the realm’, and such.²³⁶

(11) To (a) the first of these [doubts], it must be said that in all such [propositions] the terms supposit personally. On this point, it must be un-

²³²See Ch. 63, para. 6, above.

²³³In other words, what about non-denoting subjects?

²³⁴That is, “thing” in the sense of an extramental, non-linguistic entity.

²³⁵That is, for things “contained” under the term. In short, for individuals.

²³⁶This paragraph is missing in several manuscripts. All these examples deal with “improper” supposition. See Ch. 77.



derstood that a term supposits personally when it supposits for its significates, or for [things] that *were* its significates or *will be* or *can be*. The earlier statement²³⁷ is to be understood in this sense. For it was stated above²³⁸ that ‘to signify’ is taken like this in one sense.

5 (12) But it must be understood that [a term] does not supposit for those [things] with respect to just any verb whatever. Rather, [a term] can supposit for [the things] it signifies, taking ‘signify’ strictly,²³⁹ with respect to any verb whatever, if [the term] signifies any such things.²⁴⁰ But it cannot supposit for what *were* its significates except with respect to a verb about
10 the past. Therefore, each such proposition has to be distinguished, insofar as the term can supposit for [things] that are or for [things] that were. Likewise, [a term] cannot supposit for what *will be* except with respect to a verb about the future. Therefore, the proposition [containing a verb about the
15 future] has to be distinguished, insofar as the term can supposit for [things] that are or for [things] that will be. Likewise, [a term] cannot supposit for what *can be* [its] significates, but *are* not, except with respect to a verb about the possible or about the contingent. Therefore, all such [propositions] have to be distinguished, insofar as the subject can supposit for [things] that are or for [things] that are able to be or can be. Therefore,
20 all the following have to be distinguished: ‘Every man was white’, ‘Every white²⁴¹ will be a man’, ‘Every white is able to be a man’, ‘Every man can run’.

 (13) Yet it must be understood that this distinction does not fall on the part of the predicate, but only on the part of the subject. Thus, ‘Socrates
25 was white’ [or] ‘Socrates can be white’ does not have to be distinguished. This [is] because “the predicate appellates its form”.²⁴² This is to be understood not in the sense that [the predicate] supposits for itself or for a concept, but [in the sense] that by such a proposition [*P*] it is denoted that [another] proposition [*Q*] in which the very same predicate, under its own
30 form (that is, it itself and none other), is predicated of that for which the subject [of *P*] supposits, or of a pronoun pointing precisely to that for which the subject [of *P*] supposits, *was* true if the proposition [*P*] is about the past, or that it *will be* true if the proposition [*P*] is about the future, or that it is *possible* if the first proposition [*P*] is about the possible, or [that it is] *neces-*

²³⁷See para. 2 above, and the reference in n. 232 there.

²³⁸See Ch. 33, para. 2, above (the second sense of ‘signify’).

²³⁹That is, in the first sense of the word. See Ch. 33, para. 1, above.

²⁴⁰Some terms will fail this condition. For example, the terms ‘dodo’, ‘passenger pigeon’, etc.

²⁴¹That is, every white *thing*.

²⁴²See Part II, Ch. 7.



sary if the first proposition [*P*] is about the necessary, or *per se*²⁴³ if the first proposition [*P*] is about [what is] *per se*, or *accidental* if the first proposition [*P*] is about [what is] accidental, and so on for the other [kinds of] modal propositions.

5 (14) For example, for the truth of ‘A white was black’ it is not required that ‘A white is black’ was ever true. Rather, it is required that ‘*This* is black’ was true, pointing to something the subject supposits for in ‘A white was black’. Likewise, for the truth of ‘The true will be impossible’ it is not required that ‘The true is impossible’ ever be true. Rather, it is required that ‘*This* is impossible’ will be true (if it is formed²⁴⁴), pointing to something the subject supposits for in ‘The true will be impossible’. Likewise for the others. But these cases will be discussed more fully in the treatise on propositions and on consequences.²⁴⁵

15 (15) In the present case, I say that in ‘Socrates was white’ the predicate supposits for Socrates. Similarly, it is the case for all [propositions] about the past and about the future and about a mode that [their] terms suppositing personally supposit for what are or were or will be or can be [their] supposita. And if there is no sign²⁴⁶ or negation or any other obstacle, they supposit determinately.

20 (16) But then, as for the reasoning to the contrary,²⁴⁷ it must be said that it was correctly stated that a term never supposits for anything except [for that] of which it is verified. Nevertheless, it was *not* said that [a term] never supposits for anything except [for that] of which it is verified by a verb about the present. Instead it is enough that sometimes it be verified [of that thing] by a verb about the past when it supposits for it with respect to a verb about the past, or by a verb about the future when it supposits with respect to a verb about the future, and so on. This is clear for ‘A white was a man’, assuming that no man is now white but that Socrates was white. In that case ‘white’ supposits for Socrates, if it is taken for [things] that were. Therefore, ‘white’ is verified of Socrates not by a verb about the present but by a verb about the past. For ‘Socrates was white’ is true.

30 (17) But a doubt still remains. What does the predicate supposit for in ‘Socrates was white’? If [it supposits] for [things] that are, [the proposition] is false.

²⁴³On this notion, see Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I, 4, 73^a21–74^a2. The Oxford translation renders the term as “essential.”

²⁴⁴Remember, propositions are *tokens* for Ockham, so that their existence is not guaranteed.

²⁴⁵See Part II, Ch. 7, and Part III–3, Chs. 10–12.

²⁴⁶That is, quantifier.

²⁴⁷See para. 2 above.

(18) It must be said that the predicate supposits for [things] that were, whether or not the same [things] were as are [now]. Therefore, in this case there is an exception to the rule I stated elsewhere,²⁴⁸ namely, that a term, no matter where it occurs, always supposits for [things] that are, or can supposit for them. For I understood that rule [as applying] to a term occurring on the part of the subject. But when [the term] occurs on the part of the predicate, [the rule] is not true in every case. Thus, assuming that no man is now white, but that there were many white men earlier, in that case in ‘A man was white’ the predicate does not supposit for [things] that are but only for [things] that were. Hence in general the predicate in [a proposition] about the past does not supposit for anything other than for what was, and in [a proposition] about the future [it does not supposit for anything other than] for what will be, and in [a proposition] about the possible [it does not supposit for anything other than] for what can be. Nevertheless, along with this it is required that the very same predicate be predicated of what the subject supposits for, in the way stated above.²⁴⁹

(19) To (b) the second doubt, it must be said that if no man is white and if no man is singing the Mass and if God is not creating, [then] literally it must be granted that in the propositions mentioned the subjects supposit for nothing. Yet they are taken significatively, because being taken significatively or suppositing personally can come about in two ways: either (i) because the term supposits for some significate or (ii) because it is denoted to supposit for something or because it is denoted not to supposit for anything. For in such affirmative propositions, the term is always denoted to supposit for something, and therefore if it supposits for nothing the proposition is false. But in negative propositions, the term is denoted *not* to supposit for anything, or to supposit for something of which the predicate is truly denied, and therefore such a negative has two causes of [its] truth.²⁵⁰ For example, ‘A white man does not exist’ has two causes of truth: (i) because a man does not exist and therefore is not white, or (ii) because a

²⁴⁸See William of Ockham, *Expositio super librum Elenchorum Aristotelis*, Ca. 2, sect. 9, Francesco del Punta, ed., (“Opera philosophica,” vol. 3; St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1979), p. 28 lines 125–135: “For this reason, you have to know that whenever a common term occurring on the part of the subject is matched with a verb about the past, the proposition has to be distinguished insofar as the subject can supposit for [things] that are, that is, for [the things] of which [the subject] is actually verified by a verb about the present, or for [things] of which [the subject] was verified at some time in this way. This is because a term, wherever it occurs, always has to supposit for [the things] of which it is actually verified, but only by reason of [something] adjoined [to it] can it supposit for [the things] of which it was verified at some time.”

²⁴⁹See para. 13, above.

²⁵⁰That is, two alternative truth-conditions, either one of which is sufficient.

man does exist and yet he is not white.²⁵¹ But in the proposition ‘A white man is a man’, if no man is white, the subject is taken significatively and personally, not because it supposits for something, but because it is denoted to supposit for something. Therefore, because [in fact] it supposits for nothing, although it is denoted to supposit for something, [therefore] the proposition is simply false.

(20) Therefore, if anything said above seems to be inconsistent with this, it must be understood [as applying only] in the case of an affirmative and true proposition. For in an affirmative and true proposition, if the term stands personally, it always supposits for some significate, in the manner explained earlier.²⁵²

(21) Suppose someone says, “‘It supposits’ and ‘It supposits for nothing’ do not go together, because it follows: ‘It supposits; therefore, it supposits for something’.” It must be said that [this] does *not* follow. Instead it follows: “‘It supposits; therefore, it is denoted to supposit for something or denoted to supposit for nothing.’”

(22) To (c) the third [doubt], it has to be said that such propositions [as] ‘A horse is promised to you’ [and] ‘Twenty pounds are owed to you’ are literally false, because each [of their] singulars is false, as is clear by induction. Yet if such terms occur on the part of the predicate,²⁵³ [the propositions] can be granted after a fashion. In that case, one must say that terms following such verbs have, by virtue of those verbs, merely confused supposition. Therefore, one cannot descend disjunctively to singulars, but only by a disjunctive predicate, counting not only present [things] but also future [ones]. Thus, it does not follow: “I promise you a horse; therefore, I promise you this horse or I promise you that horse,” and so on for present singulars. But it does correctly follow: “I promise you a horse; therefore, I promise you this horse or that one or that one”, and so on, counting all [horses], both present ones and future ones. This is because such verbs equivalently include verbs about the future. Thus ‘I promise you a horse’ amounts to ‘You will have a horse by my gift’.

(23) But does ‘horse’ supposit merely confusedly in ‘I promise you a horse’, speaking literally? It must be said that, strictly speaking, ‘horse’ does not supposit merely confusedly [there], because it does not supposit [at all], since it is a part of an extreme. The rule given about determinate supposition above²⁵⁴ is about [terms] that strictly speaking supposit, because

²⁵¹Actually, we have to say more than that. We have to suppose that no *other* man exists who *is* white.

²⁵²See para. 11–12, above.

²⁵³As in ‘I promise you a horse’ or ‘He owes you twenty pounds’.

²⁵⁴At the end of para. 15, above.

they are the extremes of propositions and not merely the parts of extremes. Nevertheless, extending the name, it can be said that ‘horse’ supposit merely confusedly. This is because it follows such a verb. And so, in general, a common term that follows such a verb so that it is not merely a part of the extreme always supposit merely confusedly and not determinately. But [it does supposit] personally.

(24) Thus, you have to know that whenever in any such proposition about the present or about the past or about the future there occurs a verb by virtue of which it is denoted that some [other] proposition will be true, or ought to be true, in which a common term appears on the part of the predicate, and it is not denoted for any proposition in which a singular [term] contained under that common [term] occurs on the part of the predicate that it will be true, then (taking ‘supposit’ in the sense in which a part of an extreme can supposit) the common term does not supposit determinately. That is, one cannot descend to singulars by a disjunctive [proposition] but only by a proposition with a disjoint extreme or with a disjoint part of an extreme. But now it is denoted by ‘I promise you a horse’, in virtue of the verb ‘promise’, that ‘I give you a horse’ or something like that will be true, or that it ought to be true sometime. And it is not denoted that any [proposition] like ‘I give you *this* horse’ — pointing to any horse whatever — will be or ought to be true. Therefore, it does not follow: “I promise you a horse; therefore, I promise you *this* horse or I promise you *that* horse.” The case is similar for such [propositions] as ‘I owe you twenty pounds’, ‘He is indebted to Socrates to the extent of twenty marks’.

(25) So then it is clear that ‘I promise you a horse’ can be granted, and yet ‘A horse to you is promised’ should not in any way be granted literally. The reason for this is that in ‘A horse to you is promised’, ‘horse’ is the subject and not a part of the subject. Therefore, it has to supposit determinately, since neither a sign²⁵⁵ nor a negation nor anything that includes anything like that precedes [the term ‘horse’]. Therefore, one has to be able to descend to singulars. But in ‘I promise you a horse’, ‘horse’ is not an extreme but a part of an extreme. For the whole ‘promising you a horse’ is the predicate, because ‘I promise you a horse’ and ‘I am promising you a horse’ are equivalent. So ‘horse’ is a part of an extreme. Therefore, just as it does not have to supposit, properly speaking, so [too] it does not have to supposit determinately. Consequently, one does not have to be able to descend to a disjunctive [proposition].

(26) But can one descend [at all] under a part of an extreme? It must be said that sometimes one can descend. For example, it correctly follows:

²⁵⁵That is, quantifier.

“He gives Socrates a horse; therefore, he gives him *this* horse or he gives him *that* one,” and so on. But sometimes one cannot descend, on account of some special reason like the one stated in the present case. And so, even though ‘I promise you a horse’ is granted, nevertheless ‘A horse to you is promised’ is not to be granted literally. Yet it *is* granted [anyway], because it is generally *taken* for ‘Someone promises you a horse’. Now it will be explained in the treatise on the proposition why the inference “Someone promises you a horse; therefore, a horse is promised to you” is not valid.²⁵⁶

(27) To (d) the fourth [doubt], it must be said that in [propositions] like ‘He is deprived of sight’, [the term] ‘sight’, which is part of an extreme, does not properly supposit. Nevertheless, in the sense in which it *can* supposit, it supposits confusedly and distributively. For [the proposition] is equivalent to ‘He has no sight’, where ‘sight’ is confused negatively confusedly and distributively. But [the term ‘sight’] does not supposit confusedly and distributively in every proposition expounding²⁵⁷ [‘He is deprived of sight’]. For [it does] not [supposit confusedly and distributively] in the affirmative [exponent], namely, in ‘He is by nature apt to have sight’. Rather, in this [affirmative exponent the term] supposits in a way determinately, that is, [determinately] for [things²⁵⁸] that were sometime possible — although not for all of them, but [only] for those were able to inhere in him.

(28) To (e) the fifth [doubt], it must be said that literally ‘Genera and species are substances’ is false. But ‘Genera and species are second substances’ can be granted. In that case, ‘second substances’ supposits personally and determinately, because the name ‘second substance’ is imposed to signify second intentions that convey true substances.

(29) Therefore, the opinion is false that says that ‘substance’ can have simple supposition and yet supposit for species and genera. But if sometimes you find in some author [the statement] that genera and species are substances, [those] authoritative [statements] should be expounded²⁵⁹ either (i) [so] that a signate act is understood by an exercised act. Thus, by ‘Genera and species are substances’ there is understood ‘Of genera and species there is predicated substance’. And [that act] should be exercised as ‘A man is a substance’, ‘An animal is a substance’, and so on. Or (ii) the authoritative [statement] should be expounded [so] that ‘substance’ is equivocal. For sometimes it signifies true things that are substances really distinct from every real accident and from every second intention. ‘Substance’ is taken properly then. [But] sometimes it signifies the inten-

²⁵⁶See Part II, Ch. 7. But this example does not occur there.

²⁵⁷That is, contained in the analysis of.

²⁵⁸In particular, for “sights” — that is, for visual faculties.

²⁵⁹See n. 257, above.



tions that convey substances in the first sense. And then, under that understanding, ‘Genera and species are substances’ would be granted, taking the predicate personally. But in that case [‘substance’] would not be taken properly, but rather improperly and transumptively.

5 **(30)** To (f) the sixth [doubt], it must be said that different [people] use such abstract [terms] in different ways. For sometimes they use them for things, [and] sometimes they use them for names. If [they are used] in the first way, then it should be said that they supposit for [the things] for which their [corresponding] concrete [forms] supposit, according to Aristotle’s view.²⁶⁰ In that case, ‘Fire is calefactive²⁶¹’ and ‘Fire is calefaction’ are equipollent, [and] likewise ‘A man is a father’ and ‘A man is paternity’. Indeed properly speaking such concrete and abstract [terms], if the abstract [forms] are imposed to signify precisely things, are synonymous names according to the view of Aristotle and of many philosophers.

15 **(31)** This is not so surprising, as can be convincingly shown. For I take the proposition ‘Creation is a true thing’, and I ask: Does ‘creation’ supposit [there] for something or for nothing? If [it supposits] for nothing, [then] either [‘Creation is a true thing’] will not be a proposition or else it will be a false proposition. If [‘creation’] does supposit for something, [then it supposits] either for an external thing, or for a thing in the soul, or for an aggregate [of the two].²⁶² If [it supposits] for an external thing, [then] I ask: For which one? Only God can be given [as an answer]. Therefore, ‘creation’ supposits for God just as much as ‘creating’ does. And this can just as easily be said about every other [example].

25 **(32)** If [‘creation’] supposits for something in the soul (for example, according to some [people],²⁶³ it supposits for a relation of reason), that is impossible, because in that case ‘Creation is a true thing’ is impossible. Likewise, there would never be creation except in the soul, and God would not be creative except by means of an act of a soul that forms such a relation of reason. Similarly, it could just as easily be said that ‘calefaction’ supposits for such a being or relation of reason. And no argument can be given to prove that this is a relation in a created agent any more than in the uncreated one. Therefore, according to the Philosopher’s view, there is no thing that can be signified or connoted by such a concrete [term] unless in
30 the same way it is signified or connoted by the [corresponding] abstract [term]. Therefore, according to him, if both are imposed to signify a thing, they will be synonymous names.

²⁶⁰See Ch. 6, above.

²⁶¹That is, it makes things hot.

²⁶²This odd alternative is not discussed any further.

²⁶³For instance, Thomas Aquinas. See his *Summa theologiae* I, q. 45, a. 3, ad 1.

(33) It does no good to say that the mode of signifying blocks [their] synonymy. For a difference in mode of signifying does not block synonymy except when on account of the different mode of signifying something is signified or connoted by the one [name] that is not connoted or not signified by the other one in the same way. This is clear, for example, in ‘man’, ‘man’s’, ‘men’.²⁶⁴ Likewise, ‘man’, [and] ‘risible’. Likewise, ‘intellect’, ‘will’ and ‘soul’.²⁶⁵ Likewise ‘creating’, ‘governing’,²⁶⁶ ‘damning’, ‘beatifying’, and so on for all the others. These are verified of the same [thing], and yet they are not synonymous. If a mere difference in the mode signifying of affected synonymy, I would just as easily say that ‘tunic’ and ‘cloak’ are not synonyms because ‘tunic’ ends in ‘c’ and ‘cloak’ does not. So too for many other cases.

(34) So synonymy is not blocked by such a difference [in mode of signifying], either with respect to the ending or with respect to accidents like gender and such, or with respect to other [features], like [being] an adjective and [being] a substantive and so on. Yet when there is a different mode of signifying *properly* speaking, there is no synonymy. But this does not happen in the present case, as is plainly clear, because a concrete [term] and the [corresponding] abstract [term] can have exactly the same mode of signifying when the concrete and the abstract are not like the ones that belong to the first mode,²⁶⁷ as was said in the beginning of this treatise.²⁶⁸

(35) So, then, such abstract [terms], when they are taken significatively for things, are names synonymous with [their] concrete [forms], according to Aristotle’s meaning. But according to the theologians, one perhaps has to say something else in certain cases, although not in all.²⁶⁹

(36) Sometimes, however, men use such abstract [terms] in the way the [corresponding] concrete [terms] signify. For example, they do this for ‘privation’, ‘negation’, ‘contradiction’, and the like. So in ‘A man is a relation’, ‘relation’ supposits significatively and for relative names.²⁷⁰ Likewise, ‘similitude’ sometimes supposits for a relative name, that is, for the name

²⁶⁴The “modes of signifying” here are: nominative singular, genitive singular, and nominative/accusative plural, respectively. Presumably, Ockham intends these names to be synonymous, even though they differ in their “modes of signifying.” But in the examples that follow, there is no synonymy, because different things are “connoted.”

²⁶⁵Ockham held that there was no real distinction between the soul and its “faculties,” such as the intellect and the will.

²⁶⁶In the sense in which God “governs” the world.

²⁶⁷That is, concretes and abstracts of the kind discussed in Ch. 5, above.

²⁶⁸See Ch. 6, above.

²⁶⁹See Ch. 7, above.

²⁷⁰This is badly put. What Ockham means is that it supposits significatively for the same things relative names supposit for. So too in the following sentences.

‘similar’. Likewise, ‘creation’ [sometimes supposits] for the name ‘creating’, and ‘quantity’ for the name ‘quantum’, and so [too] for many such abstract [names] that do not have concrete [forms] corresponding to them [and that] supposit for things distinct from the things that are signified by the abstract [forms], according to Aristotle’s meaning.

(37) Therefore, for all such abstract [terms], in the same way it is granted that the predicate ‘thing outside the soul’ is predicated of them, it should be granted that their concrete [form is predicated] of them, and the same [thing] for which their concrete form supposits.²⁷¹ For as has often been said, if such abstract [terms] are precisely names of first intention, they will be names synonymous with their concrete [forms], according to Aristotle’s opinion, as it seems to me.

(38) This is the reason why few such abstract [names] are found [to be used] by Aristotle. For he regarded all such [pairs as] ‘man/humanity’, ‘horse/horsehood’, ‘animal/animality’, ‘ass/asininity’, ‘cow/cowship’, ‘quantum/quantity’, ‘relative/relation’, ‘similar/similitude’, ‘calective/calection’, ‘father/fatherhood’, ‘ternary/trinity’, ‘dual/duality’, and the like as synonyms when they are names precisely of first intention.

(39) But according to the speakers’ usage, abstract [terms] are sometimes names of second intention or second imposition, and in that case they are not synonymous [with their corresponding concrete terms].

(40) Other [people], however, say that all such abstract names signify distinct things, or relations of reason, and supposit for them.

(41) To (g) the seventh doubt, it must be said that in ‘Socrates twice was white’ there occurs a word that equivalently includes a negation, namely, the word ‘twice’. Thus, in virtue of this word, [the proposition] ‘Socrates twice was white’ has a negative exponent. For it is equivalent to ‘Socrates first was white, and at some time afterwards he was not white, and after that he was white’.²⁷² Because of the negative [exponent that is] equivalently included, [the term ‘white’] does not stand merely determinately so that one can descend by a disjunctive [proposition] to pronouns or proper names expressing the [things] for which the predicate supposits.

(42) The case is similar for ‘Socrates begins to be white’, ‘A man ceases to be literate’, and in general for [all] such [propositions] that have a negative exponent.

²⁷¹I’ve done the best I can with this sentence, although I suspect there is a corruption of the Latin text here. I cannot make good sense of it as it stands.

²⁷²The three conjuncts here are three “exponents” giving the analysis of the original sentence. Note that the second one, as Ockham says, is negative.

(43) The same [thing] holds for (h) the other doubt. ‘Only an animal is a man’ has an exclusive word²⁷³ on account of which [the proposition] has a negative exponent. Therefore, neither the subject nor the predicate supposit determinately.

- 5 (44) To (i) the ninth [doubt], it must be said that if [the proposition] is taken literally, the terms supposit the same way they do in other [propositions]. But according to the speakers’ usage they supposit improperly for other [things].

²⁷³Namely, the ‘only’.