

UNDERSTANDING ANALOGY—PART II

II. Analogy of Proportionality

The predicate ‘good’ can be said of a number of different subjects. We may say that a pie is good, that a cat is good, that the boy Jerome is good, and that God is good. In each instance we are referring to a character which is the object of will or appetite. But in each case we are using the predicate in a different sense. A pie is good to eat; the cat is good because it catches mice and is affectionate; Jerome is good because he does what he is asked and is respectful to his elders; but God is good because all goodness emanates from Him.

Note how each of the instances to which it is applied, each analogate, IS the object of will or appetite and deserves to be called ‘good’. Each is ‘good’ in a sense proportionate to its level of being, and between the different analogates there is a proportion of proportions, a proportionality. One finds this in mathematics—

3 is to 7 as 6 is to 14 as 9 is to 21 as 12 is to 28

Let us take another illustration, the predicate ‘being’ said of its analogates. Thus—

God is a being
Creature is a being

And again—

Substance is a being
Accident is a being

In each case the predicate ‘being’ is said truly of each analogate. Each is an instance of something that exercises existence, but differently in each case.

When we contrast God and the creature as beings we are saying that—

essence of God is proportion- essence of creature
be of God ate to be of creature

In God’s case his existence is necessary—He cannot be-not. The creature’s existence, in contrast, is contingent—it can be-not!

Similarly, when we contrast the being of substance with the being of accident we are saying that—

essence of substance is proportion- essence of accident
be of substance ate to be of accident

The essence of substance is be-in-self; that of accident is be-in-other. Each involves an exercise of real being: each exercises be (existence) but in diverse manners.

Now, note carefully that whereas in mathematics the proportions are *simply* the same—so that, for instance, the relation of 3 to 7 is identical with the relation of 7 to 21, with analogical proportionality the proportions are only *secondarily* (*secundum quid*) the same, but *simply* diverse. Hence, when God is named being and when a creature is named being, the name ‘being’ is analogous, not univocal. We could illustrate it by using \approx to signify ‘*secondarily* the same’.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{essence of God} & & \text{essence of creature} \\ \text{be of God} & \approx & \text{be of creature} \end{array}$$

The following schema will assist.

Man	by reason of	proportion to	walk]
Horse	by reason of	proportion to	walk] is a walker
Cow	by reason of	proportion to	walk] <i>univocally</i>
Dog	by reason of	proportion to	walk]

In contrast—

God	by reason of	proportion to	be]
Creature	by reason of	proportion to	be] is a being
Substance	by reason of	proportion to	be] <i>analogically</i>
Accident	by reason of	proportion to	be]

When we use an analogical predicate the term *does not signify* exactly the same character in each. Nor does it signify a character completely different. There is some sameness between the analogates and some un-sameness, but more un-sameness than sameness—more *dissimilarity* than *similarity* between them.

Division of Analogy of proportionality

There is a further twist in the story whose force will become obvious as we relate it. Often, in speech, we will use a term with exaggeration for effect. It is a legitimate use of speech in which imagination is blended with reason in one or other of the figures of speech.

Thus, we may refer to a storm at sea as ‘raging’, or ‘angry’, and then we are likening the effects of the operation of the elements, sea, wind and sky, to the animal passion. In such a case we are using metaphor and the term is not found *formally* in the subject to which it is applied only *virtually*. That is, what is found are only its effects. The two modes of proportionality can be contrasted as shown below:

Analogical term ‘being’

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \text{Here ‘being’ is} & [& \text{essence of God} & & \text{essence of creature} \\ \text{found formally} & [& \text{be of God} & \approx & \text{be of creature} \end{array}$$



Analogical term 'angry'

Here 'angry' is [angry animal a stormy sea
 found virtually [harming a hurter wrecking ships ≈

Accordingly, **Analogy of Proportionality**—where the character referred to is found intrinsically in all the analogates—is divided as follows;

Analogy of Proportionality is either:	[analogy of <i>proper</i> [proportionality [or: [[analogy of <i>metaphoric</i> [proportionality	& then the character is found formally in each analogate;
		& then the character is found formally in one & only virtually in the other.

We can close by showing, in schematic form, the break-up of the various forms of analogy.

Analogy is either	[Analogies of Attribution [[[[Analogies of Proportionality [and then either, [or, [or	and then it applies truly to one only of the analogates and is attributed to the others;
		[analogy of <i>proper</i> [proportionality [or [[analogy of <i>metaphoric</i> [proportionality.