

Latin Notes, Chap 4, Marebun, Philosophy
of Abelard

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It must be noted a truth that it is permitted that the definition of a universal, either a genus or species, include only spoken words, & after this names are transferred to their things, as when it is said that species are made up from a genus and difference, this is a "thing not the species" from "thing genus." [Ergo species ex re generis]. When the nature of spoken words is explained according to signification, it is done now about words and then about things, & frequently the name of there is mutually transferred to the other. Where it comes about that many tracts on both logic & grammar about the translation of ambiguous names are greatly in error, not well distinguishing either the property of the impositives of names or the abuse of translation. Moreover Boethius in the Commentary greatly committs this confusion on account of translations.

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7 Where we may otherwise know
about universality and greatly
concerned with experience about the
accidents of a thing, say that
singular things not just forms are
distinct from one another, the truth
is that they are discrete in their
essences, that there is no way
that what is in one is in the other,
either that what is matter or that
what is form, because the personal
discreteness of each — according to
which, indeed, the one is not that one —
is not due to forms, but to that
diversity of essence.

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When we should call moreover rationality a difference this should be only if this is that rationality or it is necessary that that this is in the difference. But in the end we differ of a universal & said to be predicated univocally of a species, and when it is destroyed, by necessity, the thing is destroyed. But in truth the rationality is not in multiple things nor does a man perish on account of it. Just as Socrates himself & this man though it [the difference] it could also be that another [difference] which might exist or might never exist.

For as rationality is in this man so that it is not corrupted, so it could be that it is the man without it and likewise it would not be corrupted. It also could perhaps happen that it might be taken back by another thing, with the result that this one should be lacking, and never that one, & likewise it would never be corrupted on account of that one.