

Word and *Esse* in Anselm and Abelard

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The medieval controversy about the nature of universals was about nothing other than the relationship between word and thing. In order to understand the history and essence of the controversy, it is most important to examine the thoughts of the two key figures: Anselm and Abelard, respectively the revered authority among the realists (*reales*), and the founder of the nominalists (*nominales*). Though there certainly lies a crucial divergence in their views, nevertheless Abelard, as well as contemporary realists, owes many of his ideas, conceptions and terms to Anselm. Having examined elsewhere their views on the relationship between word and concept¹, I would like to examine here those on the relationship between word and the world. Through this examination I shall show how Anselm's metaphysical investigation about God's locution was transformed into Abelard's logical one about human words.

In the following, I shall first examine Anselm's theory of God's locution, showing how he explains it in terms of human language and in its relationship with created things, by examining some passages from his *Monologion* and *De grammatico*. Secondly, I shall focus my attention on Abelard's corresponding theories in his two commentaries on Porphyry, *Glosse 'ingredientibus'* and *Glossule 'nostrorum petitioni sociorum'*.

1. God's *locutio* and *esse* in Anselm

When one starts one's investigation into Anselm's insight on the relationship between word and things, one must realize that in Anselm the issue is primarily not concerned with human affairs but with God, the creator. For him the relationship originates in the that between God's speaking and reality. I shall approach this from two aspects: *locutio* and things; and things and their *essentia*.

1.1 God's speaking and our mental thinking by reason

When Anselm argues concerning 'creatio ex nihilo' in his *Monologion* that created things 'were not nothing...before they had been made', and 'a form' of the thing to be made must have existed in God beforehand, he goes on to identify this form with 'a kind of speaking (*locutio*) of the things in God's reason'. He compares this 'speaking' of God with a craftsman's mental conception, i.e., 'the mind's or reason's locution', of

¹ Shimizu, T., Words and Concepts in Anselm and Abelard, J.Biard, ed., *Langage, sciences, philosophie au XIIe siècle*, Paris:Vrin, 177-197, 1999.

his work in the planning stage². This idea of Anselm is in a sense remarkable, for it has traditionally been said--as Anselm himself says--that God created the world by His word or 'speaking' (*Monol.* cap.12³), or the Son is the Father's word or 'speaking' (*Monol.* cap.39-42). It was also said that the *forma* of each created thing was in God before creation as a word or *ratio*, but this was explained with a static image, e.g., as a primordial idea, and not as active locution. By contrast, here Anselm refers to this form as God's 'speaking', which means that he explains the form in God not as a static knowledge residing in the memory, but as an act of thinking something. Here we can recognize the first aspect of the relationship between word and thing. There happened speaking something in God, but the object of speaking was not there. By apprehending the point as speaking and not as word, the emphasis is put on the side of the act of speaking, or the agent, and not to the thing or fact that is spoken of.

Anselm indicates some correspondence between this 'speaking' of God and human mental locution, or thinking of the things themselves without using 'sensible signs', of which the two subspecies are: (a) imagining external figures of things and (b) understanding their essential structures according to reason, e.g., thinking of a man as a 'rational mortal animal'.⁴ This mental speaking is also distinguished from locution using sensible signs, i.e., 'voces rerum significativae' (vocal sounds that have the function of signifying things)⁵.

With reference to the various types of human speaking, the following points are to be noted: (1) Anselm may be said to identify this mental locution with the mental conceptions or 'passiones animae' in Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, chap.1⁶ and Boethius' commentary to it, describing it as a 'similitudo' of things which is 'naturalis' and 'the same for all races'. Neither Aristotle nor Boethius, however, describes the mental conceptions as words, nor as speaking, as Anselm does. He does so basing himself on the Christian, and especially Augustinian, tradition, and in this sense his theory of mental locution is a fusion of the Aristotelian and Augustinian traditions. As a result of this fusion, the relationship between mental locutions and corresponding things is not that of signs, but of likenesses, i.e., mental words are words without signification.

(2) Although Anselm refers here to subspecies (a) of mental locution, which is imagination, the relationship between mental locution and things is explained

² Anselmus, *Monologion*, cap.9 and 10: ed.Schimitt, I, 24.10-27.

³ *Id.*, *ibid.*, cap 12: I, 26.26-31.

⁴ *Id.*, *ibid.*, cap.10: I, 25:4-9.

⁵ *Id.*, *ibid.*, cap.10: I, 24:27-29:

⁶ Boethius, *Com. in libr. Aristot. Perihermeneias*, *Prima editio*, ed.C.Meiser, p.37s.

exclusively in terms of understanding (*intellectus*), i.e., subspecies (b) in the later parts of the *Monologion* and ignores imagination. I refer to this point here in advance, for in Abelard we shall recognize a contrast here.

(3) Concerning the human locution using *signa sensibilia*, i.e., vocal sounds, of what are they signs? According to Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* chap.1, which Anselm depends on, they should be signs of the mental conceptions. Anselm says, however, 'voces rerum significativae', which reflects *De interpretatione* chapter 2, and that "when I signify him (i.e. the man I talked of) by this name 'man' (*cum eum hoc nomine, quod est 'homo', significo...*)". Thus the speaker is said to signify a thing by a sensible sign. In a sense here lies already the contrast between *significatio rerum* and *significatio intellectus*, which we shall see later in Abelard.

We can interpret this as follows: according to Anselm, I am able to think of the man without any sensible signs (this is the mental locution), and then I use the sign 'man' to express my thinking. My thinking, however, is necessarily a thinking of something, so that to express my thinking is to express what I am thinking of, and not to express my thinking itself. Again, I utter words for the sake of informing the hearer about what I am thinking. Thus the signification is logically connected to the signification in the sense that the hearer hears a type of vocal sounds and understands something. We shall see signification in this sense later in *De grammatico*.

In addition, Anselm refers to the type of locution with sensible signs, but without uttering them aloud, by which speaking is done by inward thinking of vocal words (*intra nos insensibiliter cogitando*). In his explanation of this type, Anselm does not refer to signification, and this suggests that signifying something only occurs when the speaker utters a word to the hearer, and not when he thinks of it in silence.

1.2 God's speaking as *principalis essentia*

Though Anselm associates God's speaking with human mental locution, nevertheless he claims that the former is definitely different from the latter. For God's Word is not a likeness of created things, but the *principalis essentia* of them⁷, while there is only its imitation in real things⁸. From this we may conclude as well that the human mental word, which is a likeness of an existing thing, or things, is an imitation of the imitation of God's speaking as the first and principal *essentia*.

When Anselm introduced the notion of God's speaking regarding what was in Him before creation, he already suggested the oneness of God's locution, by referring to the

⁷ Anselmus, *Ibid.*, cap.33: I, 53.4-6.

⁸ *Id., ibid.*, cap.31: I, 50.7-10

‘form’ (*forma*) of things before creation, or God’s ‘locutio’, in the singular, while there must be some plurality in human speaking. Later this *forma* or *locutio* is explained as the *principalis essentia* (i.e., essence as the first and principal origin of things).

It is helpful to understand how Anselm uses the term ‘essentia’. In *Monologion* chap.6, Anselm refers to its general meaning when comparing *essentia - esse - ens* with *lux-lucere-lucens*.⁹ That is, *lux* (light) is the origin from which the act *lucere*(to light) comes forth, *lucere* is the act itself, and *lucens* is the thing that is performing the act of *lucere*. Similarly *essentia* can be accepted as the origin of the act *esse*, to be or to exist, while *ens* is the thing that is performing the act of being or existing. Thus, in one context, the thing itself might be called *essentia*, for it is in a sense the origin of its act of existing. Nevertheless, not an individual being, but some universal being can better be called *essentia*, for the latter is the origin of the former.

Again, not a created thing, but something belonging to the creator should be called the *essentia*, as the ultimate origin of created things, and this is just what Anselm means, when he explains God’s locution as *principalis essentia*.

Also based on the sense of *essentia* as an origin of the act *esse*, *essentia* is said to be in both places: in the created things and in God himself. In the former the created things are (*sunt*) a mutable *essentia*, which is created according to the immutable reason, while in the latter they are (*sunt*) the *prima essentia*¹⁰. Singular and plural expressions are mixed in this explanation. For this is the explanation based on God’s speaking of Himself, i.e., “when the supreme Spirit utters himself, he utters all created beings (*cum ipse summus spiritus dicit seipsum, dicit omnia quae facta sunt*)”. Plural things are thus uttered by one Word.

1.2 *esse* and *essentia* in the *Monologion*

In the following, I shall focus my attention on created things and the *essentia* in them, and not on the *principalis essentia* in God. Anselm refers to this point in *Monologion*, cap.27.¹¹, where he describes the two kinds of substance, i.e., universal and particular, in order to distinguish the highest nature from them.

That is, every substance is considered either to be universal, which is common to plural substances as their *essentia*, so that to be a man is common to singular men, or to be particular, which has a universal *essentia* in common with other

⁹ *Id., ibid.*, cap.6: I, 20.13-16.

¹⁰ *Id., ibid.*, cap.34: I, 53.25-54.1

¹¹ *Id., ibid.*, cap.27: I, 45:6-12.

<particulars>, in such a way as singular men have something in common with other singulars, so that they are men. (Nempe cum omnis substantia tractetur aut esse universalis, quae pluribus substantiis essentialiter communis est, ut hominem esse commune est singulis hominibus; aut esse individua, quae universalem essentiam communem habet cum aliis, quemadmodum singuli homines commune habent cum singulis, ut homines sint...)

A universal (i.e., second) substance “is common to plural (first) particular substances as their *essentia*” (thus I interpret ‘*essentialiter*’). For instance, “*esse hominem* is common to singular men”. On the other hand, a particular substance “has a universal *essentia* in common with other particulars”. For instance, “singular men have something in common with other singulars, so that they are men”.

We should not, however, identify ‘*essentia* that men have in common’ with ‘*esse hominem*’, which is said to be ‘common to singular men’. For, I interpret, “ut hominem esse commune est singulis hominibus” as well as “ut homines sint” shows the result of their having the *essentia*. For, as shown above, Anselm distinguishes *esse* from *essentia* in that *esse* is the act of being itself, while *essentia* the origin of the act *esse*. So we can say that “someone is a man” is the actual fact, which results from its having man’s *essentia*, so that “to be a man (*esse hominem*)” is the component of this fact that shows what results from the *essentia*. Again, compare the following relationship between a white (thing) and whiteness: if some things are white, they have whiteness in common, and to be white is common to them. From this, however, we cannot conclude that “whiteness” is “to be white”. Similarly, if some are men, they have the *essentia* of man in common, and to be a man (*esse hominem*) is common to them. From this, however, we cannot conclude that man’s *essentia* is *esse hominem*, but that man’s *essentia* is the origin, or cause, of someone’s activity, or actual way of being, i.e. to be a man (= *esse hominem*). And this is what Anselm intends in the preceding passage.

Anselm, on the other hand, explains man’s *essentia*, as if he identified it with man’s definition, as we have seen concerning his explanation of subspecies (b) of the mental locution without sensible signs, which is as follows:

ut cum eius *universalem essentiam*, quae est ‘animal rationale mortale’, cogitat.¹²

¹² See note 4.

Here, one is attending to a man, or the man in general that we might call universal man, with one's reason, thinking about man's universal *essentia*, which is said to be a 'rational, mortal animal'. Here, however, we should not identify this '*essentia*' with a 'rational, mortal animal'. For in the present context, the universal *essentia* is the object of thinking; it is certainly said that the object can be described as a 'rational, mortal animal', but this does not mean that the *essentia* itself is the rational, mortal animal.

Again, I can refer to the man as a universal substance by saying 'man', or, according to Anselm's view, mentally thinking something that corresponds to the utterance 'man'. Also I can refer to an individual man indefinitely by saying or thinking 'a rational mortal animal'. So when Anselm says 'rational, mortal animal' is man's universal essence, he must intend to disregard individual elements from man, to focus his attention on the universal aspect of man, and to express it as an object of reason, or as conceived by reason. But it does not mean that man's *essentia* is no other than man's definition.

An analysis of the corresponding passages in *De grammatico* would seem to justify this interpretation as follows.

1.4 *esse, essentia, and significatio in De grammatico*

If we broaden our perspective beyond the *Monologion*, and include *De grammatico*, we encounter another pair of *esse* and *essentia*, which concerns the present subject and needs to be interpreted.

esse hominis and essentia hominis The pair, *esse hominis* and *essentia hominis*, is found in the context where the master leads the disciple to the conclusion: that someone is a man is not inferred from that he is a grammarian. The master argues as follows: "*esse grammatici* is not *esse hominis*", in other word, "the definition of *grammaticus* is not the definition of *homo*", i.e., the *grammaticus* is not entirely identical with the *homo*, for *homo* should not be defined with *grammatica*, while *grammaticus* cannot be defined without *grammatica*. The argument proceeds: because the *esse grammatici* is not simply the *esse hominis*, the fact that one has the *essentia hominis* is not inferred from that one has the *essentia grammatici*¹³.

Concerning *esse hominis* and *esse grammatici*, Anselm indicates in the earlier part of the book that "every man can be understood as a man without grammar, and no grammarian can be understood as a grammarian without grammar", and this means

¹³ Anselmus, *De grammatico*, [8] : I, 153.10-19.

that “*esse hominis* does not require grammar, while *esse grammatici* requires grammar”¹⁴. On the basis of this explanation, I interpret that *esse hominis* is what is required for something to be a man, and establishes what is the structure of being a man in the world. Hence, if we describe this, the description is no other than the definition of man; nevertheless, *esse hominis* is not the definition itself. Nor is it the *essentia hominis*, for, when Anselm uses the term *esse hominis*, he must use the terms according to the relationship between *essentia-esse-ens* shown above, so that he turns his attention to the components that are required for something to be a man. By contrast, by *essentia hominis* he turns his attention to what is the origin of a man’s being. Thus Anselm says that a man has the *essentia hominis*, but not that a man has the *esse hominis*. It seems, however, that *esse hominis* is nearer to *essentia hominis* than *esse hominem*.

We shall encounter a comparable terminology of *essentia hominis* and *esse hominem* in Abelard later in this paper. It should become clear that, in contrast to Anselm, Abelard rejects the former term, while accepting the latter and using it to express his theory on universals.

significatio per se, per aliud and appellatio In *De grammatico*, another remarkable set of terms is recognized concerning the term’s semantic function. As I have shown this point elsewhere¹⁵, here I shall show the conclusions in terms of the theory of word and the world.

First, Anselm differentiates between *significatio per se* and *significatio per aliud*¹⁶ by distinguishing the situations where a hearer hears a word and where he understands something. That is, when I hear ‘white (thing)’ without any other information, I understand whiteness. In this way, what a hearer understands by a name alone is what the name signifies *per se*. On the other hand, when I understand whiteness by the word ‘white’, if I have got the further information that a certain horse has this whiteness, then I understand the horse as well by ‘white (thing)’. This is what a hearer understands by a name mediated by some other information, i.e., what the name signifies *per aliud*.¹⁷

Whether it is *per se* or *per aliud*, the signification of a word is explained by showing what the hearer understands when he hears the word¹⁸. In this context,

¹⁴ *Id., ibid.*, [5] : I, 149.19-22.

¹⁵ Shimizu T., *op.cit.*, 1999: 189-192

¹⁶ Anselmus, *ibid.*, [12]: I, 157.1-3:

¹⁷ *Id., ibid.*, [14]: I, 160.26-161.4:

¹⁸ See also *Id., ibid.*, [9]: I, 154.7-13.

Anselm once explains “significare” as “constituere intellectum”, which phrase must have been taken from a passage in Aristotle’s *De interpretatione*¹⁹, and this is what Abelard mainly depends on in the definition of *significatio intellectus*. To understand ‘significatio’ in terms of the hearer’s understanding is the common characteristic to both thinkers, but not common to grammarians or dialecticians at that period.

Secondly, according to Anselm, *appellatio* is a term’s act of referring to things in speech. He explains that, though the term ‘grammaticus’ “has the function of referring to a man, nevertheless it is not properly said to have the function of signifying it (*quamvis sit appellativum hominis, non tamen proprie dicitur eius significativum*) , etc²⁰. He goes on to define the object of *appellatio* as follows:

I say that a name has the function of referring to anything which is referred to by the name according to the custom in speech. For there is no saying according to any custom in speech: “a grammar is a grammarian”, nor “a grammarian is a grammar”; but “a man is a grammarian” and “a grammarian is a man” (*Appellativum autem nomen cuiuslibet rei nunc dico, quo res ipsa usu loquendi appellatur. Nullo enim usu loquendi dicitur: grammatica est grammaticus, aut: grammaticus est grammatica; sed: homo est grammaticus, et grammaticus homo*)²¹.

For instance in the sentence “a grammar is a grammarian”, both “grammar” and “grammarian” signify grammar, for one who hear these words understands grammar. Nevertheless, we never admit that a grammar is a grammarian, but think the sentence grammatically inappropriate. What makes it inappropriate is not the words’ *significatio* but *appellatio*, and the sentence determines according to the custom of speech what the object of their *appellatio* is. Similarly, in “a man is a grammarian”, ‘man’ does not signify a grammarian, but in this sentence it refers to a grammarian; the sentence as a whole makes this reference, i.e., according to the custom of speech (*usus loquendi*).

Thus *appellatio* is not identical with *significatio per aliud*. For *appellatio* is an act of a term performed not by itself, but combined with other elements of speech, and is independent of the hearer’s understanding, while the function of *significatio* is to produce some understanding in the hearer²².

¹⁹ Aristoteles, *De int., translatio Boethii*, cap.3, 16b20.

²⁰ Anselmus, *De gram.* [12]: I, 157.3-5.

²¹ *Id., Ibid.*, [12]: I, 157.5-8.

²² Shimizu, op.cit., 1999. p.191. Cf. D.P.Henry *Commentary on De Grammatico*, 1974, pp.203-205, 207; De Rijk, *Logica modernorum.*, II-1, 1967, pp.558-561. I mentioned that *appellatio* is different

This conclusion is confirmed by the following passage in *De grammatico*: “every substance seems to signify this something (*omnis substantia videtur significare hoc aliquid*)”, in which the subject, ‘every substance’, refers to (*appellat*) ‘every vocal sound that signifies a substance’ (*omnis vox significans substantiam*), though the subject *signifies* substances²³. Here the *appellatio* of the subject term, “every substance”, is explained as referring to a vocal term that signifies a substance, while its *significatio* as that it signifies a substance. What determines the *appellatio* of the subject term is the sentence itself, not the understanding in the hearer who hears the term. Again, one does not need any information other than the knowledge of the term ‘substance’ to understand this sentence, so that the *appellatio* of the subject term is not *significatio per aliud*. A similar explanation is possible for other examples of *appellatio* that Anselm refers to in *De grammatico*.

On the basis of the preceding difference between *significatio* and *appellatio*, we can say that the object of the *significatio* of a term, say ‘man’, is man’s *essentia*, which the hearer understands by way of *esse hominis*; while the object of its *appellatio* can be a man, or men, which is, or are, determined by *esse hominem*.

2. Abelard’ theory of words and the world

The second half of my paper concerns Abelard’s theory. Here I shall restrict my attention to Abelard’s view on the points I have addressed in the preceding section devoted to Anselm. It is well known that there is a certain progression, or evolution, in Abelard’s ideas between his *Glosse super Porphyrium (ingredientibus)*, and *Glossule (nostrorum petitioni sociorum)*, as I have argued elsewhere²⁴, and, in my view, sometimes there is a difference between these two works in respect to the points I am addressing. In the following, I shall describe first Abelard’s theory in the *Glosse*, and secondly the changes he makes in the *Glossule*, if there are any.

2.1. causa communis, status and esse hominem

When Abelard commits himself to the position called that of the ‘vocales’, ascribing universality only to the side of language, and not to the side of reality, he has

from *nominatio* as well. For the latter is a function treated by grammarians at that time period, and is a relationship between the name and its subjects established by *impositio* or *inventio*, so that *nominatio* exists even when I do not understand it nor make any speeches involving it.

²³ Anselmus., *ibid.*, [18]: I, 163.26-164.2.

²⁴ Shimizu T., From Vocalism to Nominalism: Progression in Abaelard’s Theory of Signification, in *Didascalica*, 1,15-46. 1995.

to answer the problem: “How can one name be common to many things?” Or, according to Abelard’s formulation: “What is the common cause by which a common name is imposed on certain plural things?” For the vocalist theory at that period seems to have only a theory of name-things relationship, i.e., *nominatio* and *impositio*, concerning the problem of universals.

If Abelard were a realist (*realis*), he could answer by referring to a universal thing that is common to certain singulars, and say that a common name corresponds to a universal thing existing in reality. This universal thing is what Anselm explained as the *essentia* common to singulars. Actually, this so called *material essence theory*²⁵, which Abelard refers to among other realist theories, explains that, if individual differences were removed from each man, there remains one thing ‘man’, and not many, and this is called the ‘essentia’ of the many men, and is so to speak the ‘materia’ of each individual. As a vocalist, however, Abelard rejects this explanation, and has to find another one.

Abelard replies that there is something common to those things of which a universal vocal word is the name, but this something, i.e., the common cause of the name’s imposition, is not a thing (*res*), but a fact such as that each of them *is a man*. In this context, Abelard introduces the term *status*. For instance, *status hominis* is just *esse hominem* (being a man) and is the common characteristic that can be predicated of all men. By this, he rejects the theory that all men come together (*convenient*) in a thing (*in re*), i.e. *in homine*; this theory presumably claims that *homo* itself is the *status hominis*²⁶. Scholars are agreed that this theory is identical with identity theory as a subspecies of indifference theory, which Abelard criticized in his argument against realist theories²⁷. The theory explains that, if individual differences were removed from each man, there remain as many things as individual men, nevertheless there remains no difference between the things.

Abelard seems to agree with Anselm in that *esse hominem* is common to all men, but differs from him by refusing to conclude from this that every man has *essentia hominis* in common. Theoretically speaking, *status hominis* might correspond to the

²⁵ Concerning the classification and naming of the realists Abelard tries to refute, see: Tweedale MM., *Abailard on Universals*, North Holland, 1976, especially pp. 95-130; King P., *Metaphysics*, Brouwer JE. & Guilfooy K, *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, Cambridge 2004, pp. 65-125, especially pp. 66-72.

²⁶ Abelardus, *Glosse super Porphyrium*, (LI) ed. Geyer, Peter Abaelards philosophische Schriften, I, 1933, 19,21-20,12. Klaus Jacobi shows the basic interpretation of Abelard’s theory of *status* in: Jacobi K, *Philosophy of language*, Brouwer & Guilfooy, *op.cit.*, pp.126-57.

²⁷ Concerning the *status* theory on the side of the indifference realists, see Dijis, J, Two anonymous 12th-century tracts on universals, *Vivarium* 28-2, 1990: 85-117. cf. King, *op.cit.*,p.71.

esse hominis in Anselm, which is between *essentia hominis* and *esse hominem*. The realist identifies it with *essentia*, while the vocalist, or nominalist, with *esse hominem*.

In my view, Abelard uses the term ‘status of X’ with the meaning: that which exists in the world, not as a thing but as a fact, and is the common cause of the name ‘X’. For Abelard, ‘*esse hominem*’ is prior to ‘*homo*’, for the former is the cause of the latter name. Though verbally we have to use the word ‘*esse*’ and ‘*homo*’ to express ‘*esse hominem*’, nevertheless the fact that is referred to by the expression ‘*esse hominem*’ is prior to the name’s imposition. In such a way the fact, or state of affairs, ‘*esse hominem*’, exists in the real world²⁸.

That the ‘*status* of X’ is a fact existing in the world and is the common cause of the imposition of the name ‘X’ is confirmed by the fact that for Abelard *esse hominem* is not the only candidate for *status hominis*. After introducing *esse hominem* in the *Glossae*, Abelard mentions another possibility of *status hominis* as follows:

Statum quoque hominis res ipsas in [‘non’ in MS] natura hominis statutas possumus appellare, quarum communem similitudinem ille concipit, qui vocabulum imposuit. (We can also call status those things set up [statutas] in the nature of man, the common likeness of which was grasped by the person who imposed the word ‘man’)²⁹.

Since I have discussed the interpretation of this passage elsewhere³⁰, I shall only present the conclusions here. First, Abelard introduces in this passage ‘*res ipsae*’, which are individual human beings themselves, and says that we can call these things ‘*status hominis*’. That is, all individual men as a whole constitute the *status hominis*, and this can be said to be the common cause of the name’s imposition. Then he explains why it can be a common cause by saying that the person who imposed the word did so on the basis of apprehending the common likeness of those individuals.

Secondly, just as he confronts identity theory, a subspecies of indifference theory, when he claims that the *status* is the *esse hominem*, here by claiming the *status* as *res*

²⁸ P.King writes, “He (Abelard) sometimes refers to each thing’s being as it is as its ‘condition’ (*status*), but this shorthand carries no metaphysical baggage” (King, *op.cit.*, p.82). In my view, however, there is something more in Abelard’s *status* theory than King’s evaluation.

²⁹ *LI*, 20,12-14. English translation is Marenbon’s. cf. Marenbon, J., *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*, 1997, p.192,n.45. My interpretation, however, is different from Marenbon’s.

³⁰ Shimizu, T., The place of *intellectus* in the theory of signification by Abelard and *Ars Meliduna*, Actes du XI Congress Internationale de Philosophie Médiévale, 26-31 aout 2002, Porto, forthcoming. Cf. Tweedale, *op.cit.*, 1976, p.207; De Rijk, R.M., Martin M. Tweedale on Abailard. Some criticisms of a fascinating venture, *Vivarium* 23(1985), 94-5; Marenbon, *op.cit.*, p.192,n.45.

ipsae Abelard is confronting another subspecies, i.e., collection-theory on the realist side³¹; that is, the view of the totality of men as a universal thing (*res*), which Abelard refuted in an earlier part of the *Glosse*³² and in the present passage where he claims that singular men themselves (*res ipsae*) as a whole can be a *status*. This interpretation may be confirmed by the fact that Abelard referred to “a thinking collected from a substantial likeness of individuals³³” in his account of the collection theory, while now he explains, “*res ipsae*..., the common likeness of which was apprehended by the person”. This fact suggests that the collection theory had an argument about universals in terms of the common likeness of things, so that Abelard uses the same point and reaches a different conclusion.

2.2 Abelard’s later theory concerning ‘*esse hominem*’

Later in the *Glossule*, Abelard might seem to retain the theory of *status* in the *Glosse*, as John Marenbon says by referring to one passage³⁴. In my view, however, he has abandoned the theory, although his expression in the passage is very similar to the *status* theory in the *Glosse*. The passage says, “(Socrates and Plato) are the same, agreeing in something: namely in the fact that that they are men (*eaedem ...sunt convenientes ex aliquo, ex eo scilicet quod sunt homines*)”. Nevertheless, he does not explicitly refer to the *status* or the *esse hominem* on the side of reality. Rather, he seems to attach importance to a fact in *intellectus* and not in reality. For in the *Glossule*, names, or *sermones*, are established in their relationship to *intellectus*, and no longer imposed in their relationship to things, so that the *status* does not play any role in the establishment of words³⁵. Accordingly, a thing’s existence is not necessary for a name to be established, but only *intellectus* is needed.

In fact, after the passage quoted above, Abelard goes on to explain how we should understand the phrase ‘*ex aliquo*’, that is, ‘*ex eo quod sunt homines*’ and introduces a short dialogue as follows³⁶:

³¹ *LI*, 14, 7-17.

³² *LI*, 14, 32-15,22.

³³ *LI*, 14, 12-14: cogitation collecta ex individuorum substantiali similitudine... cf. Boethius, *In Porph.* ed II., 166.

³⁴ *LNPS* 531.33-39: Dicendum est igitur, quod omnes res discretæ sunt oppositæ numero, ut Socrates et Plato. Eaedem etiam sunt convenientes ex aliquo, ex eo scilicet quod sunt homines. Neque tamen ex socratitate vel platonitate neque ex aliqua re qua inter se participant, eos convenire dico et tamen ex aliquo convenire, idest aliquam convenientiam habere, ex eo scilicet, quod sunt homines. Cf. Marenbon, *op.cit.*, 1997, p.192.

³⁵ I argued this point elsewhere, by contrasting ‘*institutio*’ used in the *Glossule* with ‘*impositio*’ in the *Glosse*. Cf. Shimizu *op.cit.*, 1995.

³⁶ *LNPS*, 531.39-532.3; 533.1-9.

‘I want something (*aliquid*)’ -- ‘What do you want?’ --- ‘I want a golden fortress’.

This he interprets thus: no golden fortress exists, so that when I reply ‘I want a golden fortress’, it does not mean there is some thing that is a golden fortress, but it only means that I have such a *voluntas*. Similarly, when I say ‘I understand “chimera”’, there is no thing as a chimera, but it means only that I understand something. These examples have a situation in common, i.e., the situation that there is nothing in reality, but a will or understanding in the mind. From this, we can understand what Abelard means when he claims, “(men) come together ‘*ex aliquo*’, i.e., ‘*ex eo quod sunt homines*’. That is, this ‘aliquid’ (something) is not anything existing in reality, but something in the mind, i.e., something understood.

Q. by Charles: N.b. I take ‘ex eo quod’ in the usual sense of ‘for the reason that’; is there sufficient justification in considering the ‘eo’ to be something which needs to be identified??

A. My point is that Abelard himself is trying to explain ‘aliquid’ in ‘ex aliquo’ as not anything but so to speak an object in mind, which I wanted to express as ‘something understood’. By this I criticize Marenbon’s interpretation who claims that Abelard keeps the status theory here. The status theory by Abelard in the *Glosse* was expressed that men come together ‘in esse hominem’ (in eo quod sunt homines) and not ‘in homine’. Thus we find similar expression here, though here not in eo but ex eo. And my point is that Abelard himself goes on to explain what is aliquid in ex aliquo just after this sentence. OK

In the *Glosse* Abelard claimed that it is not in the thing, i.e., *in homine*, that men come together, but in the *status*, in *esse hominem*, which is a fact in reality: the contrast was made between *res* and *status* as a fact. By contrast, in the *Glossule* the contrast is between *res* and *intellectus*. Consequently we can conclude that Abelard first admits *esse hominem* as a fact in reality, and rejects *essentia* as a universal thing, but later even *esse hominem* interpreted as a fact seems to lose its role in his theory of the word, and instead understanding that understands *esse hominem* bears that role.

2.3 *significatio intellectus*

As I have shown elsewhere, vocalists at that period presumably only made use of *nominatio* and *impositio* in their theory of universals, while Abelard, basing himself on

Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, adds the theory of *significatio intellectus*: a name signifies an *intellectus*, i.e., a name produces an *intellectus*, or an act of understanding, in the hearer. He explains the nature of the *intellectus* in two ways: *imaginatio* and *abstractio*, which correspond to Anselm's two subspecies of the third type of locution: *imago* and *ratio*, respectively.

First, he introduces what we can call the 'imaginatio-theory' of signification, and explains that a common name produces the understanding which "conceives a common likeness of things". For instance, the understanding produced by the word, 'man', is directed toward a likeness as a mental image, or a form, which is common to all men and not peculiar to any man (*ad singulos homines sic se habet, ut omnium sit commune et nullius proprium*³⁷).

This explanation is an answer to the possible criticism that, when we hear a common name, 'man', we cannot understand to whom the name refers, unless the speaker determines the object(s) by saying, "every man is walking", or "some man is walking" with an action designating the person. Again, even when only Socrates is now sitting in this house, and "a man is sitting in this house" is true, Socrates cannot be understood, nor any other man, nor all men³⁸. The criticism refers to the signification of the word when it is uttered with no additional information, and seems to imply that if we were to suppose a universal man, we could answer what the word signifies by itself. This seems to reflect Anselm's argument concerning the difference between *significatio per se* and *per aliud*, which I have referred to in the preceding section, and Abelard answers, in effect, that we need not suppose a universal man as an object of *significatio per se* of 'man', but individual men only. For the understanding 'man' produced in the hearer is related to individual men via the likeness as a mental image that is 'common to all men and not peculiar to any man'.

Secondly, after *imaginatio*-theory, Abelard adds the theory of abstraction by *intellectus*. Concerning the *intellectus* of a universal, he explains, "When I hear 'man'... , I don't think, by the name's force, of all the natures or properties of which the subject things consist, but by 'man' I have got only the confused, and not discrete, conception of animal, rational and mortal, **OK** but not of other inferior accidents"³⁹. The phrase, "confused, and not discrete", shows the relationship between the conception and the corresponding things, which is similar to one between likeness as a mental image and things: "common to all men and not

³⁷ *LI*, 21.32.

³⁸ *LI*, 18.17-19.2.

³⁹ *LI*, 27.18-24.

peculiar to any man”. Consequently he shows two different ways in which a common name produces understanding in the hearer: likeness as a mental image and rational conception. Abelard, however, says nothing about how these two modes of intellect relate to each other, and thus both modes are only put side by side in the *Glosse*.

Later, in the *Glossule*, he retains the abstractio-theory only, having abandoned the imaginatio-theory. This corresponds to evolution in Abelard’s theory of signification, which includes the claims: it is a *sermo*, and not a *vox*, that is a universal; a *sermo* exists, i.e., has been established (*instituta*), even when no one utters it. When he claims first that a *sermo*, and not a *vox*, is a universal, he distinguishes the formal aspect of a type of vocal sounds from its material aspect, and selects the term, ‘sermo’, that involves the former. The second claim means that a *sermo* exists without the corresponding voice existing, for the mode of a *sermo*’s existence is different from the one of a voice’s, i.e., that a *sermo* exists means that the *sermo* has been established. Concerning this point, I have shown elsewhere that a *sermo*’s establishment is based on understanding, and not on things⁴⁰. This might be the most important evolution in Abelard’s thought in the *Glossule*, for a word was said to have been imposed on things in the *Glosse* so that things must have existed when a corresponding word was imposed. By contrast, in the *Glossule*, Abelard speaks of the term, ‘chimera’ and says, “I understand chimera”, recognizing there is no chimera, nor has there ever been one. This means that the real existence of a chimera is not required for the establishment of the term ‘chimera’, and from this we can conclude that a word’s establishment has been effected on the basis of understanding. In addition, the understanding seems also to exist independently of someone’s actual act of understanding when he hears a word.

This may explain why Abelard ignores likeness as a mental image in the *Glossule*. The mental likeness is a common likeness of things, and consequently the things’ existence is required to precede it, while the rational conception, e.g. rational, mortal animal, does not require the thing’s existence, but rather precedes it. This point will be confirmed by examining how the abstractio-theory was introduced in the *Glosse*.

2.4 Forms in God before creation

It is notable for the present subject that, in the *Glosse*, Abelard introduces the notion, ‘*formae* in God before creation’, in the last part of his explanation of the imaginatio-theory, i.e., just before the abstractio-theory⁴¹. He introduces the notion to answer the question he himself has raised, i.e., whether the form towards which the

⁴⁰ Shimizu, op.cit., 1995.

⁴¹ *LI*, 22:28-34.

understanding is directed can be said to be the object of signification as well. Interpreting a passage from Priscian⁴², he refers to conceptions in God's mind before creation, and considers the difference between God's and human ways of cognition. Through this consideration, in my view, he becomes aware of the inadequacy of his *imaginatio*-theory, and goes on to add *abstractio*-theory.

Abelard argues that conception by abstraction belongs properly to God, and not to human beings⁴³, according to which individual men have been created. This means, he has introduced the form in God to compare it with 'imaginary' likeness in human beings, but the former is not an imaginary conception, but a rational one, which Abelard explains as conception by abstraction. This conception, however, is, according to him, very difficult for human beings to achieve. Thus, the *abstractio*-theory of *intellectus* is introduced and has to be explained by Abelard.

In this respect, Abelard has something in common with Anselm, who referred to *imaginatio* as well as *intellectus* in the third type of locution, but it was *intellectus*, and not *imaginatio*, that is compared with God's locution as the *principia essentia* of created things. Again, the later Abelard is shown to be closer to Anselm, for his theory of *sermo* is based on only *intellectus* and no longer on *imaginatio*⁴⁴.

Nevertheless, two notable differences can be observed between Abelard and Anselm. First, Abelard only refers to '*formae*' in the plural, and seems unaware of oneness of form or locution in God. Secondly, for him, neither the act of understanding in the human mind nor the form(s) in God are word, or locution in its proper sense, and if an authority refers to them as words, it is a metaphorical expression of thoughts or understandings. For instance, in the *Theologia Christiana*, Abelard explicitly claims what one may call a '*translatio*-theory'; that is, when a mental conception is called a 'word', it is not in accordance with the proper meaning of 'word', but in its

⁴² Priscianus, *Inst. Gram.*, Liber XVII,c.44., III,p.135: quantum ad generales et speciales formas rerum, quae in mente divina intellegibiliter constiterunt antequam in corpora prodirent.

⁴³ *LI*, 23.6-16.

⁴⁴ In the *Glossule*, Abelard quotes the same passage from Priscian again to introduce the theory that ascribes universality to *intellectus*, and to which theory he never subscribes, at least explicitly. In my view, however, detailed examinations should be done concerning Abelard's attitude towards the theory. For in the *Glossule* he begins his explanation of universality by distinguishing the three principal views: some ascribe universality to *res*, others to *intellectus*, and others to *sermones*; nevertheless the introductory parts of the second and the third theories come one after another seamlessly so that the two seem to be united with each other, unless there is some textual lack in the MS. as many scholars presume in common. Moreover, Abelard refutes the first, i.e., realist, view, and defends the third one, i.e., *sermo*-theory, which, I think, can be appropriately called '*nominales*' (cf. Shimizu 1995), but there is no refutation, nor defence, of the intellect-theory. I hope to discuss this point elsewhere. Cf. *LNPS*, 513,15-514.8, with Geyer's note of page 514.

transferred/metaphorical meaning (*translato vocabulo*).⁴⁵ By this interpretation he can admit the existence of forms in the mind of God before creation without conceding them to be God's words, or Word.

Conclusions

The terms and concepts that Anselm proposed in his meditation on God's locution as the origin of created things constitute a common vocabulary for the controversy about universals. OK Even Abelard, the founder of nominalism, when refuting the realists, uses these terms and concepts to differentiate himself from them. Such terms, among others, are *essentia*, *esse hominem*, and *status hominis*, which is Abelard's substitute for Anselm's *esse hominis*. Again, Anselm's idea of *significatio* as an act of producing understanding in the hearer becomes the main idea in Abelard's semantics. We can, however, recognize elements of discrepancy between them as well as these examples of agreement. Abelard excludes *essentia* from his theory of universals, separating it from *esse hominem*, and shifts the idea of *esse hominis* to the one of *status hominis*. Again, Anselm's *intellectus* produced by a word is the understanding by which an *essentia*, or something's *esse*, is understood, and the latter is based on the *principalis essentia* in God, while Abelard's is separated from *essentia* and even from the facts in reality (*status*), in his later theory, though connected in his earlier one. It seems that Abelard cultivates a new realm of conceptions independent of things' *essentia*; this realm is properly for human beings, not for God, the creator. In this sense, 'Deus homo' happened between Anselm and Abelard.

⁴⁵ Abaelardus, *Theologia Christiana*, ed C.Mews. I,16,18,23. I have explained this point in detail in: Shimizu 1999, p.196. Concerning the theory of *translatio* in Abelard, See also: Irène Rosier-Catach, La notion de *translatio*, le principe de compositionnalité et l'analyse de la prédication accidentelle chez Abélard, in Biard, ed., *op.cit.*, 1999. pp.125-164.