

“CONVENIENCIA DE VARIAR LA CLASIFICACIÓN ZOOLOGICA
EN LA PARTE QUE AL HOMBRE SE REFIERE”

DISCURSO

PRONUNCIADO

EN LA APERTURA ANUAL DE LOS ESTUDIOS

DE LA

UNIVERSIDAD DE MANILA

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POR EL

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DEL ORDEN DE PREDICADORES

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*Plurimæ enim et maximæ sunt animæ humanæ
præcellentiæ supra animas brutorum, etiam
philosophantibus secundum sensum manifestæ.*

*Ubicunque autem tot et tantarum invenitur
excellentiarum symbolum, ibi merito semper
constitui debet differentia specifica.—Baco De
Verulam, be Augm. scient., lib. IV, cap. III.*



MANILA

IMPRENTA DEL COLEGIO DE SANTO TOMAS

1874

FOREWORD

THE CONVENIENCE IN VARYING ZOOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION IN THAT WHICH REFERS TO MAN

Belén L. Tangco, OP

This inaugural address delivered by the Rev. Fr. Bernardino Nozaleda, O.P., Professor, University of Manila during the annual opening of classes on July 2, 1874 was printed in the Colegio de Santo Tomas in the same year.

Professor Nozaleda expressed his awareness of the recently established Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in the University, and that a great number of young students had passed the courses. These men would someday play a vital role in the progress of society. To these students and future enrollees and faculty professors he did dedicate his paper.

The lecturer asserted his viewpoint that it would be convenient to have a variation in the zoological classifications where it pertains to man. These classifications are not well justified. It is indeed surprising and shocking to see man among the vertebral mammals situated beside the monkeys like divisions of the same class. The only class general enough to understand man and the beast is the animal kingdom, understanding animal as a living and sensitive being. The first division which could be made in this kingdom is the rational and irrational animal; certainly, rationality is a characteristic more important and a better consequence to be used as a specific consequence than the vertebrate and living. This is also the division more conformed to the principles that rule modern classifications. Before, when the law of classifications was a system in both Zoology and Botany, the naturalist understood certain characteristics only as those that appeared more important to him to form his aggrupation distinguishing such characteristics that were or were not specific differences. But today where the known methods have replaced the systems and the characteristics which are sought to form the groups are the specific differences, naming the compared anatomy, there is no need to find another difference to distinguish man than that of rationality.

Man did not remain excluded from the fatal law of evolution. Given his great likeness with the monkey than any other in the rest of the kingdom, man was

considered the monkey's immediate descendant. Man had to be resigned to being a transformed monkey. In his lecture, Fr. Nozaleda cited Lamarck, the author of zoological philosophy who wanted to explain with heavy seriousness the various phases of the said transformation. He adeptly described the details marking the differences that essentially place man in a special pedestal.

The author of this opening address enhanced and reaffirmed the truth that in man exists an intelligence, a characteristic faculty of his immaterial and immortal soul. It elevates him to an immeasurable height over the rest of the visible creation, and puts in his hand superior means by which he could embellish many other beings in nature. With his intelligence, man is able to finally encounter the secret of his reigning superiority over the infinite elements that conspire against his existence.

Besides his dominion over the physical world with his powerful intellect, man, as God's crown of creation, could elevate himself to another superior world – the spiritual one where he knows God, the immortality of his soul and with which he has ideas of good and evil, and the idea of order and of beauty. He concerns himself with the mysteries of eternity and the brilliant future reserved for him beyond the grave.

Man shows with external signs that which transpires in his interiority, sensationalizes his thoughts by word and this is a common sign on all human species. A wild animal speaks like a civilized man and both naturally speak with the end of being understood. No animal uses the sign of thought and it is not the language of some monkeys which is as perfect as that of man. There are other animals which pronounce words and long expressions but nothing has shown the significance of these words; a monkey does not repeat it and articulate but only repeats and articulates like an echo and artificial machine, defects thus lie in the thoughts and not in the organs. It is not possible to talk without thinking, without combining ideas. Animals do not speak because these could not make such combinations. For this reason, irrational animals do not invent nor perfect anything.

The excellence of man's nature and the immense distance which God's will has placed between man and the brute clearly draw the distinction in beings. Man is rational, the animal, irrational. Alongside the naturalists Geofroy Saint Hilaire and Quatrefages, the author avers that man could be situated before the zoological classes but could not be included in any of these classes. Man belongs only to the human kingdom.