Term: Hypostatic Abstraction

Quote: Abstraction names two wholly different operations. One of them consists in supposing some feature of the fact to be absent, or at least leaving it out of account. I call that prescissive abstraction. The other changes ‘This man is shy’ to ‘This man is affected with shyness’. [—] In non-prosaic language it changes a predicate into a subject (extending the term subject beyond the subject nominative to the subject accusative and subject dative, – in short, to what are called the direct and indirect objects of the verb). “The rose smells very sweetly” is by hypostatic abstraction converted into “The rose possesses a delightful perfume.” So “Cain killed Abel” is changed to “Cain caused the death of Abel.” Perfume and death are hypostatical abstractions. They denote entia rationis, whatever that may mean.


References: MS [R] 96

Date of Quote: 1905 [c.]

URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-branches-geometry-existential-graphs-r-2