

## JUDGEMENTS, PROPOSITIONS & PREDICATES

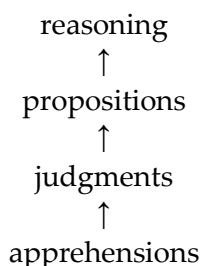
### *Comparison & Judgment; the Proposition*

Next after *simple apprehension* the mind proceeds to *comparison* which leads to the act called *judgment*. After viewing *Merry* and apprehending that he exercises that universal reality *dog*, we encounter *Lucy* and judge that she, too, is an instance of the same universal reality. We judge *Lucy* to be 'a dog'. In this we confirm the identity of our judgment with what is. This is logical truth.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & | & \\ \text{dog in mind} & = & \text{dog in Lucy} \\ & | & \end{array}$$

And, having formed this judgment internally, we give it external expression in the *proposition*. We assert, whether orally or in writing, "Lucy is a dog".

From judgment we proceed to *reasoning* in which we compare, and contrast, one proposition with another so as to proceed from one truth to another truth and so grow in knowledge. Here is the ontological order, from the bottom up—



### *Reasoning & Predication*

Reasoning is essentially concerned with universals. A concept can be more or less *comprehensive*, as we noted above when the degree of the concept's *extensive-ness* operates in inverse proportion. The more comprehensive the concept, the less extensive it is; the more extensive it is, the less comprehensive. One may hear a logician refer to a thing, such as *Lucy*, as 'an inferior' of a concept, such as 'dog'. By this he means that the thing is an instance of the universal. Again, he may refer to a concept, such as 'man', as an inferior of a more extensive concept, 'animal'; or refer to 'animal' is an inferior of the concept 'creature'. Note that this classification, *since it has to do with how we know things, not how they exercise existence in the real*, is a reversal of what we might expect. So *Merry*, *Lucy* and *Spot* are inferiors of the concept *dog*.

When I was at school many years ago, our grammar teachers made a point of getting us to see the importance of subject and predicate, whether in English or in Latin or in French. Take this sentence—

*Lucy is a dog.*

The subject is *Lucy*. The predicate is *dog*. The sentence attributes to the subject the predicate *dog-ness*. That is, to a *singular* thing is attributed a *universal* nature. In language the different functions played by subject and predicate are generally denoted by the way the words are placed, subject before predicate. In an inflected language, such as Latin, words are inflected; that is, their endings show which is subject and which predicate. Predication is the application to a subject of a universal character.



There are different ways in which we can apply a predicate. I could say —

*Lucy is brown*

*Lucy is a four-footed animal with paws*

*Lucy is a retriever of game*

*Lucy is aggressive towards strangers.*

These characteristics serve to demonstrate four distinct modes of predication. So, the predicate ‘dog’ may be applied to *Lucy* as follows:

		[ the definition	four-footed animal
		[ (or a part of it)	with paws
	[ <i>per se</i>	[	
Predication	[ & then:	[ a property	aggressive
either:	[	[	
	[	[ a proper act	retriever of game
	[ or		
	[ <i>per accidens</i>		brown

Let’s do that again using a man, James, as our illustration. We can consider that —

*James is a Caucasian (i.e., of European origin, white skinned)*

*James is a rational animal*

*James is artistic*

*James is an animal that laughs (i.e., risible)*

The predicate ‘man’ is applied, then, to *James* in similar fashion.

		[ the definition	rational animal
		[ (or a part of it)	
	[ <i>per se</i>	[	
Predication	[ & then:	[ a property	an animal that laughs
is either:	[	[	
	[	[ a proper act	artistic
	[ or		
	[ <i>per accidens</i>		Caucasian

So, there are four basic modes of predication.

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