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PEETERS

PHILOSOPHES MÉDIÉVAUX

TOME I

LE LANGAGE MENTAL DU  
MOYEN ÂGE À L'ÂGE CLASSIQUE

sous la direction  
Joël BIARD

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## JERÓNIMO PARDO ON THE UNITY OF MENTAL PROPOSITIONS

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Pardo's views on mental language reflect an advanced status of the discussions on this issue. Almost two centuries have passed since Ockham's innovative theses were delivered, and since the reactions of his contemporaries which followed<sup>1</sup>. Given this distance from the original controversy, Pardo does not address the problem of mental language as an independent one, but rather he uses the notion of a mental language (which he takes for granted) when he needs it, either to solve some logical difficulty or to substantiate some of his semantic theses.

Pardo's logical work (*Medulla Dialectices*: Paris, 1500, 1505) is constructed around a core issue, namely, the problem of truth. All his analyses are directed to finding out what it is that truth and falsity depend on. In this approach, propositions (and also mental propositions) become the focus of the majority of Pardo's reflections. I have chosen the question of the unity of mental propositions, because it is extensively treated by Pardo, so that the detailed discussion allows him to bring into play his whole theory of language and thought.

On the surface, the question "an propositio mentalis sit plures noticie" arises as a help to solve a technical difficulty: the problem raised by a sophism, namely, the apparent conflict concerning truth values, caused by the fact that utterances have parts that can be arranged in different ways ("Omnis homo est homo" / "Homo omnis homo est"). But at a deeper and more interesting level, the question about the composition of

<sup>1</sup> See G. Nuchelmans, *Late Scholastic and Humanist Theories of the Proposition*, Amsterdam-Oxford-New York North Holland, 1980; E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions: A Semantic Problem Discussed by Early Sixteenth Century Logicians", *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), p. 61-96; ead., "The Structure of Mental Language: Some Problems Discussed by Early Sixteenth Century Logicians", *Vivarium* 20 (1982), p. 59-83. Also, a brilliant analysis of the development of the discussions up to the seventeenth century can be found in S. Meier-Oeser, "Mental Language and Mental Representations in Late Scholastic Logic", in R. L. Friedman and S. Ebbesen (eds.), *John Buridan and Beyond. Topics in the Language Sciences 1300-1700*, Copenhagen, The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2004, p. 237-265.

mental propositions helps us to understand what exactly a proposition is: what, if there is such a thing, makes the proposition something different from other pieces of language.

### Preliminaries: propositions and their meaning

#### *What is a proposition?*

If we search the *Medulla* looking for a definition of *propositio*, we do not find any. All we have are some lines explaining the supposition of the term “*propositio (mentalis)*”:

Iste terminus ‘*propositio mentalis*’ supponit pro una qualitate existente in anima, connotando talem qualitatem representare ita esse vel non esse<sup>2</sup>.

This analysis is quite illuminating, as it makes clear that a proposition is specifically linked to a special kind of *representare*. In contrast to the initial reading of the sophism, which focuses on the constituents of the proposition, Pardo’s ideas suggest that in order to understand what a proposition is we must not look at it as an object, but rather as a sign<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, in order to understand Pardo’s answer to the question “an *propositio mentalis sit plures noticie*”, it is worth explaining this special kind of *significare* that is characteristic of propositions. Moreover, in order to understand this special kind of signifying, we need to say something about Pardo’s ontology and his ideas about the significate of propositions.

#### *The significate of a proposition*

The problem of the *significatum propositionis* is addressed by Pardo at the very beginning of his work. He presents his own ideas as an intermediate solution between two paradigmatic conceptions: the theory of

<sup>2</sup> *Medulla Dialectices*, Paris, 1505, f. 7va.

<sup>3</sup> The consideration of the proposition as a sign explains, in addition, the priority that Pardo gives to mental propositions over vocal and written ones, as they cannot signify unless they are subordinated to a mental proposition: “*Dico enim quod si non habeatur actualiter mentalis propositio correspondens propositioni vocali, tunc propositio vocalis non est vera neque falsa, ymo non est propositio, quia non significat, nunquam enim aliquid significat nisi actualiter habeatur noticia de illo quod significatur*” (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 7rb).

*complexe significabile* as defended by Gregory of Rimini, on the one hand (which postulates a special kind of entity designed to be the significate of propositions)<sup>4</sup>, and the theory put forward by John Buridan, on the other hand (which reduces the significate of a proposition to the particular things signified by the terms)<sup>5</sup>. Pardo’s solution is an original middle term. In fact, although his nominalism makes him sympathise with Buridan’s ideas, they must be (radically) transformed in order to achieve the project that Pardo has in mind: he wants to ground truth and falsity on the significate of propositions, and the Buridanian “bare particulars” are not enough to carry out this task.

In addition to this semantic perspective, there is an epistemological motivation for Pardo’s proposal: as he makes a literal reading of the phrase “*intellectus movetur a re*”, and as he observes that the same things can be conceived in a multiplicity of ways, thus he is convinced that there must be some different ways for the same things to be arranged in reality (these ways functioning as the cause that moves the intellect to form the different ways of conceiving things). This is the extra element that Pardo adds to the Buridanian view: the particular things signified by simple terms are *related in different ways*, and these “ways of being related” (*modus se habendi*) function as the cause that moves the intellect to conceive the same particular things in so many different ways. For example, the intellect can conceive things *affirmatively* by means of an affirmative proposition. Therefore, if the intellectual act must be strictly caused by reality, there must be in reality an *affirmative way of being related*.

This is how Pardo’s semantic views force him to adopt an enriched ontology. In Pardo’s world, in addition to the particular things (individual men and animals, for example), “there are” also some ways of being related (*modus se habendi*, which correspond to the different ways of being conceived: affirmatively, negatively, disjunctively, universally...), and even some relative modalities (*modalitates relativae*, which correspond to the different modes of these relationships: truly, falsely, necessarily, and so on)<sup>6</sup>. To the question about the significate of propositions, Pardo answers in a Buridanian manner (identifying it with the particular things signified by the terms), but he qualifies this view from the perspective of his enriched ontology (as the significate of a proposition is not reduced

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 1r-2v.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 2v-5r.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 5r-7r.

to the "bare particulars" signified by the terms, but is identified with these particulars insofar as they are related in an affirmative or negative way<sup>7</sup>.

Of course, the nominalist Pardo always insists that these (infinitely many) "modes of being related" are not really (*non realiter*) different from the related things themselves. But eventually he cannot avoid recognising that there is some difference between the particular things and the modes of being that cause the different modes of conceiving them: Socrates, for example (which is conceived by the term "Socrates"), cannot be exactly the same as Socrates insofar as he is identical with himself (which is conceived by the proposition "Socrates is Socrates"): if they were the same, it would be impossible to know Socrates without knowing that Socrates is Socrates, which is denied by Pardo<sup>8</sup>.

### *The signification of a proposition*

In accordance with these ideas about the *significate* of propositions, Pardo recognises a specific *signification* for propositions (a specific way of signifying), that distinguishes them from terms. A proposition, although it signifies the same things as its terms signify separately, signifies them *in a way* that cannot be signified by the simple terms. In order to understand this "way of signifying" (parallel to the ontological "modes of being related"), it is worth considering Pardo's ideas about syncategorematic terms.

<sup>7</sup> See G. Nuchelmans, *op. cit.*, p. 65-66; E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 69; P. Pérez-Ilzarbe, "John Buridan and Jerónimo Pardo on the Notion of Proposition", in R. L. Friedman and S. Ebbesen (eds.), *John Buridan and Beyond...*, p. 153-181, esp. p. 167-172.

<sup>8</sup> "Sed ibi esset bonum dubium: utrum noticia illius modi se habendi sufficienter causetur a noticia rei que sic se habet. Respondeo: ad cognoscendum aliquem modum se habendi necesse est habere noticias omnium eorum vel cuiuslibet quod exigitur ad talem modum se habendi. Sed tamen hec consequentia non valet: 'cognosco quicquid exigitur ad aliqua taliter se habere, ergo cognosco illa taliter se habere'; nam clarum est quod ad hoc quod Sortes se habeat unitive affirmative ad seipsum non requiritur nisi Sortes, et tamen non sequitur 'cognosco Sortem, ergo cognosco Sortem unitive in ordine ad seipsum', nam per noticiam cui subordinatur iste terminus 'Sortem' cognosco Sortem et tamen non cognosco Sortem unitive in ordine ad seipsum. Et ex hoc videtur apparentia quedam: quod ille modus se habendi unitive non omnino ydemptificetur cum Sorte, ex eo quod stat aliquem cognoscere Sortem et tamen non cognoscit quod Sortes se habeat unitive in ordine ad seipsum. Et istud argumentum posset applicari universaliter de omnibus modis se habendi unius ad aliud, probando esse aliquam distinctionem inter rem et modum se habendi, sed hoc omitto quia non est presentis inquisitionis" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 17ra).

Pardo offers an extensive analysis of "mental syncategorems" (or better, of *actus illis quibus subordinantur sincathegoreumata vocalia vel scripta*), and presents a view which strongly diverges from the *opinio communis*<sup>9</sup>. Opposing the view according to which mental syncategorems do not signify *aliquid*, but only *aliqua*, Pardo defends the idea that any syncategorematic act signifies *aliquid aliqua*. That is, a syncategorem signifies the same things that are signified by the categorematic terms, but it signifies them in a way that the categorematic terms are not able to signify<sup>10</sup>.

For Pardo, then, syncategorematic acts are true cognitions (*notitia*), by means of which the intellect knows something<sup>11</sup>. The fact is that the intellect can know the same thing in many different ways, so there are many kinds of *notitiae*, by means of which the intellect knows the things in different ways. For example, Socrates can be known by a simple concept ("Socrates"), but also by a mental proposition ("Socrates est Socrates"), which represents the same thing in a different way (namely, as affirmatively related to himself), and also Socrates can be known by a complex term ("Socrates si est Socrates", which represents him in a conditional way with respect to himself), etc<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 11vb-14rb. See G. Nuchelmans, *op. cit.*, p. 29-31; E. J. Ashworth, "The Structure of Mental Language", p. 63-65, with the reactions of Pardo's contemporaries to his striking theses.

<sup>10</sup> "Dico ergo quod huius conditionis sunt actus illi quibus subordinantur sincathegoreumata vocalia vel scripta: quod significant aliquid, puta illud quod significant cathegoreumata, sed aliqua, taliter videlicet qualiter non significatur per cathegoreumata" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 12vb).

<sup>11</sup> Pardo puts forward three objections, and gives the corresponding detailed answers, in order to clarify the kind of signification that belongs to syncategorems: "significare aliqua aliqua, representare aliqua aliqua" (*Ibid.*, ff. 13ra-14rb).

<sup>12</sup> "Et si queras quales ergo noticie aut cuius conditionis sunt ille quibus subordinantur sincathegoreumata vocalia aut scripta, respondeo intellectui nostro tanta est data intelligendo fecunditas ab ipso summo opifice Deo ut quamcunque rem in numeris et infinitis modis cognoscere potest, ut istam rem que est Sortes intellectus infinitis diversis modis cognoscendi cognoscere potest. Potest enim [cognoscere] per noticiam simplicem et incomplexam cognoscere Sortem. Potest cognoscere etiam per mentalem cui subordinatur ista vocalis 'Sortes est Sortes', per illam enim mentalem 'Sortes est Sortes' nichil a Sorte realiter distinctum significatur, sed aliqua representatur qualiter non representatur per illam noticiam Sortis (scilicet, compositiva et unitiva); et tali modo non representatur per primam noticiam, et ista secunda noticia compositiva et unitiva a prima noticia causatur, cum ipso intellectu principaliter effective concurrente. Potest etiam cognoscere per istam mentalem 'Sortes non est Sortes', sed aliter (puta, unitive negative). Potest etiam cognoscere Sortem per hanc disiunctivam 'Sortes est Sortes vel Sortes non est Sortes' aliqua qualiter non concipit per illum terminum Sortes (scilicet, disiunctive)" (*Ibid.*, f. 12va-b).

The signification of a proposition is, of course, of a "syncategorematic" nature: a proposition signifies the same things that are signified by subject and predicate, but in a special way (affirmatively, negatively, etc.) which corresponds to the different modes of *ita esse vel non esse*.

This special syncategorematic signification of propositions is the key to understand the difference between a proposition and a term (for example, "Homo est animal" signifies man and animal, but in a way that "homo" and "animal" by themselves are not able to signify, that is, in so far as they are affirmatively related). But in addition, this special way of signifying is what allows Pardo to account for the unity of mental propositions.

### The unity of mental propositions

It is important to note that Pardo's conception about the unity of mental propositions has nothing to do with the question about the "glue" that joins subject and predicate together. The "unity" of a mental proposition means for Pardo the non-composite character of this mental act. Pardo's answer to the question "an propositio mentalis sit plures notitiae" is an emphatic "no mental ultimate proposition (whether categorical or hypothetical or any other) is composed as an aggregate of several cognitions"<sup>13</sup>.

In the subsequent discussion of this general thesis, Pardo develops a full theory on the nature of mental propositions. I will focus on four aspects of this theory, which Pardo defends as his most original points: first, the place of judgement in Pardo's account of the unity of propositions; second, the sense of the "complexity" which is traditionally ascribed to propositions; then, the role that is left to subject and predicate in this account; and, finally, the new conception of the copula which is advocated by Pardo.

### Mental propositions and judgement

First of all, Pardo does not share Gregory of Rimini's view which grants the unity of mental propositions by identifying them with simple acts of judging (*assensus* or *dissensus*)<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> "Nulla propositio mentalis ultimata (sive categorica, sive ypothetica, aut cuiuscunque generis propositionum) est ex pluribus notitiis composita, compositione per aggregationem, quod est dicere quod nulla talis est plures notitiae" (*Ibid.*, f. 14va). In order to prove this thesis, Pardo presents four *rationes* that show the shortcomings of the opposed view (*Ibid.*, ff. 14va-15va).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 15vb-16r.

For Pardo, the unity of a proposition is something previous to the act of assenting or dissenting. This idea is connected to Pardo's conviction about the priority of mental propositions over vocal and written ones. In order for a vocal or written proposition to signify, it must be subordinated to a mental one. But it is obvious that one does not need to make a judgement in order to understand a vocal or written proposition. Using a familiar example (the vocal proposition "Rex sedet"), Pardo explains that it is perfectly possible that, in the lack of any reason for neither assenting nor dissenting to its content, one does not form any mental judicative proposition; nevertheless, if the vocal proposition is understood, one must have formed some mental proposition, that must therefore be an apprehensive cognition (*notitia apprehensiva*)<sup>15</sup>.

Moreover, in order to form a judicative cognition, it is necessary to have formed a previous apprehensive cognition, for it is impossible to judge about a content (the object of the judicative act) unless there is an apprehension of this content. Some might say then that the judicative cognition is at the same time an apprehensive cognition of its content, but Pardo has shown that there must be an apprehensive cognition distinct from the judicative one, so he is entitled to put a previous apprehensive cognition as a requirement for the formation of any act of judgment. In other words, a judicative proposition presupposes the *modum representandi* of an apprehensive proposition<sup>16</sup>. And, even more, the mental

<sup>15</sup> "Ideo, doctor ille recte ponit omnem mentalem esse simplicem noticiam, ponendo solam noticiam iudicativam esse propositionem mentalem ultimam. Sed hoc tamen non credo esse verum, ad quod moveor tali ratione: quia satis possibile est aliquem habere mentalem ultimam et tamen non assentire aut dissentire. Nam proponatur alicui ista propositio 'Rex sedet': manifestum est eum formare mentalem ultimam qua cognoscit regem sedere, quia aliter illa oratio vocalis ei non magis significaret quam greco litteras latinas ignoranti, et tamen manifestum est eum non assentire aut dissentire huic quod est regem sedere, quia non habet aliquod motivum, ut suppono, ad assentiendum vel dissentiendum" (*Ibid.*, f. 16ra).

<sup>16</sup> "His suppositis, ad instantiam respondeo quod non sola notitia iudicativa est propositio mentalis, sed ponenda est quedam notitia apprehensiva a notitia iudicativa realiter distincta, que prius (saltem natura) tendit in obiectum illud quod debet iudicari per noticiam iudicativam quam formetur notitia iudicativa realiter distincta. Et hoc provenit ex perfectione quam habet notitia iudicativa, propter quam perfectionem presupponit modum representandi noticie apprehensive. Unde dico quod illa qualitas que est notitia iudicativa non esset notitia iudicativa sui obiecti nisi per apprehensivam apprehendatur tale obiectum. Ideo, potest concedi quod notitia iudicativa quantum ad illam denominationem que est iudicativa dependet ab apprehensiva, licet quidam dixerunt quod ipsamet iudicativa est apprehensiva. Quamvis hoc posset sustineri, tamen postquam est necesse ponere aliquam apprehensivam a iudicativa realiter distinctam, melius est ponere apprehensivam illam presuppositam ad hoc quod habeatur notitia iudicativa" (*Ibid.*, f. 16rb).

proposition properly speaking is just the apprehensive one. *Assensus* and *dissensus* are only called "propositions" in a derivative sense, insofar as they can be said true or false<sup>17</sup>.

In conclusion, the act of judgement, which is essential to Gregory's account of the unity of mental propositions, does not play any role in Pardo's explanation. Instead, his efforts are directed towards making clear how an apprehension that we usually call "compositionem vel divisionem" is nevertheless as simple as the "simplex apprehensio" itself.

### *Mental propositions and complexity*

So the big challenge that Pardo has to face is the apparent conflict between the thesis about the unity of mental propositions and the traditional view of propositions as a kind of complex<sup>18</sup>. On the one hand, he is strongly interested in preserving this complexity, as he wants to use it to draw the desired distinction between propositions and terms. But, on the other hand, he has to create a new notion of complexity, that would not involve any danger to the simplicity of mental propositions<sup>19</sup>.

Pardo explicitly rejects the common view, according to which two kinds of complexity can be distinguished: *in genere rei* and *in genere signi*. This common view attributes to the propositions a complexity *in genere signi*, which is explained as an equivalence in meaning to several simple cognitions<sup>20</sup>. Now, Pardo objects that the proposition "Socrates est Socrates" is not equivalent in meaning to several cognitions. Instead, this mental proposition is a *noticia* by which the same thing is known as is known by the single *noticia* "Socrates", although it is signified in a new way, namely in a unitive way (as related to himself)<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> "Et si queras que istarum noticiarum, iudicativa videlicet an apprehensiva, dicatur propositio illa cui subordinatur propositio vocalis in significando, respondeo: de noticia apprehensiva solet teneri communiter quod est propositio mentalis cui subordinatur vocalis, sed de noticia iudicativa non modo dubium est an sit propositio illa cui subordinatur vocalis, sed an debeat dici propositio" (*Ibid.*, f. 16va). "Sed quod noticia iudicativa debeat dici propositio, licet non illa cui subordinatur propositio vocalis, non magna est vis: potest enim propositio appellari postquam vera vel falsa dicitur" (*Ibid.*, f. 16vb).

<sup>18</sup> See G. Nuchelmans, *op. cit.*, p. 94-98.

<sup>19</sup> See E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 79-80.

<sup>20</sup> According to Ashworth, this is Peter of Ailly's view (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 78).

<sup>21</sup> "Secunda instantia est: si propositio mentalis esset unica noticia sequeretur quod non esset noticia complexa quod est falsum, quia tunc non deberet dici oratio, ymo unus terminus simplex, quod est falsum. Consequentia tamen probatur, quia si sit unica noticia non videtur quare debeat magis dici complexa quam noticia cui subordinatur iste terminus 'homo'. Ad hoc solet communiter dici quod non vocatur complexa in genere rei (seu

And this is the kind of complexity that corresponds to a proposition: a complexity consisting of knowing an object *in a way* that it is not known through an incomplex cognition which is *presupposed by it as a cognition* of the same object<sup>22</sup>.

Two important aspects are involved in this definition: first, that the true relation between the mental proposition and the simple cognitions corresponding to subject and predicate is not a relation of part-whole, but a relation of presupposition. Pardo emphasises that this presupposition should be *as a cognition*, thus ruling out some apparent counterexamples. In the first place, it is not a matter of just presupposing a simple cognition, as any intellective (human) cognition presupposes some sensitive cognition, not necessarily being for this reason a complex cognition<sup>23</sup>. In the second place, it is not a matter of presupposing a simple cognition as an object (*sub ratione obiecti*), as the cognition through which some other cognition is known presupposes the existence of this other cognition, though not its being a cognition, and for this reason it should not be called a complex cognition: for example, I can know the cognition that I have of Peter, but this cognition is not known inasmuch as I am knowing Peter through it. In contrast, a complex cognition presupposes the incomplex one inasmuch as some object is being known by it, exactly the same object that is known by the complex cognition: should the incomplex cognition not represent the object, the complex cognition would not be able to represent it<sup>24</sup>.

formaliter aut intrinsece), eo quod sit plures noticie alterius rationis, sed solum in genere signi, pro quanto equivalet in significando pluribus vocibus vel pluribus noticiis. Sed contra, quia tunc sequeretur quod esset aliqua propositio mentalis que non esset complexa. Patet: capio mentaleme cui subordinatur ista vocalis 'Sortes est Sortes'. Illa non est complexa in genere signi, quod probo: quia non equivalet pluribus noticiis in significando, nam per eam tantum cognoscitur id quod cognoscitur per noticiam cui subordinatur ille terminus 'Sortes', sed aliter (puta, unitive)" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 16vb).

<sup>22</sup> "Alia est ergo assignanda ratio quare dicatur complexa, si omnis propositio mentalis complexa debeat dici talis: quandocunque aliqua noticia aliquid cognoscitur circa aliquid obiectum qualiter non cognoscitur per noticiam incomplexam quam presupponit tanquam noticiam eiusdem obiecti, tunc talis noticia debet dici complexa, quia nulla noticia incomplexa presupponit aliam noticiam incomplexam ut noticia est." (*Ibid.*, f. 16vb). Ashworth considers this idea of complexity to be an original contribution of Pardo (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 79).

<sup>23</sup> "Neque satis est ad noticiam complexam quod presupponit incomplexam, quia tunc noticia intellectiva que haberetur de aliquo sensibili semper deberet dici complexa, cum presupponat noticiam sensitivam eiusdem obiecti; sed hoc non est quantum est ex parte ipsius noticie, sed ex ordine potentiarum pro statu isto, qui non ex natura rei sed ex ordinatione divina in anima coniuncta (saltem post peccatum primi hominis)" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 16vb).

<sup>24</sup> "Etiam, non satis est ad noticiam complexam quod presupponat aliam noticiam sub ratione obiecti, quia noticia per quam aliquis cognosceret intuitive noticiam exigit existentiam illius noticie quam cognoscit, sed propterea non dicenda est complexa, quia non

On the other hand, Pardo reminds us that in order to have a complex cognition it is not sufficient to have this relation of presupposition, but it is also needed that the same objects are known *in a different way*. This idea is explained when considering the question whether a common cognition (which seems to presuppose a singular cognition as a cognition) should be called a complex one. Pardo's answer is that, although the common cognition presupposes a singular cognition of some object also known by it, the object is not known in different ways. This solution might appear an *ad hoc* one, as Pardo has to admit that the knowing *confuse* (corresponding to the common cognition) and the knowing *distincte* (corresponding to the singular cognition) do not count as different ways of knowing, because confusion and distinction are not on the part of the thing, but only on the part of the cognition: one may ask whether this thesis is compatible with Pardo's general statement that *intellectus movetur a re*<sup>25</sup>.

In any case, it is clear that Pardo's idea of complexity involves *presupposition* of simple cognitions and also a *different way* of representing. A corollary is that, under this perspective, any syncategorematic term becomes a complex term, as through the mental syncategorem the same object is known as it is known by the corresponding mental categorem, but *in a way* that it is not known by it<sup>26</sup>.

exigit eam sub ratione noticiae sed solum sub ratione obiecti. Non enim cognosco noticiam quam habeo de Petro eo quod per noticiam Petri cognoscitur Petrus, per noticiam autem complexam idem obiectum cognoscitur quod per incomplexam, ita quod noticia illa que dicitur complexa presupponit incomplexam ut tendentem ad idem obiectum ad quod tendit ipsa complexa, ita quod noticia illa que dicitur complexa nunquam representaret obiectum nisi quia noticia incomplexa representaret idem obiectum." (*Ibid.*, f. 16vb)

<sup>25</sup> "Et si dicas: noticia communis presupponit noticiam singularem, ut noticia communis omnium entium presupponit noticiam alicuius singularis etiam sub ratione noticiae, et tamen manifestum est quod non debet dici complexa. Respondeo: noticia illa communis omnium entium est incomplexa, et difficile est de ea probare quod presupponat noticiam alicuius singularis entis sub ratione noticiae, ita quod per illam noticiam communem non potest omne ens representari et cognosci nisi quia per noticiam singularem aliquod ens singulare representatur. Posset enim dici quod illa causatur ab aliquo singulari ente (vel saltem a specie intelligibili alicuius singularis entis), eo quod talis noticia communis semper est abstractiva. Dato etiam quod illa noticia communis presupponeret noticiam incomplexam alicuius singularis entis, non propterea dici debet complexa, quia, ut dictum est, per noticiam complexam idem obiectum cognoscitur quod per incomplexam, sed aliquid qualiter non cognoscitur per incomplexam. Sed per noticiam illam communem, quamvis idem obiectum cognoscitur quod cognoscitur per incomplexam singularem, non tamen alio modo cognoscitur quam per incomplexam (saltem attendendo illum modum quantum est ex parte obiecti cogniti), quamvis enim per unam noticiam cognoscatur tale singulare confuse et per aliam distincte, illa tamen confusio et distinctio non se tenent ex parte rei cognite, sed tantum ex parte cognitionis" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra).

<sup>26</sup> "Ex isto patet quod omnis terminus sincategorematicus dicitur terminus complexus, nam subordinatur in mente conceptui complexo quo idem obiectum cognoscitur

Finally, Pardo elaborates his notion of presupposition in terms of a *causal relationship*: the reason why the complex cognition is said to presuppose the simple cognitions is that it is caused by them in the course of a cognitive process. For example, we have seen that through the mental proposition "Socrates est Socrates" one knows Socrates as he is affirmatively related to himself. Pardo understands that the act of knowing Socrates this way is the result of a cognitive process that must start by knowing Socrates in itself (this is achieved through the mental term "Socrates"). Then, by a mechanism that Pardo does not explain, this first cognition of Socrates comes to cause a new one, the proposition through which one knows Socrates in a different way as cannot be known by the simple term "Socrates"<sup>27</sup>.

This raises the additional question as to whether the simple cognitions are sufficient causes for the complex one. Pardo's answer is that they are not: one can well know Socrates by the simple cognition "Socrates", without automatically knowing that Socrates is Socrates (that is, Socrates as affirmatively related to himself), and this shows that the complex cognition "Socrates est Socrates" needs some extra cause, apart from the simple cognition that is presupposed by it<sup>28</sup>. The fact is that the tension between pure nominalism and some disguised realism that Pardo meets at the ontological level is reproduced at the cognitive level, as the complex cognition that was supposed to make us know *the same things* as the simple ones that are presupposed, in a sense makes us know *something different* from the simple ones, namely, a *modus se habendi* that in a sense must be something different from the things that are so related<sup>29</sup>.

quod per conceptum cui subordinatur cathegoreuma, sed aliquid qualiter non cognoscitur per noticiam cui subordinatur cathegoreuma (puta, universaliter, particulariter, aut aliquo alio modo)" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra).

<sup>27</sup> "Per hec patet quod noticia cui subordinatur ista vocalis 'Sortes est Sortes' est complexa, eo quod causatur a noticia incomplexa et eam presupponit tanquam noticiam eiusdem obiecti, et aliquid qualiter cognoscitur per istam noticiam (puta, relative unitive et affirmative) qualiter non cognoscitur per noticiam cui subordinatur iste terminus 'Sortes', qui modus se habendi est Sortes realiter se habens" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra).

<sup>28</sup> "Sed ibi esset bonum dubium: utrum noticia illius modi se habendi sufficienter causetur a noticia rei que sic se habet. Respondeo: ad cognoscendum aliquem modum se habendi necesse est habere noticias omnium eorum vel cuiuslibet quod exigitur ad talem modum se habendi. Sed tamen hec consequentia non valet: 'cognosco quicquid exigitur ad aliqua taliter se habere, ergo cognosco illa taliter se habere'; nam clarum est quod ad hoc quod Sortes se habeat unitive affirmative ad seipsum non requiritur nisi Sortes, et tamen non sequitur 'cognosco Sortem, ergo cognosco Sortem unitive in ordine ad seipsum', nam per noticiam cui subordinatur iste terminus 'Sortem' cognosco Sortem et tamen non cognosco Sortem unitive in ordine ad seipsum" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra).

<sup>29</sup> "Et ex hoc videtur apparentia quedam: quod ille modus se habendi unitive non omnino ydemptificetur cum Sorte, ex eo quod stat aliquid cognoscere Sortem et tamen

Leaving aside this problem, the fact is that Pardo's idea of complexity grants, as was desired, both the distinction between propositions and terms and the unity of mental propositions. The worry now is what is left in this picture of the traditional notions of subject and predicate.

### *The nature of mental predication*

Pardo further elaborates his idea of mental complexity when he has to face an objection concerning the possibility for a proposition of representing contradictory contents, along with the possibility of representing the same things in repugnant ways<sup>30</sup>. Pardo is convinced that the "unity" (that is, the simple nature) of a mental proposition does not prevent it from being able to represent different (even contradictory) contents, or to represent in different (even repugnant) ways. The key for a correct understanding of the propositional unity is now a distinction between absolute cognitions (*noticia simplex seu absoluta*) and comparative ones (*noticia comparativa*). An absolute cognition makes us know the thing in itself, as not compared to anything, whereas a comparative cognition makes us know the thing as related to something (*in ordine ad aliud*)<sup>31</sup>.

Pardo ascribes to the comparative cognitions the same notes previously ascribed to complex ones: a comparative cognition *presupposes* the simple cognitions that are compared, in the sense that *its representing*

non cognoscit quod Sortes se habeat unitive in ordine ad seipsum. Et istud argumentum posset applicari universaliter de omnibus modis se habendi unius ad aliud, probando esse aliquam distinctionem inter rem et modum se habendi, sed hoc omitto quia non est pre-  
sentis inquisitionis" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra).

<sup>30</sup> "Tertia instantia est: si propositio mentalis esset una simplex noticia sequeretur quod eadem noticia esset noticia representativa contradictorium. Nam capiatur mentalis cui subordinetur ista vocalis ypothetica 'Sortes currit et Sortes non currit': si illa sit unica simplex noticia, sequitur quod eadem noticia representat contradictoria, scilicet Sortem currere et Sortem non currere. Et universaliter sequeretur quod eadem noticia representaret obiectum modis repugnantibus (puta, intuitive, abstractive, singulariter, universaliter et sic de aliis modis). Si enim aliquis habeat mentalem cui subordinatur ista vocalis 'A est albedo', posito quod 'A' sit nomen proprium alicuius singularis albedinis quam intueatur, tunc per illam propositionem mentalem cognoscit A singulariter seu discrete, cognoscit etiam ipsum A communiter seu confuse omnem albedinem cognoscendo; cognoscit etiam A intuitive per illam noticiam, et abstractive per hoc quod cognoscit quamlibet albedinem abstractive" (*Ibid.*, f. 17ra-b). This problem has lead Peter of Ailly to consider hypothetical propositions as composed, a view that also Andreas Limos has defended. See E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 94.

<sup>31</sup> "Respondeo: duplex est noticia. Quedam est noticia simplex seu absoluta qua aliquod cognoscitur absolute non relative in ordine ad aliud, alia est noticia comparativa qua aliquod cognoscitur comparative seu relative in ordine ad aliud" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 17rb). See G. Nuchelmans, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

*depends on* the representing of the simple ones, and this dependence is due to the fact that the comparative cognition *must be caused* by the simple cognitions that are presupposed<sup>32</sup>. Now Pardo adds a further note, which casts much light on the kind of complexity that can be attributed to mental propositions: the complex cognition is *more perfect* than the simple cognitions that are its causes. This perfection is due to the fact that the comparative cognition *contains* in a superior way (*continet eminenter*)<sup>33</sup> the ways of representing of the simple cognitions that have caused it. This perfection is what explains the possibility of containing different ways of representing, even repugnant or contradictory ones<sup>34</sup>.

If we apply this idea to mental propositions, we can see them as comparative cognitions that are caused by some previous cognitions that we can call "subject" and "predicate". But, again, the relation between a mental proposition and the cognitions corresponding to subject and predicate is not one of part-whole, but a relation between two different steps in the cognitive process. The way that subject and predicate are "contained" in the proposition has to do with the relation between the different kinds of *representare* that are involved in each step: after the formation of a mental proposition, the initial way of representing is *preserved* in some sense but also *transcended* in a crucial sense.

Pardo allows himself to use the names "predicatio", "compositio" and "divisio", but he is very careful not to interpret them in the sense that a mental proposition is "composing" a subject with a predicate. Predicating is not combining a predicate with a subject, but just representing

<sup>32</sup> "Et hec secunda noticia comparativa presupponit noticiam simplicem vel noticias simplices eius vel eorum que comparantur, nunquam enim intellectus potest comparare aliquid in ordine ad aliud nisi cognoscat id quod comparatur, ita quod noticia illa que dicitur comparativa dependet a noticia vel a noticiis eorum que comparantur, non solum quo ad esse, sed etiam forte quo ad conservari. Per illam enim mentalem 'Sortes non est Plato' cognosco Sortem in ordine ad Platonem, et illa noticia effective causatur a noticia Sortis et Platonis, et sua representatio dependet a representationibus noticie Sortis et noticie Platonis, ita quod noticia Sortis et noticia Platonis sunt tendentes seu representantes sua obiecta, sine quibus tendentiis illa qualitas que est noticia comparativa non esset cognitio Sortis in ordine ad Platonem" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 17rb).

<sup>33</sup> This view was defended by Peter of Brussels (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 88).

<sup>34</sup> "De illa autem noticia comparativa non est inconveniens quod representet contradictoria neque illis modis de quibus in argumento fit mentio, scilicet singulariter et universaliter intuitive et abstractive, et ratio huius est quia illa noticia est perfectior noticiis illis a quibus causatur, ita quod continet eminenter modos illos representandi illarum noticiarum a quibus causatur; qui modi, etsi circa unicam noticiam simplicem repugnant, non tamen circa noticiam comparativam, illa enim est illuminata ad modos illos representandi illarum noticiarum a quibus causatur" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 17rb).

some things in a special syncategorematic way. That is, through a mental proposition we are signifying that something is something (or that it is not): "significatur hoc esse hoc vel hoc non esse hoc"<sup>35</sup>. The *compositio / divisio* is a new syncategorematic cognition caused by the previous ones, but never composed of them. Pardo even claims that we can discover this by introspective experience: it is true that, when understanding a proposition, one experiences having a concept of the subject and a concept of the predicate, but (Pardo says) one is not experiencing them as parts of the proposition; rather, what one experiences is that, once these simple cognitions are formed, the intellect forms a new cognition, namely a composition / division which is caused by the previous simple concepts<sup>36</sup>.

Can we, then, legitimately speak of the subject and predicate of a mental proposition? According to Pardo, we can say that a proposition has a subject and a predicate in a derivative sense: in the sense that the way of representing of the mental proposition is that of a *predication*. That is, through a mental proposition something is known as it is *attributed* to something else (or to itself). The thing that is attributed in the predication has the *ratio* of predicate, and the thing to which it is attributed has the *ratio* of subject. Thus derivatively, the propositional cognition through which I know, for example, that man is animal ("hominem esse animal") can be said to have a subject, inasmuch as I am knowing something (man) to which something else is attributed (animal), and it can be said to have a predicate inasmuch as I am knowing something (animal) that is attributed to something else (man), because this predicative way of knowing contains in a superior way the cognitions of man and animal<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> "Per hec dicta patet ad aliud quomodo dicantur in mente esse predicationes, pro quanto per illas propositiones significatur hoc esse hoc vel hoc non esse hoc" (*Ibid.*, f. 17vb).

<sup>36</sup> "Ex his patet solutio ad persuasionem aliquorum tenentium propositionem mentalem esse compositam ex pluribus noticiis. Sic enim persuadent: experimur in nobis ut cum audivimus illam vocalem 'Homo est animal' formamus unam noticiam de ly 'homo' et aliam de ly 'animal', ergo dicendum est quod propositio mentalis est plures noticie. Respondeo: non negandum est eis quin experiantur habere illos conceptus, cum de facto ita sit, sed nego quod experiantur illos conceptus esse partes alicuius propositionis mentalis, sed potius experiantur oppositum. Experiantur enim quod, habitis illis noticiis simplicibus, intellectus componit, que compositio vera noticia est ab illis duabus causata. Querendum enim esset ab istis experiantur ne illum actum syncategorematicum quem ponunt copule corre-spondentem, per quem actum nichil cognoscunt, quia non est noticia ut volunt. Et si respondeant quod sic, credo quod dicant contra mentem" (*Ibid.*, f. 17va-b).

<sup>37</sup> "Sed ut amplius cognoscatur quo pacto noticia illa unitiva propositio mentalis dicatur, ponitur quarta instantia: si talis propositio est una simplex noticia, sequitur quod

Now, when it comes to explaining the logical properties that are traditionally explained in terms of subject-predicate relations (for example, *predicatio superioris de inferiore*), Pardo always has recourse to the cognitions that are the cause of the mental proposition. The cognitions that we call "subject" and "predicate" need not be there as real parts, because they are contained in a superior way by the propositional cognition that transcends them (*eminenter continet*)<sup>38</sup>.

A striking corollary of Pardo's view is that the vocal propositions "Homo est animal" and "Animal est homo" must be subordinated to one and the same mental proposition. That is, to the objection that, in the absence of any parts, the proposition that compares man and animal cannot be distinguished from the proposition that compares animal and man, Pardo concedes the argument: knowing man as related to animal is exactly the same as knowing animal as related to man. This simply confirms the non compositional character of any propositional act of knowing. Through the mental proposition the intellect is just apprehending "at once" some individuals as related to each other in a certain way<sup>39</sup>.

non habet subiectum et predicatum; similiter, in ea non esset predicatio. Respondeo: in ea dicitur esse predicatum et subiectum equivalenter et eminenter, pro quanto per eam cognoscitur aliquid ut alteri attribuitur vel sibi ipsi, et sic id quod attribuitur habet rationem predicati (saltem obiective) et id cui attribuitur dicitur habere rationem subiecti (saltem obiective). Exemplum: illa noticia unitiva per quam cognosco hominem esse animal dicitur habere subiectum, pro quanto cognoscitur homo cui aliquid attribuitur, scilicet animal, et illa noticia dicitur habere predicatum, pro quanto per eam cognoscitur animal quod homini attribuitur cognoscendo quod homo est animal. Et ita homo dicitur subiectum obiective et animal predicatum, et ita illi duo termini 'homo' et 'animal' equivalenter dicuntur subiectum et predicatum, pro quanto illa noticia eminenter continet noticiam hominis et noticiam animalis" (*Ibid.*, f. 17vb).

<sup>38</sup> "Qualiter autem una predicatio dicatur superioris de inferiori videndum est, considerando si illa noticia unitiva causetur ex duabus noticiis quarum una sit superioris et altera inferioris, et ita in aliis noticiis consimiliter est iudicandum" (*Ibid.*, f. 17vb).

<sup>39</sup> "Et si arguas: non est aliqua ratio quare homo habeat magis rationem subiecti quam animal, cum per illa cognoscatur hominem esse animal et animal esse hominem, qui enim comparat animal ad hominem etiam comparat hominem ad animal. Respondeo: argumentum vincit quod tam homo quam animal possunt habere rationem subiecti et predicati, homo enim potest habere rationem subiecti pro quanto animal cognoscitur in ordine ad hominem, potest etiam habere rationem predicati pro quanto cognoscitur in ordine ad animal, et similiter dico de ly 'animal' quod potest habere rationem subiecti et predicati. Ideo, concedo quod ille due propositiones vocales 'Homo est animal' 'Animal est homo' eidem mentali subordinantur, et certe in vocali quilibet illorum terminorum posset dici indifferenter subiectum vel predicatum, nisi consuetum esset terminum precedentem copulam appellare subiectum et alium terminum predicatum" (*Ibid.*, f. 17vb).

*Mental propositions and "mental copula"*

Finally, we can understand the completely new conception of the copula that is involved in Pardo's account. As we have seen, the role of the propositional cognition is not that of combining subject and predicate into a composite unit, but rather that of representing them in a new predicative way. In accordance with this view, Pardo explains that the Aristotelian *dictum* according to which the copula "est" makes a composition of predicate with subject should be understood in the sense that the copula signifies in a compositive way the things that are absolutely signified by subject and predicate<sup>40</sup>.

In Pardo's position, the vocal "est" is not subordinated to any part of the predicative cognition (as there are no parts in it), but to the whole mental proposition that represents *aliqua aliquid*. In what sense, then, can we speak of a "mental copula" according to Pardo's position? The only "mental copula" that is admissible in this account is the mental proposition itself, as it is the only cognition to which the vocal "est" can be subordinated<sup>41</sup>.

Again, certain prejudices about "subject" and "predicate" come to distort our vision. We seem to have the intuitive idea that the syncategorematic cognition corresponding to the copula needs to be accompanied by the categorematic cognitions corresponding to subject and predicate (thus apparently confirming the view of a mental proposition as a composite of several parts). Of course, Pardo agrees that a "way of being related" cannot be known unless the things that are so related are also known: in some sense, there is a dependence between the propositional cognition and some simple cognitions of what we call its "extremes". But Pardo's conception of syncategorems allows the mental proposition to represent both the things related and the way of being related: that is,

<sup>40</sup> "Quapropter bene dicit Aristoteles primo Periarmanias: si ly 'est' purum dixeris (hoc est, solitarie acceperis), nichil significat, sed significat quandam compositionem extremorum, id est, iunctum extremis significat id quod extrema significant aliquid (puta, unitive et compositive) qualiter extrema non significant (scilicet, compositive et unitive seu complexive), quod certe sine extremis non est intelligere illud scilicet quod est compositio. Vult ergo habere Aristoteles quod ly 'est' in voce vel scripto exprimit illam noticiam que compositio dicitur, ideo dictum illud commune quod illa copula 'est' denotat unionem predicati cum subiecto falsum est secundum sensum formalem quem habet, nisi caperentur 'subiectum' et 'predicatum' obiective pro rebus ipsis vel pro re ipsa significata vel significatis per subiectum et predicatum. Intellectus ergo illius propositionis est iste: quod ly '<est>' significat ea que per subiectum et predicatum significantur unitive" (*Ibid.*, f. 12vb).

<sup>41</sup> Ashworth attributes this view to Andreas de Novo Castro (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 86).

the dependence does not mean that the syncategorematic cognition is not sufficient by itself to represent *aliquid aliquid*. This dependence has been explained, not in terms of a part-whole relation, but in terms of a relation of causation and *eminenter continere*. So, once it has been caused by the categorematic cognitions, the syncategorematic cognition (on its own) suffices to represent both the things compared and their way of being related<sup>42</sup>.

An interesting feature of this "holistic" view is that this allows Pardo to interpret negative propositions as a mental division (instead of as the negation of a mental composition). The vocal expression "non est" is subordinated to a single (propositional) cognition, the one through which something is known as related to something else in a comparative *negative way*<sup>43</sup>.

So far we have at least two different copulas, affirmative and negative. But, as can be expected, Pardo's picture gets more intricate as the structure of propositions becomes more complex. Pardo takes, for example, the universal affirmative proposition "Omnis homo est animal" and the universal negative "Nullus homo est animal". According to him, the mental copula corresponding to the proposition "Omnis homo est animal" is a comparative cognition that signifies that animal is attributed to every man, and the mental copula corresponding to the proposition

<sup>42</sup> "Respondeo: dictum est in solutione precedenti noticiam comparativam dependere a noticia simplici, puta a noticiis extremorum. Quamobrem apparenter posse dici propositionem mentalem esse plures noticias, diceretur enim quod illa mentalis 'Homo est animal' non est precise noticia illa unitiva cui subordinatur ly 'est', sed etiam est tres noticie [...]. Et si obiiceretur quod illa noticia unitiva est sufficiens ut per eam cognoscantur ita esse vel non esse, ergo illa noticia debet dici propositio mentalis. Responderetur quod illa noticia non est sufficiens et representandum hominem esse animal, quia si per impossibile removerentur ille noticie simplices et remaneret illa qualitas que modo est noticia comparativa seu unitiva, illa qualitas non amplius esset noticia nec per eam aliquid cognosceretur. [...] Ideo, dico ad rationem concedendo quod noticia illa unitiva cui subordinatur ly 'est' est propositio mentalis. Quod enim adducitur qualitatem que modo est noticia unitiva non significare hominem et animal unitive seclusis noticiis simplicibus extremorum (tenenti quod Deus potest facere: non statim manifeste probaretur contrarium, quicquid tamen sit), hoc non aufert ab ea esse propositionem, representat enim taliter qualiter sufficit ad propositionem, nam non requiritur ad esse propositionem quod secluso quocunque alio representet" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 18ra-b).

<sup>43</sup> "Et istud dictum intelligitur de propositione mentali que est compositio, quia de propositione mentali que est divisio aliud est, non enim ly 'est' in voce subordinatur mentali negative sed aggregatum ex ly 'est' et negatione negante ly 'est' subordinatur mentali negative. Ut si dicam 'Homo non est animal', totum hoc 'non est' subordinatur noticie per quam unitive negative cognosco hominem et animal" (*Ibid.*, f. 18rb). Ashworth describes this opinion as defended by William Heytesbury (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 89).

"Nullus homo est animal" is a negative cognition that signifies that animal is attributed to no man. Pardo explains that the vocal quantifier is not subordinated to a specific cognition, but both the "omnis" and the "est" (and similarly the "nullus" and the "est") are subordinated to one and the same cognition (namely, to the propositional cognition that we can call "mental copula", as it is the cognition to which the vocal copula is subordinated)<sup>44</sup>. This means that we see in Pardo a proliferation of "mental copulas": we have as many copulas as different ways of apprehending *ita esse vel non esse*.

### Conclusion

Pardo has presented a consistent view about the simplicity of mental propositions (and of mental acts in general)<sup>45</sup>. He has managed to free himself from the "common sense prejudices" that usually lead us to postulate a structure of mental language as mirroring the obvious structure of vocal and written language. We have seen that mental language is composed of simple acts of knowing. At most, what mirrors the structure of vocal and written language is rather the step by step cognitive process that ends up in a given propositional cognition.

In other words, speaking about a "structure" of mental propositions only makes sense in a "genealogical" way. Pardo replaces the question about parts with a new question about the "causal history" of any mental act. What is complex is the cognitive process that has led to a cognition, not the propositional cognition itself. In his logical work, Pardo does not describe this psychological process, but it is clearly presupposed. (In its turn, the structure of the psychological process is reflecting a real structure: the relations among particulars that Pardo has added to his initially Buridianian ontology.)

But there is a further step that Pardo takes and that weakens the credibility of his proposal. He has had the courage to defend a view against

<sup>44</sup> "Credo tamen quod dicendo 'Omnis homo est animal' ly 'omnis' non habeat propriam subordinationem distinctam a ly 'est', sed ly 'omnis' et ly 'est' subordinantur noticie unitive universali per quam unitive cognoscitur animal disiunctim seu confuse tantum in ordine ad hominem universaliter seu copulative. Unde quando signum determinat propositionem quemadmodum dicendo 'Omnis homo est animal', ly 'omnis' non subordinatur noticie qua precise cognoscitur homo, sed subordinatur cum ly 'est' toti propositioni universali" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 18va-b).

<sup>45</sup> See, however, Ashworth's criticism (E. J. Ashworth, "Mental Language and the Unity of Propositions", p. 87-88).

certain "common sense" that is biased by our familiarity with vocal and written pieces of language. But this biased common sense seems to reappear in a way that (in my opinion) spoils his innovative conception of mental language. As we have seen, driven by the idea of subordination of vocal to mental language, he is forced to admit that the vocal "est" is a proposition in its own right, because, being subordinated to the mental "est", it signifies in the way required for being a proposition<sup>46</sup>.

But as a consequence, Pardo seems also forced to admit that the complex vocal expression "Homo est animal" is not a proposition in the strict sense, but an aggregate of a proposition (the copula) plus the terms that signify what things are being signified by it<sup>47</sup>. In analogy to what happens at the mental level, the reason that we can say that vocal subject and predicate are parts of the vocal proposition is that they signify separately what the "est" is signifying in a comparative way<sup>48</sup>. And, as the cognitions that we call "subject" and "predicate" must be presupposed in order to have the simple cognition that is the mental proposition, so the vocal subject and predicate must be added to the vocal proposition ("est") in order for it to signify the *aliquid* that it *aliqua*ly signifies. For example, "homo" and "animal" have to appear in the vocal expression "Homo est animal", but their role is just that of signifying in an absolute way the things that the copula is by itself signifying in a comparative way<sup>49</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> "Concedo preterea unum quod parum aspicientibus videbitur alienum: quia ly 'est' in voce est tota propositio, quia sufficienter significat illud quod requiritur ad esse propositionem" (*Medulla Dialectices*, f. 18rb).

<sup>47</sup> "Et si dicas nonne debet concedi quod totum hoc 'Homo est animal' est propositio, dico quod non, sicut neque debet concedi de aggregato ex noticia unitiva et de illis noticiis simplicibus quod debeat dici propositio. Et ideo, si ille due voces 'homo' 'animal' dicantur subiectum et predicatum hoc est in isto sensu, id est, significant ea que unitive cognoscuntur unum in ordine ad aliud per conceptus correspondentes. (Alias tamen loquendo utar hoc toto 'Homo est animal' et similibus pro ipsa propositione dum argumentum non petet illam difficultatem.) Et sicut ille noticie correspondentes extremis non sunt partes propositionis mentalis, sic etiam ille voces 'homo' 'animal' non sunt partes propositionis vocalis, ideo consimiliter applicatur de propositione vocali sicut applicatur de mentali" (*Ibid.*, f. 18rb).

<sup>48</sup> "Et si dicas: ly 'homo' ponitur in propositione, respondeo: ille conceptus cui subordinatur ille terminus 'homo' causaliter dicitur poni in propositione, pro quanto effective causat conceptum illum unitivum qui propositio est. Et ista vox dicitur poni in propositione quia instrumentaliter movet ad formandum conceptum qui propositio est saltem mediate, nam immediate excitat ad formandum conceptum sui significati, qui conceptus causat illum qui propositio dicitur. Ille etiam due voces 'homo' et 'animal' dicuntur partes istius vocalis 'Homo est animal' quia significant seorsum ea que conceptus unitivus propositionis unitive significat" (*Ibid.*, f. 18vb).

<sup>49</sup> "Et si queras: si ly 'est' est propositio, quid ergo opus est in voce ly 'homo' et ly 'animal'. Respondeo: ly 'homo' et ly 'animal' ponuntur ad significandum ea que ly 'est' unitive debet significare" (*Ibid.*, f. 18rb).

This is, I think, the weakest point in Pardo's proposal. He could have explained otherwise the composition that is obvious at the vocal level. Why not just say that the whole composite expression "Homo est animal" is as a whole subordinated to the mental syncategorematic act that we can call either copula or mental proposition? This would not compromise the simplicity of mental propositions, as Pardo has explained that mental propositions contain not as parts, but in a superior way, all the cognitions that are presupposed as their causes. This *eminenter continere* would be harmlessly reflected in the compositional character of vocal and written propositions.