

Chapter II. Assent Considered as Apprehensive

We have seen from ch. 1 that **assent = absolute acceptance**; and **assent presupposes apprehension**.

In this chapter Newman presents the apprehension of propositions such that we apprehend a proposition when we apprehend its predicate. **The subject of a proposition need not be apprehended to warrant a genuine assent!**

Given the following:

- ⤴ Proposition 1: “Lucern is medicago sativa”
- ⤴ Proposition 2: “That lucern is medicago sativa is true”
- ⤴ Proposition 3: “My mother's word, that lucern is medicago sativa is true”

From which we can see that

- ⤴ P1 [subject = lucern; predicate = is medicago sativa]
- ⤴ P2 [subject = that lucern is medicago sativa; predicate = is true]
- ⤴ P3 [subject = my mother's word, that lucern is medicago sativa; predicate = is true]

Therefore we can further conclude that

- 1) A child may well apprehend the predicate of P2 and P3 (they are the same predicate) but not of P1 (does he apprehend the subject of either P1 or P2 or P3?)
- 2) A child's assent to P3 is stronger than any assent to P1 or P2 because the image of his mother is bound up as part of himself. *Example: the child may well lay down his life for P3 - but without P3, he may well not lay down his life for P1 or P2. However, once P3 is added to P1 and P2, it (P3) has the power that the child may well now lay down his life, even for P1 and P2.*

It is noted that whether or not the child is justified in trusting his mother is not of concern at this point.

Chapter III. The Apprehension of Propositions

Apprehension is not the same as understanding, which is an ambiguous term that may mean 1) the faculty of conceiving, or 2) comprehending. Apprehension is neither of these. Thus:

It is possible to apprehend without understanding.

- ⤴ I may well apprehend what is meant by saying the John is Richard's wife's father's aunt's husband before I can understand that John is great-uncle-in-law to Richard.
- ⤴ I may well apprehend a man's conduct without understanding it.

Apprehension = an intelligent acceptance of the idea or fact which a proposition enunciates.

While an economist must deal in facts, a grammarian may nevertheless translate the economist from one language to another because though he has no hold on such facts he has a hold on the notions of the words and propositions. The former has **Real Apprehension** and the latter **Notional Apprehension**.

Real Apprehension = images; the things in themselves; concrete. This includes the impressions, memories, and imaginative compositions (images) of the things in themselves. These imaginings, while ideal mental creations, are in no sense abstractions and are in no sense notional.

(real apprehension is likened to “seeing”) ? Seeing is apprehending? Newman separates images (even imagined creations) from intellectual notions. An interesting distinction considering Lonergan's “seeing is not understanding.”

Yet there is what Newman calls the **incommensurable** affections and passions of our nature which are **sui generis** (of its own kind, unique in its characteristics) of which the imagination cannot create an image of, even by compositions of other images. Some such incommensurables he offers:

- ⤴ The peculiar style of Cicero
- ⤴ The wit or grace of conversation of the French salons
- ⤴ The delirium of love
- ⤴ The sentiment of a virtuous action
- ⤴ The very idea of devotion

Without the direct experience of these, there can be no apprehension, which is to say, there can be no image in the mind.

Notional Apprehension = abstractions; a synthesis of qualities (categories and forms?).

Real = “A man.”

Notional = “Mankind.”