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JOHN CORCORAN AND GEORGE BOGER, *Protasis in Prior Analytics: proposition or premise?*

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In some senses of *argument*, an argument is a system containing a constituent set of propositions called its *premises* and a constituent single proposition called its *conclusion*. Typically, texts presenting arguments begin with premise representations and end with conclusion representations—reflecting etymologies of *premise* and *conclusion*.

In artificially narrow senses of *proposition*, a proposition is a system containing a constituent term called its *subject* and a constituent term called its *predicate*. The following extended analogy.

As *argument* is to *premise* and to *conclusion*,
so *proposition* is to *subject* and to *predicate*, respectively.

Argument and *proposition* are sortal nouns like *term*: the other words are relational nouns like *constituent*. They do not indicate sorts but rather are used to express relations from one sort to another. Calling something a premise (or conclusion) is incomplete—without including *of which argument or arguments*. In a broader sense, *proposition* is coextensive but not synonymous with *premise* (or *conclusion*) of some *argument*. Calling something a subject (or predicate) is incomplete—without including *of which proposition or propositions*. In certain contexts, *term* is coextensive but not synonymous with *subject* (or *predicate*) of some *proposition*.

The word *pro-tasis* is etymologically a near equivalent of *pre-mise*, *pro-position*, and *ante-cedent*—all having positional, relational connotations now totally absent in contemporary use of *proposition*. Taking *protasis* for *premise*, Aristotle's statement (24a16)

A protasis is a sentence affirming or denying something of something....

is not a definition of *premise*—intensionally: the relational feature is absent. Likewise, it is not a general definition of *proposition*—extensionally: it is too narrow. This paper explores recent literature on these issues.