# ABSTRACT

Alexander Lamprakis *How (Not) to Use Examples and Comparisons in Dialectic: Alexander of Aphrodisias, al-Fārābī, Averroes, and Agostino Nifo on Topics, VIII, 1, 157a14-17* pp. 7-36

In Topics VIII, 1, 157a14-17, Aristotle briefly touches upon the question of how to employ examples and comparisons in the framework of a dialectical debate. This article argues that this passage, mostly neglected in contemporary research on Aristotle's *Topics*, was discussed controversially in its premodern reception. The first and larger part of this paper is dedicated to Alexander of Aphrodisias' (fl. 200 CE) interpretation of this passage and al-Fārābī's (d. 950-1 CE) criticism of it, as it comes down in the recently edited Hebrew fragments of his literal commentary on Topics, book VIII. The second part aims to shed light on the aftermath of this discussion in the commentaries of Abū l-Walīd Ibn Rušd, also known as Averroes (d. 1198 CE) and Agostino Nifo (d. 1538 CE). As will be shown, the debate surrounding the correct usage of examples and comparisons in dialectic amounts to the more general question of how to delimit Aristotle's theory of dialectical argumentation and how to evaluate its relation to rhetoric, poetic discourse, and the demonstrative sciences.

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Fouad Mlih *Avicenna's Kit b al-Ǧadal: A Complete Integration of Philosophical Dialectic and Aristotle's Topics into a New Epistemological System* pp. 37-107

This article aims to provide with an overview of Avicenna's *Kit b al-Ǧadal* (Book of Dialectic), which forms part of his *Kit b al-Šif'* (Book of Healing) and is a comprehensive commentary of Aristotle's *Topics*. It shows that, like his predecessors, Ibn Sīnā takes advantage of his philosophical commentary to bring a case of incompetence against scholars who do not do justice to dialectical reasoning or syllogism (*qiyās ǧadalī*) as seen in its philosophical dimension. The revival of the Greek *Topics* enables him to target rational theologians (*mutakallimūn*), particularly for their supposed degradation of the state of debate, and to introduce a technical dimension to reasoning, which allows him both to assert his superiority over scholars in other disciplines and impose philosophical technique as the ultimate exercise in debate between scholars, with a view to installing dialectic as a technical instrument of any scientific discussion that falls within the political perspective of the good governance of the multitude.

In doing so, Avicenna shows great sense of innovation in the way he takes up, among other things, the *endoxai* and defines *mašhūrāt* (commonly known premises), in the way he describes in great detail the act of concession (*taslīm* and *tasallum*) between the two debaters, and in the way he adds to the traditional philosophical terminology of logical implication the notion of *ilzām*, which he borrows from the discipline of speculative theology.

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Melpomeni Vogiatzi *Aristotle and the Byzantine Commentators on the Classification and Order of topoi* pp. 109-32

Within the Aristotelian corpus, various lists of *topoi* are presented but withdivergent classifications: The *Rhetoric* distinguishes between common topoi and idia based on generality, while the *Topics* classify *topoi* according to the type of proposition demonstrated. This paper addresses the inconsistencies and gaps in Aristotle's classifications and examines how later scholars, particularly Byzantine commentators, attempted to systematize and reconcile these



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classifications to demonstrate the unity and consistency across Aristotle's writings. By exploring the reasons for and methods of classifying *topoi*, the paper aims to elucidate the relationship between different *topoi* lists and their applications in dialectical and rhetorical arguments.

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Riccardo Saccenti *A Science of the Loci: The Reception of Aristotle's Topics Between the End of the 12th and the First Half of the 13th Centuries* pp. 133-91

The *Topica* is a crucial section of Aristotle's logical writings, and its prominence in the Middle Ages is clearly evident from the vast number of manuscripts that transmit the text. However, it was only from the central decades of the twelfth century that this work began to be read and studied in its Latin translation. This contribution offers a reconstruction of the early reception of the *Topica* over a chronological span from 1140/45 to 1240/45. It reviews the early manuscript circulation of the text and considers the traces of its use in twelfth-century schools, mapping how it entered the corpus of the *Logica* and became part of the university curriculum. The paper also focuses on the role that the contents of the *Topica* played in the development of dialectic and how its critical study contributed to establishing the major elements of the interpretation of the Aristotelian theory of topics. The paper provides an analysis of the *tabulae* on this Aristotelian text found in the manuscript Pisa, Biblioteca Cathariana 124, and includes an edition of some parts of these *tabulae* in the appendix.

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Charles H. Manekin *Topical Inference in Medieval Hebrew Logic* pp. 193-216

Topical inference of the sort found in the internal books of Aristotle's *Topics* was introduced to Hebrew-reading Jewish savants in Italy in the mid-



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XIII$^{th}$ century, and in Southern France in the early XIV$^{th}$ century, via translations and adaptations from the Arabic. This article examines the relatively few treatments of topical inference in Hebrew logic through the XV$^{th}$ century. The first treatment of topical inference in Hebrew, albeit one highly condensed, is found in the section on logic of Judah b. Solomon ha-Kohen's encyclopedia, *Midrash ha-Ḥokhmah*, which he himself translated from his Arabic original. Somewhat later, Moses Ibn Tibbon translated into Hebrew Averroes's *Compendium of Logic*, which included a section on topical inferences at the end of syllogistic. These remained the only Hebrew writings on the subject until Averroes's middle commentary on the *Topics* was translated by Qalonymos b. Qalonymos in 1313. Shortly thereafter, excerpts of this translation appear in the *Logic* of Hezekiah b. Ḥalafta of Millaud, and commentaries were written on it by Levi Gersonides and Todros Todrosi. Familiarity with the Latin tradition of topical inference was bound up with the fate of Petrus Hispanus's *Tractatus*, which was extant in over a half-dozen Hebrew versions.

Still, topical inference was on the whole not a part of the Jewish student's logical curriculum, to judge from the available evidence. Jewish scholars studied logic primarily for theoretical understanding and for practical applications in medicine and other fields, rather than for engaging in formal disputations of the sort found in Christian universities. By the XV$^{th}$ century, interest in topical inference declined both in Jewish and Latin contexts. Some Hebrew logic textbooks omitted it entirely, while others replaced it with contemporary Latin topics, like the theories of obligations and consequences. Evidence suggests that when Jewish students studied topical inference, it was mainly for its own sake rather than for understanding dialectic or disputational techniques.

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Yehuda Halper *Literary Dialectic and Its Discontents: Humor and Physics in Immanuel of Rome and Jedaiah Bedersi* pp. 217-32

This paper examines two Jewish thinkers of the early 14$^{th}$ century who composed literary works that treat questions in physics in dialectical terms taken from the Hebrew Aristotelian *Topics* tradition. One of these, Immanuel



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of Rome, did so in a humorous manner, poking fun at the ways in which dialectic can be used to promote sophisms. The other, Jadaiah Bedersi, probably of Beziers, did so in two epistles that critique another Hebrew physical thinker, possibly Levi Gersonides. Both of these thinkers employ dialectic in an aggressive manner, designed to attack and defeat the physical arguments of their opponents. Even though Immanuel's approach is one of ridiculing dialectic, his words suggest that at least some interest in dialectic existed outside of his purview. And, indeed, we find such interest in the works of Jedaiah.

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Ana María Mora-Márquez *John Buridan on the Syllogism and His Departure from Radulphus Brito* pp. 233-54

This paper analyses John Buridan's approach to the notion of syllogism by putting it in the institutional and doctrinal contexts where he belongs, that is, the faculty of arts of the University of Paris and its Aristotelian logical tradition. The analysis aims to ascertain Buridan's innovative contribution to the history of logic by underscoring the points of continuity and rupture with respect to Radulphus Brito, the immediately preceding Parisian master whose Aristotelian logic is available to us. The conclusion points to Buridan's unprecedented syncretism of Aristotelian and terminist logic in the Parisian tradition, which provides a framework to his departure from Brito's pragmatic approach to the notion of syllogism. I propose to interpret this rupture as a crucial step towards the demarcation of logic as a formal discipline that, as John MacFarlane has shown, was first consolidated by Kant.

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Hassan Rezakhany - Francesco Omar Zamboni *Clearing the Heart: Rāzī & Reasoning* pp. 255-84

Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) developed at least three distinct accounts of 'reasoning' (*fikr*/*naẓar*) over the course of his career. The latest of these is both historically unprecedented as well as perhaps the most philosophically interesting. Further adding to its interest is that it is contained in a recently re-discovered Rāzian manuscript (Fatih 3145). Each account is here explained and evaluated for its philosophical virtues and vices. The final account is couched in highly 'mystical' language, but there is good reason to believe that it is mystical in appearance only. Rāzī uses highflying mystical terms only then to deflate them of any genuinely mystical sense, thereby 'rationalizing mysticism' instead of 'mystifying rationality'. Scholarly debate continues, however, on the related but broader question of Rāzī's stance on mystical knowledge in general. Although the question is difficult to answer comprehensively due to the extensive evidence in need of sifting, we marshal some passages by Rāzī heretofore undiscussed in the secondary literature to argue that the existing scholarship provides no basis for the conclusion that Rāzī recognized mystical knowledge as a species of knowledge distinct from every-day, 'rational' knowledge.

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Jacopo Lohs *XIV$^{th}$ Century Perspectives on Univocity of Being: Francis of Meyronnes' Logical Writings* pp. 285-314

Within the Scotist tradition, Francis of Meyronnes (Franciscus de Mayronis, d. 1328 ca.) constitutes a case of marked theoretical originality: Francis develops his theories in a wholly personal way. From a metaphysical point of view, the doctrine of the univocity of being is elaborated by Mey-



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ronnes from different perspectives, intertwining ontological considerations with the theory of knowledge and logical considerations. He is explicit in stating that, if the sciences are distinguished from one another on the basis of their proper subjects, their hierarchical order will respond to that distinction. The primary science has the first subject as its subject, and starts with the first principle, namely «de quolibet est affirmatio vel negatio vera et de nullo eorum ambo simul». This principle guarantees the basis of certain knowledge of the real world, insofar as its proper subject is being (*ens*). The truth dimension of this principle is not restricted to the logical realm, but is entwined with the ontological horizon. At a metaphysical level this idea has a very important repercussion, because both God and the creature are included under one idea of being, otherwise no non-contradictory statement with respect to both would be possible. For the latter reason, it is of primary importance to understand in which sense Francis of Meyronnes considers being and the way in which it is known. Compared to Scotus, it will be evident that Meyronnes' account of being follows its own path: he is the only 'scotist' thinker - including Bonetus - who flat out reject analogy as useful for science and demonstrations. My presentation will detail these dissimilarities and survey Meyronnes' unique contribution to the debate over the univocity of being, primarily considering his commentary on the *ars vetus* and his conception of *univocal*, *equivocal* and *denominative* predication.

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Francesca Bonini *John of Sacrobosco and Astronomy in the* Catena aurea entium *by Henry of Herford* pp. 315-48

The Dominican *lector* Henry of Herford (ca. 1300-1370), mostly known for his *Chronicon*, is the author of the *Catena aurea entium*, an encyclopedia in ten books. This contribution addresses the third book, devoted to heaven and its parts. Particular attention is paid to the sources of the text, especially the astronomical literature quoted by Henry. The analysis highlights how Henry drew upon a wide variety of sources in his encyclopedic enterprise, which cannot be considered a mere abridgment of Albert the Great's texts. Among



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Henry's sources, pride of place is given to Sacrobosco's *De sphaera*, but his expertise is not limited to this work. Furthermore, from the analysis of several text passages, it is possible to understand which texts Henry had at his disposal. In this way, the third book of this partially edited encyclopedia offers an overview of the astronomical knowledge of the German Dominicans of the 14th century and a first glance into the conventual libraries of the German provinces.

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Andrea Fiamma *Following in the Footsteps of Buridan and Marsilius of Inghen. John Grössel's Teaching on the Ethica Nicomachea in Vienna (1446)* pp. 349-90

Manuscript no. 775 in the Admont Abbey Library contains *quaestiones* and *puncta* on *Ethica Nicomachea* and *quaestiones* on *De generatione et corruptione*, which were compiled at the Faculty of Arts of Vienna University in the mid-15th century. This article discusses these testimonies to Viennese academic life at the time, highlighting doctrinal positions, contexts and sources. The set of *quaestiones* on the EN was probably given by the master, John Grössel de Tittmoning, and addresses issues such as truth and virtue, vice, falsehood, sin and happiness. The article examines the writings in the aforementioned manuscript as case studies to determine whether the Viennese Masters, such as Grössel, merely lectured on Aristotle's works in the footsteps of John Buridan's commentary on the EN and Marsilius of Inghen's commentary on *DGC*, or whether it is possible to identify distinctive features in the Viennese teaching in *via Buridani et Marsilii*, as, for example, the relationship between the Arts and Theology.

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