

History of Logic from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance

Università “G. d’Annunzio” di Chieti-Pescara – December 2020-January 2021

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Short description of the course

This course is an in-depth survey of the reception of Aristotle’s logic in Late Antiquity and in the Middle Ages. We will look at the early discussions by Boethus of Sidon on the perfection of syllogisms (1st century BC). Boethus is the first philosopher who “systematized” Aristotle’s philosophy and had a nominalist take on universals. We will then move to the debates on the status of logic between Alexander, Ammonius, Philoponus and we will flesh out the role of logic as an underlying deductive system of medicine in Alexander and Galen. We will study Boethius’ contribution to logic and we will focus on his solution to the puzzle of future contingents. Thomas Aquinas’ solution will be presented as well and we will look into the logical implications of this solution. Finally, we will flesh out the reception of Aristotle’s logic in some Renaissance authors (Nicholas of Cusa, Savonarola, Soncino, Javelli).

Methodology

Each class will include a power-point presentation with the relevant texts which will be discussed with the students.

Evaluation

A short paper (3000-4000 words) on one of the topics analyzed in the course and an oral discussion where the student will be invited to present and discuss it.

Detailed program & calendar

First class – Thursday, December 10 (14h-16h)

1) The Reception of Aristotle’s Logic in the 1st century BC: Boethus of Sidon

(Primary source: Themistius’ *Treatise Against Maximus and Boethus on the Reduction of the Second and Third Figure to the First Figure*. Arabic edition & French translation in Rashed/Chiaradonna 2020. Relevant passages from Themistius’ treatise will be quoted in the ppt presentation)

Second Class – Saturday, December 12 (10h-13h)

2) Part or instrument of philosophy? A Late Antique Debate. (Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ammonius, Philoponus)

(Excerpts from Alexander’s, Ammonius’ and Philoponus’ Commentaries on Aristotle’s *Prior Analytics*. The texts will be made available by the teacher in English translation & in the Greek original)

Third class – Thursday, December 17 (14h-16h)

3) Logic and Medicine. Galen and Alexander on the Logic of Medicine

(Excerpts from Galen's *Institutio Logica* and from Alexander's Commentary on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*. They will be made available by the teacher in advance)

Fourth class – Saturday, December 19 (10h-13h)

4) The contribution of Alexander of Aphrodisias to the History of Logic. The notion of “category”.
The two *Barbaras*

(Excerpts from Alexander's commentary on the *Prior Analytics* and on the *Topics*, from Simplicius' Commentary on the *Categories*. The texts will be made available by the teacher in English translation & in the Greek original)

Fifth class – Friday, January 8 (14h-16h)

5) Boethius on syllogistic. Future contingents in Boethius

(Boethius, *De syllogismo categorico. Consolatio philosophiae* 5)

Sixth class – Saturday, January 9 (10h-13h)

6) Logic and theology in Eterianus. Thomas Aquinas on future contingents and on modalities

(Eterianus, *De sancto et immortalis Deo* – excerpts provided by the teacher in Latin/English translation. Aquinas, *Summa theol., in Arist. Periherm.*)

Seventh class – Saturday, January 16 (10h-13h)

7) The reception of Aristotle's logic in Nicholas of Cusa, Savonarola, Javelli, Soncino

(Cusanus, *De coniecturiis*; Savonarola, *Compendium logicae*; Javelli, *Compendium logicae*. Excerpts made available by the teacher)

Bibliography

Prantl C., 1870. *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande*, Leipzig, Hirzel.

Bochenski, I.M., 1956. *Formale Logik*, Fribourg/Münich, Aber Verlag.

Kneale W., Kneale M., 1962. *The Development of Logic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Gabbay D., Woods J., (eds.), 2004. *Handbook of the History of Logic*, Vol. 1. *Greek, Indian and Arabic Logic*, Amsterdam/Oxford, Elsevier.

Gabbay D., Woods J., (eds.), 2008. *Handbook of the History of Logic*, Vol. 2. *Medieval and Renaissance Logic*, Amsterdam/Oxford, Elsevier.

Further bibliography will be provided to the course participants.