# Narrating Premodern Philosophy in Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin

## Origins, Developments, Innovations

*Katja Krause, Luis Xavier López-Farjeat, and Nicholas A. Oschman*

### On Tradition

BY KATJA KRAUSE

Every tradition of thought, and likewise every tradition of practice—as long as it has not been lost in the black hole of history—seems to remain alive. For this reason, it has been rightly said that history and historiography keep traditions alive. Nonetheless, certain differences seem to arise among the historiographies of traditions. Some historiographies look forward, dynamically adapting, reworking, and molding what they find in their heritage to their own needs. Others look backward, seeking truth in stable origins. Wherever truths are located in such stable origins, traditions seem to be the subject measured against these origins. Do the traditions thus capture the meaning of the original? Or do they defectively deviate from it? Wherever traditions face forward, they seem free to find new expressions, to encounter divergent viewpoints, to multiply in space and time. The aliveness of traditions in this sense does not fall under a single measure; there seems to be no preference for origins over adaptations.[1] Whether traditions come to life in diversity or whether they flourish only in light of their origins, therefore, makes a difference.[2]

This book proposes to take a fresh look at the Aristotelian traditions in space and time, finding meaning in those traditions' diverse expressions, viewpoints, and multiplications of perspective without neglecting its thematic and methodological origin. Let us start by explaining more precisely what this fresh look entails and what different aspects it embraces, in order that it might be apprehended how history keeps tradition alive in both senses.

History gives an account of individual thinkers, and also groups of thinkers, who constructed or selected discourses from a stable origin—the *corpus Aristotelicum* as it was known to these thinkers at any one point in time—so as to commend or condemn ideas contained in those discourses. These acts of commending or condemning, seen from the perspective of their historical change, reveal the values and beliefs of the traditions'

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appropriators and adaptors—yet they need to be interpreted in light of the origin. Values and beliefs arise from the motifs and emphases with which tradition endows its Aristotelian origin, thus from the present needs and purposes of the appropriators and adaptors, not from the Aristotelian origin itself.[3] To be sure, the origin provides the canvas, the *sine qua non* condition without which historical change in its variety could not be grasped, let alone explained. But the origin does not itself construct or prescribe a linear causality in history that would be marked more by similarity in the adaptations than by their dissimilarity. For historical change itself is not a line of causation, not an accumulation of right repetitions and false repetitions of the origin; it is driven, rather, by the "human factor." That is certainly the case for intentions, motifs, and emphases,[4] since, for the most part, discourses on parchment are shaped by the living debates of a given time.[5]

Thus, it is through intimate familiarity with the objects of an inquiry that we obtain knowledge, that is to say *historical* knowledge, of them. For objects embody their conditions and means of creation. They contain their particularities in expression and in constructed ontologies. And they encompass the specific functions that they have acquired in space and time. We do not say that we know any historical fact until we are acquainted with its primary conditions of construction and the ontology that results from them, and until we have carried our analysis to the specific functions fulfilled by the object in the general context of its construction in space and time. Plainly, therefore, in the history of philosophy just as in other branches of historical study, our first task is to establish what the conditions are for the construction of such an object.

The wise approach is to begin with the traditions, normativities, impediments, crises, institutions, sociologies, and so on that have brought these acts of evaluation of traditions into being in their historically specific settings. Then one may proceed toward those that define the objects in their philosophical ontologies and functionalities. For these features are not knowable to us unless they are cognized under the conditions of construction.[6] In the present inquiry, we follow this order in generation, advancing from what is specifically and circumstantially preconditioned in each case of philosophical construction to what is constructed out of those preconditions of history.

Let this description, however brief, suffice as a method that approaches history and keeps tradition alive in both the senses described. Sketchy as it is, it should enable the reader to recognize the shape of the tradition in the contributions that follow.[7]

## Response to "On Tradition"

**By Nicholas A. Oschman**

Of course, such a "sketchy" prescription requires more methodological precision to be truly sufficient, and more ought to be said, building upon

and explicating the previously established foundation. For while the nature of this kind of project may seem familiar in both its commendations and condemnations, it is the familiar nature of the *corpus Aristotelicum* itself that renders it so peculiar in its manifestation. The reader of this collection will readily see that "As Aristotle says . . ." is as contentious a phrase as can be written. Which Aristotle? The Stagirite, *Ἀριστοτέλης*, himself? *Arisṭū*? *Aristoteles*? Alexander of Aphrodisias under the guise of Aristotle? Themistius under a similar guise? The misattributed *Plotiniana Arabica*? The Second Teacher? The Sheikh? The Commentator? Thomas? Aristotelianism, as received, is not singular, but myriad.

Yet the *corpus Aristotelicum* is nonetheless a body of work, defined and definite, as is the tradition that follows in its wake. It is the source of the tradition that follows, the text to which all later authors must return. To ascribe difference is not to deny boundaries. To acknowledge the occurrence of growth out of the *corpus Aristotelicum* is not to deny that there is some something shared in its interpretation—a textual ground, an authorial historicity, and a way of thought—which gives the succeeding tradition a recognizable nature. In other words, recognizing that the Aristotelian tradition contains difference does not necessitate that it entails *différance*,[8] as if all meaningful discussion of Aristotelianism and Aristotle's texts, as such, must be deferred in perpetuity or denied in the first place.

To recognize that any understanding of "Aristotle" cannot be found purely in reference to historicism need not deny the importance of history.[9] Context and history matter, as both the markers of continuity and the mechanisms of division. Misreadings become novel readings. Novel readings become standard readings. Standard readings become condemned readings. Condemned readings become rediscovered readings. Yet this constant remains: the reading of Aristotle.

In recognition of that, what follows in this collection is less of a study than simply one more contribution to a conversation that spans continents and millennia, as were the contributions of the authors about whom many of the following papers were written. "Aristotle," it would seem, is ever growing, yet always anchored in a text.

In this sense, while the text itself does not necessitate "a line of causation" or "an accumulation of right repetitions and false repetitions of the origin," it does demarcate itself from other traditions.[10] The Aristotelian tradition is not monolithic, yet the text serves as a monolith marking the foundation of a school of thought, providing first principles that must be known if one is to be acquainted with the tradition as a whole, as Aristotle teaches about the sciences in *Physics* 1.1. Interpretations vary, yet the text itself maintains a certain hegemony over any foreign influence. The text is the source of the tradition. A return to the "true" Aristotle holds potent and powerful rhetorical appeal.

Even while recognizing the chimerical character of understanding authorial intent,[11] the tradition as such does have an author, bound

by texts written in a particular place and context. The commentators and adopters of these texts were themselves living individuals, with aims and intentions both hidden and apparent within their own writings. Though it is true that the Aristotelian tradition can be said to be "driven [. . .] by the 'human factor,'"[12] the directionality and particularity of its motion need not be considered inscrutable, as if each individual author interprets the text without a rudder, according to the whims of chance. Context, like text, can be discerned, as can purpose, even if imperfectly. While Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1 teaches us about disparate activities pursuant of disparate ends, it also reminds us that ends can be lexically prioritized, subordinated, in reference to that for the sake of which the activity is pursued. Just as the individual activities of the shipwright or bridle-maker can be judged according to the usefulness of building a ship or riding a horse, so too can individual commentators be judged according to their usefulness for understanding the *corpus Aristotelicum*.

Thus, what is needed is a method that itself discerns different methodological approaches to the *corpus Aristotelicum*, something that delineates between the text, responses to the text, and the influence of texts upon one another. (After all, it was Aristotle himself, in *Topics* 1.1, who taught us that the manner by which we obtain conclusions is as crucial to our understanding of said conclusions as the conclusions themselves.) Taken together, these hermeneutics, which attend to the text and context while maintaining a proper reference and orientation toward the texts that succeed and precede the text at hand, could be described as *source-based contextualism*, a methodological approach demiurgically created by Richard C. Taylor. This is a hermeneutic that assesses each text in reference to prior texts yet preserves a clear vision toward historical context. The family tree of the Aristotelian tradition can be charted from root to branch, based upon what has come before and after each text. It is a complicated family tree, to be sure, but one can limn it.

What follows in the body of our book are several novel attempts to map out the various branches of this tradition. Each attempt lends detail to a specific historical topic but also introduces brand-new outgrowths to the tradition ready for exploration. Each author, then, examines the tradition even while becoming part of it. In doing so, the authors add their voices to an ongoing conversation, providing greater precision even while opening new avenues for discussion. Each contributes to our knowledge about the content of Aristotelianism even while performatively displaying the author's understanding of the proper methodology for approaching texts in the Aristotelian tradition. Put simply, Aristotelianism grows from its textual roots.

Let this description suffice for an introduction to the research that follows.

## Response to the Response to "On Tradition"

BY LUIS XAVIER LÓPEZ-FARJEAT

Of course, more needs to be said if we are to find a sufficient prescription for defining what is usually called the "Aristotelian tradition." The conversation always continues. In debates and writings, historical and contemporary thinkers reexamine the texts to which they respond, while their writings, in turn, become texts that require equally careful examination and response. The same has happened with the *corpus Aristotelicum*. The text has been subject to adaptations, transformations, and appropriations, thus generating new thoughts, debates, and texts—in short, new sources that become embedded in discussion, interpretation, and innovation in different cultural contexts. These processes have been crucial for the development of the philosophical vocabulary and philosophical problems that have shaped what we generally recognize as the "Aristotelian tradition."[13]

Throughout the history of philosophy, for two and a half millennia, Aristotle has been there. However, as has been stated, the question "Which Aristotle?" is imperative.[14] Aristotle's philosophy has been transformed in different ways at different times, in books, in minds, in debates. There have been Aristotelians and Aristotelianisms of many different kinds. Neither did Aristotle emerge out of nothing. Aristotle's ideas were deeply rooted in Plato's philosophy. Despite their differences in method and content, Middle Platonists, Neoplatonists, and Late Antique commentators thus adapted, transformed, and appropriated their Plato and their Aristotle as two complementary, or at least compatible, philosophies.[15] The attempt to harmonize—in some cases to combine—these two philosophies extended into the Middle Ages, when philosophers and theologians of the three Abrahamic traditions walked similar paths.

In some significant ways, therefore, philosophy and theology in the three Abrahamic traditions are rooted in Aristotle and in other sources that affirmed or rejected Aristotle or that tried to reconcile Aristotle with Plato.[16] The result is the emergence of a multifaceted Aristotelianism, an Aristotelianism in constant transformation. From an Aristotle that had already been transformed in many ways, the medievals took ideas, structures, arguments, and methods to discuss problems relating to their own contexts and concerns. The first principles that were "most knowable and obvious" to each generation were, in part, artifacts of their milieu.[17] For better or for worse, medieval thinkers kept their traditions alive through adaptations, transformations, and appropriations of the past.[18] Without the medieval reworking of Aristotle, there would have been no Renaissance and no modernity in philosophy. Through the Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin translations of Aristotle and their formalized commentary cultures, Aristotle's ideas, structures, arguments,

and methods were assimilated into the history of philosophy, theology, science, and even medicine.[19]

Abundant scholarly literature is devoted to exploring the different ways in which medieval scholars inherited and transformed Greek philosophy—especially Plato, Aristotle, and Neoplatonism.[20] This literature mostly approaches these inheritances and transformations through the lens of a linear historical trajectory, in which the original provides the standard against which the historically later contributions are to be measured. But history, even if a record of natural things, is not a natural object that aims at some teleologically endowed good.[21] The reception and adaptation of the Aristotelian tradition lacked any predetermined purpose. Every time it was put to some purpose, something new was formed. The volume complements these inheritances and transformations by emphasizing how medieval philosophical appropriations were always bound to forge new meanings, produce new ways of understanding philosophical vocabulary, concepts, and arguments, and implement new ways of doing philosophy. These acts of appropriation are particularly challenging given that, as each contribution to this volume shows, they require careful examination of the sources. Working with the sources, focusing on their specificities, is essential to recognizing not only the appropriations but also the recontextualizations and reformulations of philosophical ideas.

The kind of work just described has its complexity. Historians working with philosophical ideas engage with their sources in context, as part of a specific space and a specific time. The historian of philosophy knows and weighs the particular cultures and social spaces, the linguistic and religious conventions, the motivations, intentions, and sets of questions; in short, all the relevant conditions of a particular historical construction. Historians of medieval philosophy consider carefully under which circumstances, how, and why the medievals departed from Aristotle and subsequently transformed him.

Different languages often complicate this work further. Aristotle was translated from Greek into Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, Latin, and many vernaculars. Translations are themselves interpretations and innovations, as is the generation of new ideas from translations.[22] Adding even more complexity is the historian's access to the actual historical events in which ideas and concepts took shape—conversations over beer, wine, or *shāy*, discussions in university classrooms, madrassas, and synagogues, and debates in private and public space are all lost; we can only read texts that have come down to us. The same was true for medieval philosophers with regard to their ancestors. Al-Fārābī could only read a version of Aristotle, his Aristotle (whoever that was), certainly not talk to him in person.

Medieval philosophers and theologians thus examined and mined philosophical texts to create meaningful philosophies and theologies within their own lifeworlds. We as historians of philosophy, in contrast, examine not only medieval philosophical and theological texts, but also the texts

that medieval philosophers and theologians examined and other texts of historical relevance, such as statutes of universities, letters, texts of other literary genres, images, manuscripts in their material culture, etc. Discussion continues as to what is the most appropriate way to examine the philosophical and theological texts produced by the medievals.

Members of the "Aquinas and 'the Arabs' International Working Group" (AAIWG) have, for many years now, discussed, adopted, and developed what Richard C. Taylor, the founder of the group, has called "source-based contextualism." As has been said,[23] this approach assesses each medieval philosophical or theological text in light of other relevant philosophical and theological texts, leading to a root with different derivations that allows us to recognize the complexity of each text and the different ways in which a philosophical problem can be framed. This methodology encourages a meticulous work of analysis and textual interpretation based on sources. The interpretation of a text in light of other texts contributes, in some cases, to the clarification of philosophical discussions and, in other cases, to a more appropriate approach to the problems. Certainly, working with this method also allows discovery of the variety of adaptations and interpretations carried out by medieval scholars of the three Abrahamic traditions.[24] The contributions in this volume provide, precisely, new insights to understand the Aristotelianisms permeating the philosophical and theological discussions of the Middle Ages.

Let this description suffice as the method scholars should adopt when approaching texts in the history of philosophy.[25]

## Liminal Spaces, Familial Narratives

**by Katja Krause, Luis Xavier López-Farjeat, and Nicholas Oschman**

Of course, more needs to be said for a sufficient prescriptive approach to tradition.

Understanding traditions requires wrestling with mereological problems. Traditions are not, after all, just the sum of their parts. Rather, they are fashioned by a complicated nexus of influence, rejection, ignorance, adaptation, and adoption. One cannot understand a tradition, especially a tradition as long, storied, and complex as an Aristotelian tradition, by simply delimiting its boundaries and deducing its shared characteristics. Traditions are both narrative, in the sense of history unfolding, and familial, in the sense of sharing a common foundation. But they are also more than that, for while authors are embedded in context, text, and the holistic gravity of history, a certain dimension of them—the personal—escapes these confines.

Traditions contain myriad liminal spaces, found wherever living human beings are. Take, for instance, Averroes as a reader of Aristotle. Averroes

(Ibn Rushd) is credited with carrying out a "return to Aristotle,"[26] as if the precise meaning of that phrase were clear. In fact, the complexity of what this really means can scarcely be detailed, even though the claim is accurate on the whole. Within the phrase lies a whole history: Averroes' personal context; the texts and translations available to him; the contexts and texts of his predecessors, whose positions he either rejects, adopts, or adapts; and his understanding of those authors. The intricacy of Averroes' relationship to even a few of his predecessors alone is too complicated to explicate in full: al-Fārābī, commentator on and Neoplatonic adapter of Aristotle; Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā), reader and adapter of both Aristotle and al-Fārābī; Ibn Bājja, advocate of Plato, often forgoing Aristotle and al-Fārābī; and Averroes' erstwhile mentor Ibn Ṭufayl, who rejects Aristotle, al-Fārābī, and Avicenna's *Shifāʾ* in favor of Avicenna's Eastern philosophy—an entirely fabricated position constructed by Ibn Ṭufayl himself.[27] Each of these authors has their own "Aristotle," and Averroes rejects each "Aristotle" in favor of his own conception. But where is the overlap? Where are the gaps? Where is the influence? Careful scholarship can ameliorate these difficulties, but our approach to understanding even this small sliver of Aristotelian tradition is asymptotic.

Concluding that traditions are complicated, murky things, muddled by the messiness of human activity, is different from understanding them. For this reason, we, the editors, have endeavored to prime the reader toward a deeper engagement with these issues. In this introduction so far, we have each in turn taken stances, some performatively insincere, about methodology, described in our private discussions as "contextualism" (Krause), "textualism" (Oschman), and "holism" (López-Farjeat). None of these stances, despite our claims above, is sufficient to describe the proper way to interpret Aristotelianisms. Each is a prescription, responding in part to the inadequacies of other prescriptions. But no prescription closes the conversation; the tradition, including its interpretation, remains open-ended. By taking up clear points of view, our aim was to challenge (and even frustrate) you, the reader, inviting cognizance about the lens through which each of our contributors approaches their topic. By interpreting one another in different ways, we hoped to remind you that the tradition invites and, in fact, is made up of different types of interpretations.

Each "Aristotle" contained in this book is a scholar presenting a historical author, influenced by other authors, each of whom views "Aristotle" through a different interpretive lens. There are layers upon layers of types of interpretations, each driven by methodological and numerous other choices, each creating new seams to explore. We hope you appreciate not merely the texts, the contexts, and the historical whole of the tradition, but the methodologies adopted by both contemporary and historical authors. And in considering these methodologies, we hope you consider the liminal spaces, the human elements, the lacunae between authors, which shape the tradition every bit as much as intention.

This book thus addresses the various attempts that single historical actors made to shape and reshape Aristotelianism over its *longue durée*: how some of them understood, adopted, and appropriated Aristotle's corpus; how others interpreted, transformed, and adapted Aristotle's philosophy; and how yet others used Aristotle's ideas for their own sake. It is well beyond the scope of this book to give an exhaustive chronological account of such developments in the Aristotelian tradition. But despite the particular and even idiosyncratic approaches of individual contributors to the Aristotelian tradition, all of the historical actors studied in this book are examined through three interrelated questions. First, given the availability of numerous possible ways to approach "Aristotle" and the tradition which follows in his wake at various moments within the Aristotelian tradition, using what approach did historical actors engage with "Aristotelian" works? Second, how did they view previous historical actors' engagement with "Aristotelian" works? And third, what, if any, thematic and methodological choices did the actors make according to their own particular scientific ideals?

Approaching the historical in this way, the tension between thought options and choices in each case serves as an intellectual litmus test as to how we should describe the internal scientific factors that established and stabilized any Aristotelian tradition over the course of time. Indeed, by examining the spectrum of these factors and subsuming them under three broad analytic categories—origins, developments, and innovations—we hope to initiate a lively discussion about how our own thought options and methodological choices influence the ways that we describe the intentional space of our historical actors vis-à-vis their sources. This book is not, then, intended as a study of the historical, social, and cultural conditions *under* which an Aristotelian tradition was forged at any given time, even though these matters arise in different functions in a number of the contributions. Nor does it intend to study the material means *with* which Aristotelianism could physically be carried forward in history, even though manuscripts, translations, prints, and editions play a crucial, even if implicit, role in all contributions. Rather, in each chapter, this book studies the intellectual practices that historical actors apply to their texts and templates in order to create knowledge and meaning through *epistēmē*, *ʿilm*, *scientia*. As a whole, it engages with the intellectual practices and lenses that we as scholars apply when investigating our historical actors in the Aristotelian traditions.

These practices and lenses form our own liminal space. The lacuna between the contemporary scholar and historical author is, in each case, navigated by specific methodological decisions and concerns. But discussions about methodology rarely capture the full entanglement of these issues, because the most important methodological decisions are often the ones that are not made, or are not made explicitly. Decisions about topic, style or personal preference, personal exposure to specific scholarship and texts,

and values all contribute to the methodologies of contemporary scholarship and to scholarship itself, often superseding methodological decisions. Again, the human comes to the fore, new spaces arise, new seams between authors (this time contemporary and historical) as they negotiate a clear definition of the tradition. We are ourselves part of the mereological problem. Our own encounter with the texts of the Aristotelian tradition creates a new liminal space.

In order to remind you of these issues, we have organized this book idiosyncratically. It is not a chronological account of the Aristotelian tradition, as if each developmental stage of understanding Aristotle builds upon the last in a necessitated and determined way. Nor is the book thematically coordinated, as if authors interested in certain topics share some core motivations. It is not even organized according to the characteristic methodologies of the historical authors themselves. Instead, we have grouped the sections of this book according to the methodologies of the contemporary scholars who have contributed. Rather than making Aristotle or history the stars of the show, we give the scholars center stage. The lens through which they look at history is the ordering principle of the study. But this raises the question: Are we, as editors, already applying our own lens of interpretation to our scholars, which colors the book throughout?

Given the disparate approaches of the contributions, we have catalogued the papers under three very general headings: those adopting methodologies that return to the origins of the tradition, those adopting methodologies that emphasize the continuity of the tradition, and those adopting methodologies that emphasize a *de novo* reading of the tradition. Though the methodological decisions made in each contribution are much more complicated than backward-looking, developmentalist, or forward-looking, our hope is that the methodological categorization and order of the contributions will invite you, the reader, to keep methodology—the historical author's, the scholar's, our own as editors, and yours—top of mind.

Two final things should be said before introducing the contributions. First, organizing them according to the methodology of the contemporary scholar alone leads to some interesting results. Whereas some of our chapters fit neatly according to expectations (e.g., David Twetten's examination of the influence of Aristotle and Alexander on Averroes' conception of the Prime Mover as a methodology, which looks back to the origin, and Therese Scarpelli Cory's examination of light in Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes as a developmentalist approach), others show a methodological tension between scholar and author. For example, Thérèse-Anne Druart's examination of the Arabic sources of Roger Bacon's *Moralis philosophia* takes a forward-looking author, Bacon, who uses sources for his own novel ends, but applies a retrospective methodology that highlights the influence of Avicenna and al-Fārābī on Bacon's thought. Similarly, Steven Harvey examines Averroes' own retrospective methodology, which aims to return to Aristotle, and shows the novelty of Averroes' approach.

Methodological decisions by authors talking about authors, talking about still other authors, build upon one another in interesting, and sometimes confounding, ways. The second thing to be remembered is that the organization of this book is itself a kind of lens, whose use betrays our own motivations, methodologies, and values as editors. Our readings of the contributions are not the authors' own, nor need they be yours. By creating a whole out of the parts, we have incidentally (as is always the case) created interstitial spaces. We invite you to examine, question, reject, and adopt our interpretations as you please.

## Part I: Origins

The authors in the first section of our book measure the premodern philosophers of Aristotelian tradition by their fidelity to the origins of their thought—the templates, or what are identified as such, from ancient Greek or Arabic lands, most notably of Aristotle and the Platonic and Neoplatonic tradition. Faithful renderings of these origins are marked by steadfast allegiance to the letter, unwavering loyalty to the thought, firm adherence to the idea, and even commitment to the culture of the author, text, and audience.[28] Transformation is read as a departure from the original. But in order to know what it is *in* the letter, thought, idea, and culture, the essays in this section review, reconstruct, examine, and determine these origins mostly on the basis of our own contemporary scholarship, and it is against this background that they analyze historical interpreters. The historical actors studied in this section are found to either meet or fail to meet the criterion of fidelity to the original. They either recognize or fail to recognize the theoretical ideals of the original—two criteria that are themselves imbued with the epistemic values of contemporary scholarship, even of future scholarship, as our knowledge of the original is in constant flux and depends on ever-new findings of its truth in history.

The historiographical question about the kind of causality that the First Cause exerts according to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ 7 is the subject matter of **David Twetten**'s contribution. Prominent contemporary Aristotle scholars, Twetten suggests, render this causality narrowly as *telos* only. In contrast, Twetten reasons that the medieval Arabic philosopher Averroes takes a wider approach to the causality of the First Cause, which is the "source" or "form" along with the *telos* of the cosmos. For Twetten, Averroes comes closest to Aristotle's true intention, thus helping to measure contemporary interpretations according to their fidelity to Aristotle.

**Owen Goldin**'s essay examines how Philoponus, the sixth-century commentator on Aristotle often known as John the Grammarian, understands "form" (*eidos*) by harmonizing apparent tensions between Plato with Aristotle, a recurring theme in the long Aristotelian tradition. Though Philoponus' sense of form as universal was entirely conceptual

and thus faithful to Aristotle, it nonetheless remained open to the view of forms as conceptual *logoi* in the demiurgic mind of God and thus faithful to Plato. With this solution, Goldin suggests, the sixth-century Christian philosopher and scientist found new ways of explaining Plato and Aristotle that reconciled the opposing views of Ammonius and Proclus, even while rejecting the Proclean metaphysics of mind-independent universal forms. Goldin shows that Philoponus established new paths against the background of his immediate predecessors; his solution was fundamentally a return to its origins, to Plato and Aristotle.

Ascribing one's own doctrines to Greek origins was, at least in the Ismāʿīlī context, a common stratagem in polemical writing. Studying the *Book of Ammonius on the Opinions of the Philosophers: "The Different Statements on the Principles [and] on the Creator,"* **Janis Esots** raises this question of misattributed origin and fidelity to the Greek original. He shows how the themes under scrutiny in the *Book* (misattributed to the Greek philosopher Ammonius)—*creatio ex nihilo* (*ibdāʿ*), the Divine Will, and the Neoplatonic notion of return—suggest some familiarity with its Greek origin, but not fidelity to it. When Esots moves on to later appropriations of the book by early Ismāʿīlī thinkers such as Nasafī, Rāzī, and Sijistānī, he detects even greater deviations, for polemical purposes, from the Greek original, an original known to us today but not available in the same way to early Ismāʿīlī thinkers.

**Josep Puig Montada**'s essay guides us through the thicket of self-motion in Averroes' three commentaries on *Physics* 7 and illustrates that Averroes faithfully adhered to Aristotle in three different and evolving ways. He reproduced Aristotle's reasoning; he followed Alexander of Aphrodisias' guidance in reading Aristotle; and he held Aristotelian tenets as scientifically foundational. Three specific tenets guided Averroes' mature treatment of self-motion in his *Long Commentary on the Physics*: the divisibility of *per se* movables, the equivalence between parts and wholes at rest, and the inequivalence of mover and movable for those movables that display an equivalence between parts and wholes at rest. These tenets, Puig Montada submits, aided Averroes in concluding—against most commentators, with the exception of Alexander—that the notion of a "primary *per se* movable" is applicable to the First Mover alone. The mature Averroes thus remained faithful to Aristotle not only in terms of method and authority but also, increasingly, in content.

Unaltered uses of passages from the original can be counted as faithful returns to it. **Francisco J. Romero Carrasquillo**'s essay presents us with Thomas Aquinas' unaltered uses and receptions of John Damascene's teachings on the body and on images in religious worship. Building upon a reconstructed understanding of the Damascene as an "Arab" in the cultural sense of the word (he was a Christian monk raised in Damascus in the seventh century), Romero Carrasquillo surveys explicit quotations and implicit excerpts of the Damascene in Aquinas' works. He concludes

that the Damascene was the Arab thinker most influential on Aquinas, even more influential than thinkers that we have commonly come to consider "the Arabs," namely al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Avicenna, and Averroes.

Discrepancies between the original and later uses seem to stem from the user's own intentions and circumstances, almost all of which lie outside the truly exegetical endeavor. These discrepancies are what **Thérèse-Anne Druart** finds in her reading of Roger Bacon's use of the Latin translations of Ibn Sīnā's *Metaphysics of the Shifāʾ* and al-Fārābī's *De scientiis*. Druart identifies misinterpretations of doctrines, appearances of false facts, omissions of ideas, and cultural erasures in Bacon's appropriations of Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī in his *Moralis philosophia*. She thereby reveals how little Bacon was interested in the historical Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī and their philosophical sophistication. Instead, Bacon's use was geared to his own doctrinal interests: with Avicenna, he classified moral philosophy as the most important philosophical discipline; with al-Fārābī, he molded his own rhetoric to entice people to love of Christianity and to virtuous action.

Infidelity to a system of philosophy despite fidelity to some of its ideas, contextualizations that conflate one system of philosophy with another, manipulations of ideas to fit in with one's own system of thought, omitted references to originals with purposes of a similar kind—all these transformations strike a reader as incorrect renderings of the original. **Jules Janssens**' contribution on the presence of Ibn Rushd's dialectical works in Ibn Taymiyya's *Averting Contradiction between Reason and Revelation* (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wa-l-naql*) proposes just such a reading. Janssens identifies Ibn Taymiyya's epistemic standards of Islamic theology as standards extrinsic to Averroes' system. He concludes that it was precisely these standards that ultimately provoked Ibn Taymiyya's unfaithful renderings.

## Part II: Developments

The authors in the second section of this book show the ways in which philosophers in the Islamic and Latin lands adopted the philosophy of their origins so as to develop their own philosophy. This "adoption" was anything but mere repetition. It was a creative adaptation, recontextualization, and transformation, leading to new approaches, views, and understandings. The origins our authors treat are diverse: Aristotle, his Late Antique readers, and Christian and Islamic thought. But the contributions involve amalgamations of these origins, paying attention to the sophisticated, correlated, and synchronized transformative processes of the past. The range of transformations they describe relied on a range of agents. Editors, translators, and philosophers were all active contributors to a tradition. Their scholarly work gave rise to different Aristotelianisms, if we may call them that. These Aristotelianisms can be studied in isolation, recognizing their value and originality in separation, or they can be reviewed

in common, appreciating the correlations and parallels they yield. The formation of this common core in the premodern Greco-Islamic-Christian cultures and history was, we insist, an active intellectual appropriation, in which the readers used their sources as fountainheads of living ideas. Readers interacted with texts, constantly recovering, comparing, readapting, and transforming ideas to generate new approaches, new insights, new concepts, new arguments, and indeed new sources. The use of Greek sources within different cultures, religions, and historical contexts was dynamic, and its fruits deserve to be recognized in conjunction. The authors in this section pinpoint the means by which medieval authors developed their own received traditions, expanding and expounding upon them in dialogue with other sources.

For medieval Arabic and Latin Scholastic philosophers, the figure of light played an important instrumental role in explaining key theoretical components of philosophical psychology within the Aristotelian corpus, and it played a decisive theoretical role in optical intromission and extramission theories, mostly alongside the Aristotelian corpus. But it was Aristotle's own theory of light, and with it the fundamental question of how light is able to actualize color, that attracted the most intense discussion within the Aristotelian tradition. **Therese Scarpelli Cory**'s chapter takes us on a journey through the different transformations of light's ability to actualize color within this tradition. Cory argues that the two different options of thought available in the Arabic tradition, from Avicenna and Averroes, converged into one view in the three key proponents of Latin Scholasticism in the 1240s and 1250s: Albert the Great, Bonaventure, and Aquinas. The imagery that Cory finds in this univocal Scholastic view—"the transference of the corporeal form of luminosity" (p. 208)—presents us with a particularly striking case of transformation: Aristotle's mostly underdetermined functional theory led to a metaphysical rendering in the Latin world. Cory's essay reveals, therefore, that this development of philosophical theory pursued neither faithful adherence to the original nor a given theoretical preference. Rather, it resulted from bias and peer pressure—a historical momentum that, on the level of the agents, aims to legitimize or even canonize a given reading of the original theory.[29]

Rather than choosing one option of thought already available, a philosophical tradition can also develop by combining two available options to create a new one that is amenable to the convictions of the appropriating audience. **Cristina D'Ancona**'s contribution illustrates this kind of development in conversation with Richard C. Taylor's research on the *Liber de causis* (a short Neoplatonic treatise that was composed anonymously in Arabic in the ninth century and translated into Latin in the twelfth). D'Ancona elucidates how, in proposition 8[9] of the *Liber de causis*, the anonymous author combined Neoplatonic teaching on the causality of the first cause with an ontology that merged the Neoplatonic One with Pure Being and with Aristotle's divine Intellect. Although this

merging was obscured in Gerard of Cremona's Latin translation of the proposition, which left the Arabic term *hilya* (the aggregate of attributes and qualities) untranslated and raised associations with the Greek term *hyle* (matter), D'Ancona suggests, in reference to Taylor, that Thomas Aquinas was nonetheless able to understand the proposition's teaching due to the overall philosophical context. It seems that philosophical development within a tradition depends not only on merging of available theories but also on reading theoretical elements within larger, overarching contexts.

Epistemic norms, formulated as principles or axioms of theories, hold traditions together. One such principle in Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition is that of truth. In her essay, **Olga L. Lizzini** uncovers how Avicenna transforms the meaning of truth (*al-ḥaqq*) found in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* through the Arabic Plotinus and other sources, thus building a notion of "truth" with ontologically nuanced contents. For Avicenna, Lizzini shows, truth is tied to being, a reality that remains outside philosophical analysis. As such, it can be one of four things: the Necessary Existent, propositions expressing necessity, the principle of non-contradiction, or quiddity. None of these four falls under analysis or demonstration in the realm of philosophical logic, and in this sense all are thus foundational. All other truth outside these four ontological truths is true only secondarily, in relation to them, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, it does fall under philosophical analysis and demonstration. The development undergone by the notion of truth in Avicenna, in Lizzini's reading, is most visible in logic's reflection of ontology, in an idealized replication of one order of being in another. It was this secondary development, this implicit epistemic norm of reflection and replication, that would survive and exert its far-reaching impact on the philosophy of the Latin Middle Ages, if—once again—only implicitly.

The ontological nuancing of the foundations of metaphysics was not an issue for al-Fārābī, at least not in his logical corpus. All the more important was a sophisticated rearrangement of the epistemic foundations of Aristotelian logic, a logic that al-Fārābī inherited in the form of the Alexandrian organization of Aristotle's *Organon* into five argumentative arts: dialectic, sophistry, demonstration, rhetoric, and poetry. **Terence J. Kleven**'s contribution shows that al-Fārābī nuanced the foundations, the epistemic things prior to the syllogistic arts, by promoting four of them—received traditions, generally accepted opinions, sense perceptions, and first intelligibles—in two works that he added to the Aristotelian *Organon*, the *Introductory Letter* and the *Five Aphorisms*, and by discussing the application of one, "generally accepted opinions," in his exposition of the art of dialectic. Promoting the principled use of the syllogistic arts by paying close attention to their manifold epistemic foundations, Kleven suggests, enables al-Fārābī to develop an Aristotelian logic that avoids the Scylla of skepticism and the Charybdis of dogmatism.

Linguistic translations from Arabic either sprang new ideas on their Latin audience or gradually imposed them, often mediated through an initial phase of mental processing. For Dominicus Gundissalinus, archdeacon of Cuéllar and translator of key Arabic philosophical works, both scenarios applied at once, not least because he embodied both translator and audience. As **Nicola Polloni** elucidates, Gundissalinus' earliest treatise *De unitate et uno* was written in close conversation with Ibn Gabirol's *Fons vitae*, the Latin translation of which he had made himself. Yet it would be unjust to reduce the archdeacon's treatise to a mere paraphrase of the *Fons vitae*. References to earlier Latinate authors—openly to Boethius (resulting in a pseudo-epigraphical attribution to him); tacitly in all other cases—were woven into *De unitate et uno*, probably, Polloni argues, with the aim of legitimizing the ontological and cosmological ideas contained in the *Fons vitae*. Polloni's contribution to this volume includes the first English translation of Gundissalinus' short work. The promotion of Ibn Gabirol's thought that Gundissalinus thus attempted did not last: the philosophical ideas of Avicenna later superseded those of Ibn Gabirol in his translation project and in his own works. In his late *De processione mundi*, Gundissalinus corrected his initial advancement of Latin philosophy through ideas from Ibn Gabirol and discarded these in favor of Avicenna's, though with the same aim of winning over his Latin audience.

Using Aristotelian philosophical concepts to expound systematic theological doctrines in new and better ways was a common practice amongst Scholastic thinkers. The extent to which such concepts exerted a comprehensive explanatory force for theological doctrines is questionable, however, especially in light of competing frameworks stemming from more proximate sources, such as Augustinian, Dionysian, and Cathedral School theologies. In her contribution, **Isabelle Moulin** examines the specific amalgamation of doctrinal backgrounds in Albert the Great's early view on sacramental theology. She suggests that in order to fully account for his theology of the sacraments, Albert skillfully fused Hugh of St. Victor's theological notion of preparation (apparently an adaptation of the Dionysian power of reception) and Augustine's theory of seminal reasons with Avicenna's notion of material disposition. Yet Albert's prime objective was not in fact the causation of the sacraments, but their character and efficacy as signs. Moulin's chapter shows, perhaps more than any other in the volume, that theoretical development relies on aligning seemingly equivalent ideas from different traditions to build synthetic systems, as Albert the Great's certainly was.

Synthesis was also on Averroes' mind when he composed his *Decisive Treatise* (*Faṣl al-maqāl*), but this time it was a synthesis of themes in philosophy and law. Set up as a legal determination of the role of philosophy within Islam, the *Treatise* commands capable Muslims to do philosophy, and proposes three distinct levels of discourse for that endeavor, all derived from Aristotle's logic: demonstration, dialectic, and rhetoric. The *Treatise*

consciously promotes just one of these levels of discourse, dialectical argumentation, as its very own tool, **Peter Adamson** shows. This may seem strange, Adamson suggests, since Averroes often uses "dialectic" as a term of abuse, such as when he finds the *mutakallimūn* guilty of engaging in dialectical argumentation. Yet Averroes also saw a positive role for dialectic, in clearing the ground for proper demonstrative, philosophical discourse. He put to use techniques recommended in Aristotle's *Topics* by way of a silent methodological substitution in the *Treatise* and in a related work, the *Exposition* (*Kashf*)—a practice that resulted in a show-case rather than a tell-case of correct reasoning.

Appropriations of Aristotle's ideas sometimes came at the price of seeming philosophical contradictions. A negative development of this kind comes to the fore in **Deborah L. Black**'s contribution, which carefully examines Averroes' distinctive accounts of the imaginative faculty (*takhayyul*) in his commentaries on the *De anima* and the *Parva naturalia*. Black shows that while Averroes sought criteria for distinguishing the imagination from the lower and higher internal senses, the paradigmatic criterion—the capacity to perceive sensible objects in their absence—created more philosophical tensions than clarity. Averroes commented on Aristotle's works with the aim of demonstrating the truth of their content, and the different interpretations of the imagination given in his commentaries could not meet that aim. But though Averroes' project of developing Aristotle's notion of imagination may have failed in terms of philosophical demonstration, it does reveal the dangers inherent in a philosophical commentary tradition: if the origin is taken seriously, perhaps to its extreme, it may turn out not to be as coherent as one might wish.

## Part III: Innovations

The authors who contributed to the final section of our book chose to emphasize their subjects' originality without ignoring the historically embedded contexts of medieval authors. Through a careful examination of the origins, their content, ideas, arguments, and thoughts, the contributors claim to find not *sui generis* insights, divorced from a tradition that came before, but caesuras in the rhyming of tradition that introduce new lines of thought, new constellations of argument, and new fusions of ideas and scientific systems. And yet our authors do not uncover some intrinsic innovative bent among the medieval sages they discuss—this would perhaps take matters too far. Instead, they approach their subjects in a way that highlights particular innovation in thoughts, arguments, and ideas. They thus underscore that medieval thinkers were not only faithful receivers of the origins of traditions within which they wrote, nor mere appropriators and developers of those origins, but also creators of traditions in their own right.

Whether the study of the intellect was subject to metaphysics or to natural philosophy was a question left obscure in Aristotle. But Albert the Great took a clear stand on the point when he composed his autonomous work *De intellectu et intelligibili* and integrated it into his *Parva naturalia*. **Henryk Anzulewicz** submits that Albert was the only Scholastic thinker to hold this position, for which he was vehemently attacked by his student Thomas Aquinas. Nonetheless, he did not build his position on sand. Anzulewicz shows how, by carefully selecting teachings of Peripatetic psychology and cognition theories relevant to his own *scientia de intellectu et intelligibili* and fending off erroneous views such as Averroes' mono-intellectualism, Albert created a new discipline in natural philosophy with its own subject matter. This comprised the perfection of the human intellectual nature, the conditions leading to such perfection, and the modes and scope of its realization in both theory and practice. Albert's combination and consolidation of source material for his autonomous *scientia de intellectu et intelligibili* thus launched a new *scientia naturalis*, even though its heirs did not continue the legacy.

That linguistic translations are not merely about faithfulness to their original but bear surprising histories themselves is a theme rarely discussed in the literature. Yet the origins of the *Plotiniana Arabica*, a text whose authorship is unknown to this day, turn out to illustrate just such a case. **Michael Chase**'s textual investigation of the paraphrastic translation of Plotinus' *Enneads* into Arabic reveals that the text is probably a multistage project of commentary, partial translation, and edition: a commentary by Plotinus' student Porphyry on Plotinus' *Enneads* written in the form of marginal glosses, parts of which, along with parts of the *Enneads*, were translated into Arabic by Ibn Nāʾima Ḥimṣī and probably then edited by al-Kindī. Each historical version of the text, if one may still call it that, certainly transformed its shape and meaning, a process that Chase highlights by investigating the *Plotiniana Arabica*'s doctrine of creation by being alone. The end product, as is well known, itself initiated a new textual tradition and transformation history.

Claims made about one's philosophical return to the origins, especially when launched against an opponent who has supposedly turned his back on those origins, sometimes turn out to reinvent the pursuit of philosophy. This is what **Amos Bertolacci** shows in his contribution, discussing Averroes' self-attested "return" to Aristotelian orthodoxy and critique of Avicenna's originality. It emerges from Bertolacci's chapter that for Avicenna, doctrinal independence from Aristotle is one of the highest philosophical norms, both in saying and doing. For Averroes, in contrast, that norm is doctrinal adherence to the letter of Aristotle. The values of originality and orthodoxy—despite presenting contemporary scholars with apparently conflicting philosophical approaches that lead to opposite results—in fact turn out to be equally novel. What is at stake for both Avicenna and Averroes, according to Bertolacci, is nothing less than what

it means to do philosophy. But Averroes' reactionary attitude to Avicenna's originality was not the only new way of doing philosophy. With its apologetic approach, al-Jūzjānī's defense of Avicenna's orthodoxy in his introduction to Avicenna's *Shifāʾ* carves a middle way—more sophisticated perhaps, but certainly more subdued than Averroes' open opposition. In its ultimate aim, however, it coincides with Averroes' reaction: to alleviate the fear of the unknown.

The subordination of the religious sphere to the demonstrative sphere is a philosophical doctrine that most historians of medieval philosophy associate with Averroes alone. But **Joerg Alejandro Tellkamp** reveals that Marsilius of Padua promoted very similar ideas in his own writing, despite lacking access to their forerunners. Without being able to read Averroes' *Decisive Treatise* and *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, Marsilius, in his *Defensor pacis*, creatively reconceived Aristotle's *Politics* by means of a loose understanding of demonstration as found in *Posterior Analytics* and by applying that method to his own political *Lebenswelt*. This combination sufficed for Marsilius to become an "Averroist without Averroes"—through parallelism or correlation of approaches and ideas, and perhaps just a little contagion.

Even subtle amendments to philosophical systems can have a lasting impact and create new ways of framing debates or settling long-standing arguments. Examining the reception of Avicenna's discussions of God's causal role in the cosmos, this is what **Jon McGinnis** argues when he explores al-Ṭūsī's harmonization between the theological view of creation in time and the Avicennian notion of eternal creation. McGinnis suggests that Al-Ṭūsī brings new focus to the issue driving the passions at the heart of the creation debate: whether creation is willed or necessitated. By emphasizing a distinction between the agent and the sufficient reason for which the agent acts, al-Ṭūsī is able to rebuff Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's claim that eternal creation requires that God act of necessity, not will, even while altering the Avicennian position criticized by al-Rāzī. In the end, al-Ṭūsī offered a philosophical solution devoid of the necessity to choose, which, McGinnis shows, resulted in a free space for the philosophical debate to move on to other, seemingly more pressing themes.

Innovation and the emergence of new traditions in the history of philosophy come through the creation of new disciplines, layers of textual transformation, negotiation of philosophical values, correspondence of philosophical ideas, actors' choices, and certainly many more types of advancements. The same may or may not hold for our historiographies. But their correction by careful examination of the claims they make is another factor, and perhaps the key factor for innovation in this area. **Steven Harvey**'s contribution shows, by disposing of six long-held assumptions about Averroes' commentaries, that Averroes did not approach his commentaries in the rigid, architectonic way in which his corpus is sometimes described. The commentaries are not always easily categorized. Some are

liminal cases, and all seem to be carefully tailored to the subject matter at hand rather than following the formulaic structure that has long been part of our historiographies. In fact, Harvey raises the possibility that the structure of Averroes' commentary corpus was initially unplanned, thus suggesting that a commentary can itself be something novel. In his holistic view, Averroes' commentaries reveal the organic nature of writing and its relation to the commentary author. Then and now, texts, styles, and traditions, like the people who create them, must always grow and change.

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Concluding this book is an appendix by Brett Yardley. Written in consultation with Yardley's mentor Richard C. Taylor, it details the history of the AAIWG, a group spearheaded by Taylor during his illustrious career. We include the piece for several reasons. First, in an effort to show that this book is itself a continuation of the Aristotelian tradition, we wish to give one example of the ways in which some of our authors are still part of that tradition. There are, of course, many other such groups, but the appendix chronicles what one of these communities looks like in our time. Second, the AAIWG, and especially the work of Richard C. Taylor, has nourished, sharpened, rebutted, affirmed, and inspired many of the contributions to this book. Several of our authors are members of the organization to which Taylor has devoted so much; all are friends and colleagues of the man himself. And third, it was in the context of AAIWG and Taylor's wisdom that we, as editors, conceived of this book and everything it contains. Let this description suffice as an introduction to all of the ways that Richard C. Taylor has advanced the study of premodern philosophy in the Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin traditions. We are deeply indebted to our dear friend.

## Notes

1 The two distinct moments of historiography are aptly described by Bergemann et al. in their chapter "Transformation." There, the authors refer to what I call "the origins" as "reference culture" (*Referenzkultur*) as opposed to "recipient culture" (*Aufnahmekultur*). Contrary to the artificial contrast that I draw here, for rhetorical reasons, between different historiographies arising from these two "cultures," the authors of the chapter argue that there is a mutual creation of the reference culture and the recipient culture, a phenomenon they call *allelopoiesis*: "Transformation thus means that the reference object is not fixed, cannot be stipulated once and for all; instead, under each particular set of media and other conditions of transformation it is changed, produced afresh, indeed 'invented'" (p. 40; here and throughout the volume, all translations are the authors' own unless otherwise attributed). Bergemann and his colleagues then provide a useful typology of transformation processes. Our considerations in the present introduction were originally inspired by this insight, but have since left the field of cultural studies to apply and adapt it to the material at hand, namely, our historiographies in medieval philosophy.

2 The preceding thoughts, in their structure and formulation, are inspired by Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1. 1, 1094a1–1094a17. William David Ross' English translation can be found in Barnes, *Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2.

3 This is an insight I owe to Bergemann et al., "Transformation."

4 This point is made particularly clear in Böhme, "Einladung zur Transformation," 11. There, Böhme suggests initially that

> transformations generate dynamics of cultural production where that which lies ahead of the transformation, to which it reflexively refers, and which is itself engendered and specified in the course of the transformation is always transformed as well. These processes [. . .] are marked by relations of interdependence. Transformation is a reciprocal, creative process of production that is not necessarily symmetrical. Depending on whether Antiquity is accorded unquestioned authority, to be venerated and imitated, or whether it is arbitrarily instrumentalized and used to consolidate one's own position, the weighting of the agents of transformation changes—sometimes more pathic and receptive attitudes prevail, sometimes more active and adapting ones—and with it the weighting, image, and role of Antiquity.

These insights anticipate on an abstract theoretical level our very concrete arrangement of the papers in this book.

5 The preceding thoughts, in their structure and formulation, are inspired by Aristotle's *Topics* 1. 1, 100a20–101a24. W. A. Pickard-Cambridge's English translation can be found in Barnes, *Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1.

6 This is the particular approach of "historical epistemology," as applied in many studies in the history of science. Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's *On Historicizing Epistemology*, 2–3, summarizes different versions of historical epistemology before and after coinage of the term: "My use of the term *epistemology* requires a brief explanation. I do not use it as a synonym for a theory of knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) that inquires into what it is that makes knowledge (*Wissen*) scientific, as was characteristic of the classical tradition, especially in English-speaking countries. Rather, the concept is used here, following the French practice, for reflecting on the historical conditions *under* which, and the means *with* which, things are made into objects of knowledge. It focuses thus on the process of generating scientific knowledge and the ways in which it is initiated and maintained" (original emphasis). Other important recent publications that describe and also critique historical epistemology are Nasim, "Was ist historische Epistemologie?"; Feest and Sturm, "What (Good) is Historical Epistemology?"; Sturm, "Historical Epistemology."

7 The preceding thoughts, in their structure and formulation, are inspired by Aristotle's *Physics* l. 1, 184a10–184b14. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye's English translation can be found in Barnes, *Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1.

8 Here, I am referring to the famous "neither a word nor a concept" coined by Jacques Derrida and its link to the Latin *differre* (to defer), even though the meaning of *différance* remains "irreducibly polysemic." See Derrida, "La différance."

9 "Historicism" should be taken here in the sense used by both Karl Popper and Leo Strauss. Popper describes historicism as futile, and one of his central critiques is the inability of the historicists who adopt a *gestalt* theory of the past to ever know the whole, given that only certain aspects can be chosen for study at any moment and "all description is necessarily selective." See Popper, *Poverty of Historicism*, 71. Strauss contrasts "historicism" with "historical consciousness," an attitudinal approach that emphasizes "historical exactness" by striving to "understand the thinkers of the past exactly as they understood themselves." Strauss, "Political Philosophy and History," 67.

10 See Krause, "On Tradition," in this chapter.
11 One need not adopt the naive view endorsed by Johann Martin Chladenius that we can access the author's conception of an event directly through the author's account, or Friedrich Schleiermacher's view that one can understand a text so thoroughly that the hidden motivations of the author can be uncovered. Chladenius, *Einleitung zur richtigen Auslegung vernünftiger Reden und Schriften*, 307; Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik und Kritik*, 18.3. But neither need one endorse the opposite extreme by claiming that the author is gone, insofar as the author signals a finality to meaning, and that what is signified by the text remains infinitely remote, as Roland Barthes describes. Barthes, "La mort de l'auteur." Something more conciliatory is possible, perhaps in line with Michel Foucault when he writes: "It is easy to see that in the sphere of discourse one can be the author of much more than a book—one can be the author of a theory, tradition, or discipline in which other books and authors will in their turn find a place. These authors are in a position that I will call 'transdiscursive.' This is a recurring phenomenon—certainly as old as our civilization. Homer, Aristotle, and the Church Fathers, as well as the first mathematicians and the originators of the Hippocratic tradition, all played this role [. . .]. They are unique in that they are not just the authors of their own works. They have produced something else: the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts." Foucault, "What is an Author?," 216–17.
12 Krause, "On Tradition," in this chapter.
13 The Aristotelian tradition encompasses some Neoplatonic philosophers, Late Antique commentators, and Syriac, Persian, Arabic, Jewish, and Latin Christian translators and interpreters from the Middle Ages; it extends to the Renaissance and even to modern and contemporary philosophy. The number of monographic studies and collective volumes that continue discussing and interpreting the *corpus Aristotelicum* is amazing. Some of them offer a broad historical approach, others focus on the reception of specific works of the *corpus*, yet others discuss the development of concrete problems raised within the *corpus*. Among many others, see Burnett, *Glosses and Commentaries*; Gutas, "Starting Point of Philosophical Studies"; Sharples, *Whose Aristotle?*; Leijenhorst, Lüthy, and Thijssen, *Dynamics of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy*; D'Ancona, "Commenting on Aristotle"; Fazzo, "Aristotelianism as a Commentary Tradition"; Donini, *Commentary and Tradition*; Sorabji, *Aristotle Transformed*; Perkams, "Syro-Persian Reinvention of Aristotelianism"; and Sorabji, "Cross-Cultural Spread of Greek Philosophy."
14 Oschman, "Response to 'On Tradition,'" in this chapter.
15 See Gersh, *Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism*; Karamanolis, *Plato and Aristotle in Agreement?*; Gerson, *Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*; Gerson, "What is Platonism?"; Gerson, *From Plato to Platonism*; Boys-Stones, *Platonist Philosophy*.
16 Perhaps the most representative attempt to reconcile Aristotle and Plato within the Islamic tradition is found in al-Fārābī's *On the Harmonization of the Opinions of the Two Sages* (Alfarabi, *The Political Writings*, trans. Butterworth, 125–67). Marwan Rashed, in "Authorship of the Treatise," has questioned the authorship of this work. Beyond this discussion, al-Fārābī's philosophy is characterized by the articulation of Platonic, Neoplatonic, and Aristotelian features. Avicenna, Maimonides, and many other philosophers from the three Abrahamic traditions inherited, directly or indirectly, al-Fārābī's philosophical ideas. Alongside the role of al-Fārābī in reconciling Plato and Aristotle, there are early attempts in al-Kindī, the first philosopher of the Arabs (see Endress, "Building the Library"). The development and transformations of Platonism are as intriguing and fascinating as those of Aristotelianism.

17 This is a clear, even if unintentional, ramification of Aristotle's insights in *Phys.* 1. 1.

18 Although in several cases the process of translation, adaptation, and transformation of Aristotle and other philosophical and scientific texts can be reconstructed, the appropriation of vocabulary, concepts, and arguments began to generate new discourses in which Aristotle and his interpreters became, involuntarily and unconsciously, part of a common intellectual heritage within the Abrahamic traditions. The inheritance and exchanges between the three traditions have also influenced our way of understanding Aristotle in this volume.

19 See Badawī, *La transmission de la philosophie grecque*; Butterworth and Kessel, *Introduction of Arabic Philosophy into Europe*; d'Alverny, *La transmission des textes philosophiques et scientifiques*; Taylor and Omar, *Judeo-Christian-Islamic Heritage*; López-Farjeat and Tellkamp, *Philosophical Psychology*; and Fidora and Polloni, *Appropriation, Interpretation and Criticism*.

20 For instance, see Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus*; Peters, *Aristotle and the Arabs*; Endress, "L'Aristote arabe"; Endress, "Circle of al-Kindī"; Gutas, *Greek Thought*; D'Ancona, "Greek into Arabic"; and Cameron and Marenbon, *Methods and Methodologies*.

21 History itself decidedly lacks the kind of intended or essential teleology that Aristotle discusses in *EN* 1. 1.

22 On the role of translation in premodern philosophy, see also Krause, Auxent, and Weil, *Premodern Experience of the Natural World*.

23 Oschman, "Response to 'On Tradition,'" in this chapter.

24 The work of the "Aquinas and 'the Arabs' International Working Group" has been published in several volumes and special issues. See *Proceedings of the Catholic Philosophical Association* 86 (2012) ("Philosophy in the Abrahamic Traditions"); *The Thomist* 76 (2012); *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 79, no. 2 (2012); *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 88, no. 2 (2014) ("Aquinas and Arabic Philosophy"); *Tópicos* 45 (2013); and *Anuario Filosófico* 48, no. 1 (2015) ("Tomás de Aquino y las tradiciones abrahámicas"). Furthermore, in 2018, Brepols opened the PATMA series ("Philosophy in the Abrahamic Traditions of the Middle Ages: Texts and Studies in Interpretation and Influence among Philosophical Thinkers of the Medieval Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew Traditions").

25 At least in the sense that this method ought to ensure shared first principles which empower dialectic, as described in *Top.* 1. 1.

26 Arnaldez, *Averroes*; Endress, "Le projet d'Averroès"; Mesbahi, "Ibn Rushd critique d'Ibn Sīnā"; and Baffioni, *Averroes and the Aristotelian Heritage*.

27 Gutas, "Ibn Tufayl on Ibn Sīnā's Eastern Philosophy"; Conrad, *World of Ibn Ṭufayl*; Puig Montada, "Philosophy in Andalusia." See also Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*.

28 See the typology of transformation (*Transformationstypen*) in Bergemann et al., "Transformation," 47–56.

29 See ibid., 47.

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