

International Conference
Renaissance Aristotelianism in Southeast Europe

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Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb, Croatia

LIST OF CONFIRMED SPEAKERS AND TITLES

LUCA BIANCHI (University of Milano) [Day 1 Keynote]

Officium expositoris: Medieval and Renaissance debates on the best way of interpreting Aristotle

CRAIG MARTIN (University of Venice) [Day 2 Keynote]

Daniel Furlanus, on the margins of the Aristotelianism

PAUL RICHARD BLUM (Loyola University Maryland / Palacký Universtiy Olomouc)

From Humanist Knowledge to Encyclopedic Science: Antonio Zara's *Anatomia ingeniorum et scientiarum*

EVA DEL SOLDATO (University of Pennsylvania)

Matija Frkić and His Enemies

SANDRA PLASTINA (University of Calabria)

An Original Subversion of the Aristotelian Paradigm: Marija Gundulić and the Defense of the Female Sex

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A Renaissance Rereading of Aristotelian Political Theories: Gučetić's treatise *Dello stato delle repubbliche* (1591)

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Centre vs. Periphery? Mainetto Mainetti and Nikola Vitov Gučetić as Commentators of Averroes' *De substantia orbis*

TOMÁŠ NEJESCHLEBA (Palacky University Olomouc)

Francesco Patrizi's *Discussiones Peripateticae* as a possible source of Valeriano Magni's Synopsis and Critique of Aristotle's philosophy

MAIKO FAVARO (Université de Fribourg)

Aristotelianism and Platonism in Nikola Vitov Gučetić's *Dialogo della bellezza* and *Dialogo d'amore*

VLADO REZAR (University of Zagreb)

Aristotelian Scholarship of Nicolaus Petreus Corcyraeus (1486-1568)

MARCO SGARBI (University of Venice)

TBD

ROBERTO BONDÍ (University of Calabria)

TBD

LUKA BORŠIĆ (Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb)

TBD

ABSTRACTS

LUCA BIANCHI (University of Milano) - [Day 1 Keynote]

Officium expositoris: Medieval and Renaissance debates on the best way of interpreting Aristotle

It is generally assumed that the Aristotelian tradition was deeply transformed by the humanists because they promoted, against Scholasticism, a ‘restoration’ of the Aristotelian corpus by employing the same philological methods that they successfully applied to other ancient documents. I argued elsewhere that the use of such methods was favoured by the introduction of new principles and standards of philosophical exegesis; that one of the distinctive features of Renaissance Aristotelianism was the growing preoccupation with the ‘best way’ to study, to translate and to interpret Aristotle’s works; that this became the object of a specific genre of philosophical literature, as witnessed by some little studied treatises authored by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scholars. Some of these scholars explicitly argued that the Aristotelian corpus was to be read using the principle that every author is the best interpreter of himself. Obviously similar to the claim that Holy Scripture interprets itself, introduced by Luther, this principle represents a variation on the dictum ascribed to Aristarchus – but actually formulated by Porphyry – that Homer explains himself. In order to better understand when and how it was introduced and used, I will focus not only on the Renaissance reception of the Greek commentators of Aristotle, but also on the growing influence of Galen who, in interpreting Hippocrates’ medical works, argued that the “good exegete” should explain authors “from themselves”.

CRAIG MARTIN (University of Venice) - [Day 2 Keynote]

Daniel Furlanus, on the margins of the Aristotelianism

Daniel Furlanus, a native of Crete who studied at Padua, edited and commented on Theophrastus’ *On Winds, On Fire*, and other writings on nature, as well as the Aristotelian work *On Breath*. This paper analyzes Furlanus’ understanding of the relation between Aristotle’s and Theophrastus’ natural philosophy, especially concerning physical problems surrounding the elements and Renaissance conceptions of the boundaries of the Aristotelianism and the Aristotelian corpus.

PAUL RICHARD BLUM (Loyola University Maryland / Palacký Universtiy Olomouc)

From Humanist Knowledge to Encyclopedic Science: Antonio Zara’s *Anatomia ingeniorum et scientiarum*

Antonio Zara opens his *Anatomia ingeniorum et scientiarum* of 1615 with the patterns of a humanist dedication to Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, in which he unfolds the praise of humanity and its position in the divine creation. The body of the book is an encyclopedia of all disciplines, including law, medicine, military, and theology; the systematic framework is, as the title announces, the anatomy of the human mind. Every chapter abounds with citations and references to all authorities available, from the Presocratics to contemporary natural philosophers and Jesuits. The book is intended to be comprehensive, that is, it provides information about all the fields covered and resources of research; most importantly, it presents a framework of all learning that is plausible and therefore accessible and realistic: all fields of objective knowledge are located in the structure of the human mind. Thus, the *Anatomia* can be seen as one example in the series of comprehensive presentations of the world and knowledge that are known as encyclopedias. This paper will make comparisons with some of the known sources, like Juan Huarte’s *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias* and Antonio Possevino’s *Bibliotheca selecta*, but also with comprehensive philosophies like Tommaso Campanella’s *Realis philosophia epilogistica*, and Francesco Patrizi’s *Nova de universis philosophia*. In this perspective, the details of information and theories achieve meaning primarily through the organizing system chosen by the author, which appears to shift from universal foundations in metaphysics to pedagogical and methodical purposes like, in this case, medical anatomy. The method turns into the message.

EVA DEL SOLDATO (University of Pennsylvania)
Matija Frkić and His Enemies

A particularly productive angle from which to consider the philosophical profile of the Franciscan thinker Matija Frkić (1583-1669) consists in taking into consideration the several polemical debates in which he was involved during his long life. My paper will focus on Frkić and his “enemies”, that prominently included Fortunio Liceti, in order to highlight the priorities of the Franciscan’s theoretical agenda.

SANDRA PLASTINA (University of Calabria)

An Original Subversion of the Aristotelian Paradigm: Marija Gundulić and the Defense of the Female Sex

An interesting example of the popularisation of Aristotle’s philosophy is contained in *Discorsi sopra le Metheore di Aristotele* (*A discourse on Aristotle’s ‘Meteorology’*) by Ragusa philosopher Nikola Vitov Gučetić (also known as Nicolò Vito di Gozze, 1549-1610). He establishes a connection between women's writings and the role of women and science in contemporary culture, transforming traditional teachings into a conversation which also includes women of erudition, as attested by the work's preface, written by di Gozze’s wife and destined to a female readership.

Nicolò Vito di Gozze, in fact, created a connection among women writing, the role of the women and science in contemporary culture, and turned canonical teaching into a dialogue also with the female cultured audience, as showed by the preface addressed to a female interlocutor written by his wife.

The dedication letter that Marija Gundulić (Maria or Mara Gundola) addresses to her friend Cvijeta Zuzorić (Fiore or Flora Zuzori), vigorously argues that women too are able to tackle philosophical and scientific issues. In one of the preface’s most significant passages, Gondola daringly upends the Aristotelian paradigm and attributes to the female sex a greater and better aptitude than that of men for the exercise of intellectual abilities, “per essere la complessione delle donne più molle, il che il senso istesso lo manifesta, essendo di temperamento humido; onde disse Aristotele, che quelli i quali sono di carne molle, sono più atti di mente», dal momento che l’anima opera attraverso lo strumento corporeo” (“because the nature of women is softer, as is obvious to anyone’s senses, since women are of humid temperament; as Aristotle said, those whose flesh is soft are of more capable mind, since the soul operates through the workings of the body Gondola” 1584: 4). Inspired by Plutarch, Pythagoras and Plato, Gondola talks about the exceptional virtues of renowned women from antiquity, and then mentions some contemporary examples which show “how more adept women are at learning, and how sharper and more open to academic study their intellect is than that of men” (Gondola 1584: 13).

The ‘matter’ women are made of therefore makes them perfect and more suited to dealing with scientific and philosophical themes, more so than men, who were long held to be ‘naturally’ predisposed to learning because of their warm, dry nature. It is clear that the female sex is endowed with a mind that is more suited to welcome intelligible forms.

GIOVANNI ROSSI (University of Verona)

A Renaissance Rereading of Aristotelian Political Theories: Gučetić’s treatise *Dello stato delle repubbliche* (1591)

The Ragusa humanist Nikola Vitov Gučetić (Nicolò Vito di Gozze, 1549–1610) provides an excellent example of the widespread circulation of Aristotelian political theories in Europe at the end of the sixteenth century. A typically Renaissance enthusiast of encyclopedic knowledge – ranging from economics to politics, from astronomy to natural philosophy, from poetry and aesthetics to theology – Nicolò was in constant correspondence with numerous European intellectuals, while at the same time devoting himself to concrete political activity and serving in important government positions in his own city.

In his reflections on political theory, Nicolò recovered and essentially updated the Aristotelian teachings on the same matter. His treatise (formally a dialogue) *Dello stato delle repubbliche* (1591), divided into eight days, completes the discourse begun with his *Governo della vita familiare* (1589): following Aristotle, Nicolò first reflects on the economy and then develops an analysis of the different types of government, focusing on the role of the law and the legislator, the citizen and those in charge of government, the changes in the regime of government and the related themes of sedition and tyranny, the magistrates, without neglecting issues like the best urban configuration, the shape and

location of buildings, the location of the city within a certain territory, and concluding with the theme of the education of the young.

All these themes clearly go back to Aristotle, but do not exclude a “contamination” with the thought of other classical philosophers, starting with Plato (a constant presence in the treatise); they also point to the rich and diversified Renaissance tradition of general introductory works dedicated to political matters. From Francesco Patrizi of Siena to Alessandro Piccolomini up to Jean Bodin and Giovanni Botero (all quoted in Nicolò’s work), a relevant part of the European intelligentsia throughout the sixteenth century is committed to the identification of a shared corpus of political rules that can cope with the traumatic rupture of religious unity (which was not caused only by the Reformation) and can respond to the challenges brought by Machiavelli’s unapologetic realism.

In this context, Gučetić’s work contributed to the recovery of the Aristotelian and classical heritage in general (not just on the level of philosophical argumentation, but very often also resorting to the demonstrative force of historical examples), but it also updated it with references to the theories of contemporary authors. This is exactly what the title of the work suggests: *Dello stato delle repubbliche secondo la mente di Aristotele con esempi moderni giornate otto* (Venice, 1591). Evidence of this attempt to update the Aristotelian theoretical framework – in order to confirm its validity – can be drawn from the “Avertimenti civili per lo governo delli stati”, which Gozze placed in the appendix to the work: these are 122 maxims that combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience. They belong to a successful literary genre, often used by the political writers of the time.

ZORNITZA RADEVA (University of Milano)

Centre vs. Periphery? Mainetto Mainetti and Nikola Vitov Gučetić as Commentators of Averroes’ *De substantia orbis*

In my paper, I propose to examine two commentaries on Averroes’ cosmological treatise *De substantia orbis* which are representative of the final stage of the Renaissance reception of this work but exhibit a number of contrasting features. The first commentary, which appeared in Bologna in 1570, is authored by Mainetto Mainetti, professor at Bologna and Pisa and a disciple of the famous Ludovico Boccadiferro (1482–1545). It was printed together with Mainetti’s commentary on Aristotle’s *De caelo* and draws on a large array of both late antique and medieval sources. The second commentary, which appeared in Venice ten years later, is the work of the Croatian nobleman Nikola Vitov Gučetić (Nicolò Vito di Gozze). It was accompanied not by an exposition of *De caelo*, but by Gučetić’s commentary on *Liber de causis* – a rather unusual collocation – and makes relatively few references to authorities and sources. In terms of knowledge production, are we in front of a classical case of “centre vs. periphery”, a high-quality specimen of the Italian academic tradition on the one hand and a ‘modest’, even quaint product of an author working at the margins of this culture on the other? I address this question by trying to reconstruct as closely as possible the circumstances under which both commentaries were composed and the way in which the two authors made use of the available sources.

MAIKO Favaro (Université de Fribourg)

Aristotelianism and Platonism in Nikola Vitov Gučetić’s *Dialogo della bellezza* and *Dialogo d’amore*

Gučetić’s dialogues on beauty and love are explicitly based on Plato’s thought. However, the two characters in the dialogue, Cvijeta Zuzorić and Marija Gundulić (Gučetić’s wife), also often refer to Aristotle and Aristotelian philosophers such as Averroes and Agostino Nifo. Actually, Gučetić was “very studious” of Averroes, as his wife mentions in the dialogue on love. The year before the publication of the two dialogues, Gučetić had published a commentary on Averroes’ *De substantia orbis*. Therefore, in my paper I would like to explore the relationship between Aristotelianism and Platonism in Gučetić’s two dialogues.

TOMÁŠ NEJESCHLEBA (Palacky University Olomouc)

Francesco Patrizi's *Discussiones peripateticae* as a possible source of Valeriano Magni's Synopsis and Critique of Aristotle's philosophy

Valeriano Magni (1586–1661), the Capuchin monk, influential church politician, theologian and philosopher, created his philosophy as an alternative to Second Scholasticism. Based on medieval Augustinianism, Bonaventurian tradition and Platonism in general on the one hand and on modern Galilean physics on the other, he made a critique of Aristotelian philosophy a substantial part of his own philosophical approach. Magni's anti-Aristotelianism aims at demonstrating the incompatibility of Aristotelian philosophy with modern physics, its inner inconsistencies and finally its contradictions with Christian thought.

The question arises at to what extent Magni actually follows the late Renaissance critique of Aristotelianism and Francesco Patrizi's *Discussiones peripateticae* in particular. The paper will analyze similarities between Magni and Patrizi and question the possible influence of Renaissance Anti-Aristotelianism on this seventeenth century thinker.

VLADO REZAR (University of Zagreb)

Aristotelian Scholarship of Nicolaus Petreus Corcyraeus (1486-1568)

The only comprehensive Greek commentary on Aristotele's treatise Περὶ ζώων γενέσεως (*De animalium generatione*) which made its way to the Renaissance is the one written by Michael of Ephesus in 12th century. Falsely attributed to Philoponus until the mid-19th century, it was first printed in Venice in 1526. The print included two volumes, with the first comprising the commentary itself, along with Aristoteles' treatise, both written in Greek, while the second volume comprised Theodore Gaza's Latin translation of Aristoteles, accompanied by a Latin translation of the commentary. The editor of this extraordinary publishing project, as well as the translator of the Greek commentary into Latin, was Nicolaus Petreus of Korčula.

To date, Croatian scholarly publications have mainly referred to Petreus as a teacher at the humanist school in Dubrovnik (1538–1550) and the author of an autograph codex (102 ff, in quarto), which includes Latin prose and poetic compositions (Biblioteca Augusta di Perugia, G 99). His Aristotelian editing attempt has not been studied so far in terms of Aristotelian scholarship, nor has he been an important part of Croatian Renaissance philosophy surveys, if mentioned at all. However, growing international interest in humanist Greek scholarship has since 1980s shed some light upon Petreus' affiliation with Sergio Stiso of Zolino (1458–before 1538) and his school of Greek philosophy, just as it has drawn attention to at least seven Greek manuscripts of mainly philosophical content (Bodleian Library, Bibliothèque National de France, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), with numerous marginal glossae written in Greek by Petreus himself. Finally, it has been noted recently that among the holdings of Franciscan monastery of Dubrovnik there is an incunabulum (1497) with several Aristoteles' works excessively glossed with excerpts from Philoponus' and Michael Ephesius' commentaries, apparently penned by Petreus' hand.

This paper will therefore try to justify the claim that Petreus was not merely an ordinary humanist teacher, nor a passive Greek scribe, but a well-trained Latin and Greek philologist, focused on improving the common level of Aristotelian knowledge through a more scrutinous philological approach in reading the Greek sources. Analysing his translating technique and picking up from his personal correspondence material, we will try to provide evidence that, along with Ragusan Benedictine monk and archbishop Chrysostomus Calvini (1548-1574), also a Hellenist scholar, Petreus could have been the one who, especially when it comes to philology, laid sufficient intellectual foundations for the apogee of Aristotelian scholarship in the late 16th century Ragusa.