

George Pachymeres's Commentary on Boethius's De Differentiis Topicis

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George Pachymeres (1242-1310) was a prolific writer. He composed a paraphrase of Pseudo-Dionysius, scientific treatises, and philosophical works as well. The best known of these is a bulky paraphrase of the whole *Corpus Aristotelicum*¹, but there is also a little treatise entitled 'Ἡ διαίρεσις τῶν τόπων τῶν διαλεκτικῶν, καθὼς διεΐλεν αὐτοὺς τῶν Ἰταλῶν τις καλούμενος Βοήτιος, οἱ δὲ καὶ μετηνέχθησαν πρὸς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον.²

The title does not do justice to Pachymeres' personal contribution, for this *opusculum* actually presents his own views on the Aristotelian *topoi* (maximal propositions),³ and there are substantial deviations from Boethius.⁴ The treatise contains six chapters in which a great effort is made to prove that the Aristotle represents the peak of the history of logic, and that a special philosophical education is required to understand the problems he investigates. The purpose of the treatise is apologetic rather than systematic. It bears witness to the strong position that classical Greek philosophy held in Byzantine thinking, and it further reveals a tendency to present the Greek heritage as an alternative to Western thought. Moreover, the text testifies to the thoroughness of Pachymeres's philosophical education, and to his ability to exploit and develop

1. Latin translation in Pachymeres 1560.

2. Edition in Nikitas 1990: 233-239. I shall refer to this work as 'Ἡ διαίρεσις.

3. Cf. Boethius, *De topicis differentiis* II, 3, 1185a (Nikitas 1990: 25): "Locus namque est, ut M.Tullio placet, argumenti sedes. Cuius definitionis quae sit vis paucis absolvam. Argumenti enim sedes partim maxima propositio intellegi potest, partim propositionis maximae differentia. Nam cum sint aliae propositiones, quae, cum per se notae sint, tum nihil ulterius habeant, quo demonstrantur, atque hae maximae et principales vocentur ..." ["A *topos*. as Marcus Tullius would have it, is the foundation of an argument. I will make clear in a few words what the force of this definition is. The foundation of an argument can be understood partly as a maximal proposition, partly as the differentia of a maximal proposition. There are some propositions which not only are known per se but also have nothing more fundamental by which they may be demonstrated, and these are called maximal and principal". The translation is a slightly modified version of Stump 1978: 46].

4. See Boethius' *De topicis differentiis*, ed. Nikitas 1990.

Aristotelian thought in a fertile way. From a systematical point of view, the work belongs to the realist tradition, and it shows how much the problem of universals occupied the Byzantines.¹

Chapter 1 contains observations concerning the function and mutual relations of the four types of predicates (genus, proprium, definition and accident). Pachymeres notes in spite of the fourfold division of predicates, the same *topoi* apply to all of them. The *topoi* are stable propositions and vary only in their mode of presence and use used depending on the particular circumstances.² Clearly, Pachymeres' concern is to combine a common application definable in general terms with a function that varies with each particular case. Actual syllogisms will share some characteristics derivable from the general application, such as the way they are expressed and their indemonstrable and indisputable propositional structure. On the other hand, they will differ in respect of origin or domain of reference, and these parameters determine their specific meaning. In the opinion of our Christian Aristotelian, these differences demand that we be careful when assessing the meaning and expression of *topoi*.

Thus, although the same *topos* occurs with all four types of predicative determination, the very fact that it is not applied to just one deprives us of any legitimate possibility of using the same arguments in all situations. The particular type of situation facing us forms the objectively indisputable criterion. That is to say, in every domain of being under examination, we must take into account the exact interrelation between the strictly concrete, interconnected factors, and this interrelation provides the main guidelines for how to deal with our specific problem. The permanent logical substratum becomes specialized both through its application and through the syllogistic process by which it is articulated and exhibits such details as its general characteristics permit it to exhibit. A particularly strong specialization occurs when a *topos* relates to con-

1. Cf. Benakis 1978-79.

2. 'Η διαίρεσις 1, Nikitas 1990: 233.6-8. Ειδέναι χρή ὅτι τεττάρων ὄντων τῶν κατηγορουμένων, γένους, ιδίου, ὅρου καὶ συμβεβηκότος, πρὸς ἕκαστον οἱ αὐτοὶ τόποι ἀρμόττουσι, τῷ τρόπῳ μόνῃ τῆς ἐπιχειρήσεως διαφέροντες. "One should know that while there are four predicates — genus, proprium, definition and accident —, the same *topoi* are appropriate to all of them, differing only in the mode of argumentation."

tradictory states.¹ In that case there is no way to reduce the relations linking subject and predicates in one state to those occurring in the other. Positing one state completely excludes positing the other.

In chapter 2, Pachymeres — changing to some extent the analyses and conceptual distinctions of the texts he uses — claims that if we examine syllogisms in their general application, we observe three types of general function of *topoi*. The first *topos* is derived from the specific situation in which the subject and predicate are found as interwoven terms.² It should be noted that Holobolos, in his translation of the relevant Boethian text, uses the following circumlocution for *topoi* of this type: ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ὅρων λαμβάνονται τοῦ προβλήματος.³ Commenting on the whole project of differentiation of *topoi* Holobolos says:

ἐπεὶ γὰρ αἱ μέγισται προτάσεις, καθὼς μέγισται καὶ ἀναπόδεικτοι καὶ αὐτόπιστοι, ἴσαι εἰσὶν, αἱ διαφοραὶ χωρίζουσι ταύτας. καὶ τὰς μὲν λέγομεν ἀπὸ ὅρου, ἄλλας ἀπὸ ἐτυμολογίας, ἑτέρας ἐξ ἀντικειμένων, ἐκ μαχομένων καὶ ἑτέρας ἐξ ἐτέρων. ἐλήφθη δὲ ὧδε ἡ μεγίστη πρότασις ἀφ' ἐνὸς μέρους τοῦ προβλήματος, ἥγουν τοῦ ὑποκειμένου ὅρου, (...), καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ ἔγνωσ πῶς αἱ μέγισται προτάσεις λαμβάνονται ἀπὸ τῆς οὐσίας τῶν ὅρων τῶν ἐν τῷ προβλήματι.⁴

In Pachymeres's first case, then, the logical processing of any articulation of substances is done without any reference to connections which are external to these and without any reduction. The case concerns the totality of the possible ways in which the subject may appear as a substance — the possible forms, so to speak, of its autonomous presence, which are indicators of its internal predicates. In ontological terms: reference is made to the stable qualities and inherent states of the subject, which reflect the multidimensionality of its natural structure. In this

1. Ἡ διαίρεσις 1, Nikitas 1990: 233.8-10.

2. Ἡ διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 233.11-13: Τρία δὲ τὰ εἶδη γενικῶς τοῦ γενικωτάτου τόπου. ἥ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν πραγμάτων λαμβάνεται, λέγω δὲ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου καὶ τοῦ κατηγορουμένου, καὶ καλεῖσθω ἐντόσθιος ... "In general, there are three species of general *topos*: for either it is taken from the things, I mean the subject and the predicate, and then it may be called internal".

3. Manuel Holobolos's translation of *De topicis differentiis* II.4-7, in Nikitas 1990: 115.16-121.7.

4. Manuel Holobolos's commentary on *De topicis differentiis* II.4.2, in Nikitas 1990: 172.17-25.

case, there is no possibility of the appearance or function of accidents, and each predicate is seen in the light of the subject's original character. Therefore, in a way, we are confronted with a situation of self-reference as regards the real and static categorical relations. The subject is isolated and is not examined with respect to what it might have been or may yet become.¹

The second *topos* is derived from the objects, i.e., from whatever stands outside the main domain of presence of our reference terms. This sort of *topos* is called "external".² Holobolos comments:

διὰ τοῦτο καλοῦνται ἔξωθεν οἱ τοιοῦτοι τόποι, ὅτι οὐκ εἰσιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τῶν ὄρων, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν εἰσιν ἐξ ἄλλων τρόπων, οὗτος δὲ ἐκ τῆς κρίσεως, ἡγουν τῆς τῶν σοφῶν ἀποφάνσεως.³

Topoi of this kind are called external because they are not derived from the substance of the terms but some from other modes, and this one from judgement, i.e., from a statement due to wise men.

We are dealing with *topoi* which define and describe relations founded in correspondence between states or entities belonging to different categorical groups or peculiar functional levels. In this case, the syllogisms expand and become more global. This happens because it is essential for them to take into account wide domains of ontological and gnoseological connexions, in the context of which interwoven predicative determinations contribute a supplementary structuring of their communication in the light of reciprocity.

The question has already been shifted from the domain of substance to that of function. The dynamic aspect of states has replaced the static one. External *topoi* also comprise the evaluations of wise thinkers, which owe their trustworthiness to the proven authority of their source. In this case, we are not dealing with subjective and arbitrary opinions, but with propositions that derive from an objective evaluation of reality and which can function as permanent scientific criteria.⁴

1. 'H διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 234.10-235.9.

2. 'H διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 233.13-14.

3. M. Holobolos on *De topicis differentiis* II.4.2, Nikitas 1990: 173.1-4.

4. According to Pachymeres, the "external" *topoi* are derived, for example, ἐκ τῶν ἀντικειμένων "from opposites", or ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων "from similars". ['H διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 235.11.]

The third *topos* is called "middle",¹ and Holobolos comments as follows:

μέσοι δὲ τόποι εἰσὶν οἵτινες οὐκ ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς οὐσίας λαμβάνονται τῶν ὄρων τοῦ τε κατηγορουμένου καὶ ὑποκειμένου οὔτε πάλιν ἔξωθεν καὶ ἐξ ἀλλοδαπῆς, ὥς ἂν εἴποι τις, ἀλλὰ μέσοι. (...) οὔτε γὰρ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἔλαβε τὸν τόπον οὐτ' αὖ ἔξωθεν, ἀλλ' ἐκείθεν μὲν, ἡγουν ἐκ τῆς δικαιοσύνης, πλὴν ἐνηλλαγμένως καὶ πῶς διαφερόντως.

Middle "*topoi*" are those that are derived neither from the substance of the terms of the predicate and the subject nor from external and "foreign" factors but <the case is somehow> in between. (...) Thus <in an example quoted> he derived the *topos* neither from the substance of justice nor from something external, but from justice in changed and differentiated manner."²

In this case each syllogism is based on the various mutations of the substance of the subject and, by extension, of any predicate belonging to it. That is, in reality, it describes the possible ontological articulations a substance may acquire or present with regard to its own presence or to that of real or potential relations. Obviously the states or connections are examined and conceptualized in their dynamic dimension, and thus there is a shift from the substance to the function or from the strict delimitation, which is not subject to development, to the expansion of the differentiations, and obviously of the semantic mutations. We are here dealing with forms of thought that reflect the multiple and ever changing being.³

It should be noticed that in this chapter Pachymeres neither explains nor comments on the *topoi*. He simply lists them in a table, with analytic subdivisions. In a way, the table is parenthetical in the presentation of the theme of his treatise. However, it is noteworthy that it introduces certain changes with respect to Themistius' list as presented by Boethius. In my opinion, these changes are far from superficial. It would be an interesting, but difficult, task to interpret these deviations with a view to

1. 'Η διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 234.14.

2. M. Holobolos on *De topicis differentiis* II.4.2, Nikitas 1990: 173.5-14.

3. According to Pachymeres, the "middle *topoi*" are divided into three categories: (1) ἀπὸ τῶν συστοίχων "from coordinates"; (2) ἀπὸ τῶν πτώσεων "from cases"; (3) ἀπὸ τῶν διαιρέσεων "from divisions". ['Η διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 233.18.]

a possible change of direction of the logical inquiry and to ask how far the new direction was in agreement with Aristotle.¹

In chapter 3 Pachymeres, returns to the idea presented in chapter 1 and points out that it does not suffice for each of the four predicates to exist in the subject, each must also make its presence apparent in its own specific way. This means that in spite of the ontological priority that the substance seems to hold over its predicates, these are neither eliminated nor absorbed by its natural structure, since they are its ways or possibilities of articulation. Thus, the existence of a genus is not fully determined by the subject in which it is found, but it exists and functions according to the terms that belong to it in its proper state as a genus.² The same applies to the remaining predicates and in this way a dialectic, as it were, develops between metaphysical and immanent realism. Therefore, as far as the structure of each predicate is concerned we are confronted with a peculiar type of link between a general state and some specific case. This, obviously, does not show that there are two ontological factors, but it means that in this case, too, the one and only factor (structure) appears in two shapes: qua immanent or qua applied, the former being original, the latter derived.

Under these conditions, the following two situations must be excluded from one specific state of being: a) The appearance in a global way of a general category as an ontological domain which, acting as a substrate, absorbs or replaces the subject. b) The presence and the function of the subject as an absolute existing form. Either of these two extreme situations would eliminate the ontological peculiarity of predicates and their applicability. Consequently, there would be no reason for syllogistic propositions to exist. There would be a hard and fast ontological similarity or permanence resulting in identity-thoughts which there would be no reason to articulate. Therefore, in the context of a quasi-dialectic of equilibrium, each predicate appears according to the condi-

1. See Pachymeres' table in 'Η διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 233.15-236.4.

2. 'Η διαίρεσις 3, Nikitas 1990: 236.5-7: 'Εκαστος τῶν τεσσάρων κατηγορουμένων καὶ ὑπάρχειν ὀφείλει τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ καὶ τοιῶσδε ὑπάρχειν. οἷον τὸ γένος οὐ μόνον ὑπάρχειν χρή τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς γένος. "Each of the four predicates ought both to exist in the subject and to exist in this way. For example, a genus should not only exist in the subject but also <exist> as genus."

tions of existence and function of the concrete thing, and yet this distributed presence does not entail loss of ontological identity or of meaning.

So, what we have here is a moderate position which attempts to mediate between extreme views about ontological and axiological priorities. The predicates with which the substance is connected are neither independent of it nor self-defined. They are not purely supra-individual forms capable of fully determining and structuring each individual substance.

On such a moderate view, the Aristotelian secondary substance is neither eliminated nor is it the starting point for the creation of some particular sort of being. The focus is on the interconnection, while no attention is paid to the question whether there is some kind of material substratum. In my opinion, the lack of reference to matter is just due to the fact that only logical questions are under discussion. Pachymeres, as a Christian, could not envisage a situation contrary to his theological convictions, according to which matter is a product and not a substratum of processes and interrelations.¹ Besides, even Aristotle did not raise the question in this context.

Since Pachymeres' framework derived from a combination of two opposed points of view, he found it reasonable to operate with two categories of *topoi*. Those belonging to the first category have to do with showing simple existence or non-existence and not with the elaboration of some very specific presence of predicates. In their general application as propositions of logic these *topoi* will belong jointly to all predicates without modifications according to the particular case. By extension, the formal aspect of the syllogism will remain the same both as regards starting point and objectives and as regards the procedure.

Topoi of the second category are subject to a fourfold division and shows each predicate's particular way of existing separately from the others in every being, and its peculiar structure as well.²

1. Pachymeres 1857 (PG 3): IV.15.781a; IX.9.934c.

2. 'Η διαίρεσις 3, Nikitas 1990: 236.8-12: ...ἔδει τοὺς τόπους εἰς δύο διηρηθῆσαι καὶ τοὺς μὲν ὑπάρχειν ἀπλῶς ἢ μὴ δεικνύναι, (...) τοὺς δὲ διηρηθῆσαι αὖθις εἰς τέσσαρας καὶ τῶν μερῶν ἕκαστον τὸν τρόπον δεικνύναι τῆς ὑπάρξεως τῶν κατηγορουμένων ἐκάστου. "...The *topoi* ought to have been divided in two and concerning the first it should be shown that they exist, simply, or do not <exist>, (...) while the others should have been have divided in four and the way of existing of each of the predicates should be shown".

I take Pachymeres' words to mean that although a *topos* refers to multiple and varied cases of being, it describes a common presence of one and the same predicate, self-identical in spite of its generality. Yet, it will interpret each connection between subject and predicates according to the conditions set by the specific case in which it is to function. It is obvious that in this syllogistic procedure logic leaves the responsibility for any evaluations to ontology, at least on the level of the starting point.

Pachymeres ends this chapter by noting that one should probably operate with further ramified divisions of *topoi* just as of predicates, but that one should not exaggerate in this respect.¹

In chapter 4 Pachymeres observes that some people might get the impression that Aristoteles had committed two logical errors on account of the double function and application he assigns to *topoi*. They would detect the first error in the case of *topoi* relating to accidents. On the one hand, the Stagirite alleges that these *topoi* are assigned in a particular way, when he says:

If we assign a particular method to each kind of problem we have distinguished, we think we can more easily place the starting point of the syllogistic programme based on the particular characteristics of each.²

On the other hand, he elsewhere claims that the same *topoi* have a common presence in all predicates, saying in a corrective tone:

Let us not overlook the fact that everything that is said about genus, proprium and accident can also be said about definitions".³

Further, Aristotle expresses a similar view in the book on definition, saying: "To examine in which way the genus exists in the species we must use the *topoi* relating to accidents."⁴ At first glance, Aristotle

1. 'Η διαίρεσις 2, Nikitas 1990: 236.12-13.

2. Aristotle, *Topica* 1.6.102b38-103a1: ἰδίαις δὲ καθ' ἕκαστον τῶν διορισθέντων γενῶν ἀποδοθείσης μεθόδου ῥῆον ἐκ τῶν περὶ ἕκαστον οἰκείων ἢ διέξοδος τοῦ προκειμένου γίνοιτ' ἂν. (Pachymeres reads πρὸς for καθ', and γένοιτ' for γίνοιτ').

3. Aristotle, *Topica* 1.6.102b27-29: Μὴ λανθανέτω δὲ ἡμᾶς ὅτι τὰ πρὸς τὸ ἴδιον καὶ τὸ γένος καὶ τὸ συμβεβηκὸς πάντα καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ὀρισμοὺς ἀρμόσει λέγεσθαι.

4. 'Η διαίρεσις 4, Nikitas 1990: 237.2-4: πότερον μὲν οὖν ὑπάρχειν τὸ γένος τῷ εἶδει ἐκ τῶν πρὸς τὸ συμβεβηκὸς τόπων ἐπισκεπτέον. There is no exact match in the alleged source, Aristotle, *Topica* 6.

would seem to have been the victim of confusion as regards the use and application of *topoi*.

The second error that Aristotle might appear to have committed consists in neglecting methodical division in his treatment of the numerous *topoi*. Apparently, he simply presents them without any reasoned order. If things were really that bad, we would never be able to obtain scientific knowledge, for a rigid formalism would reign and we would miss the necessary explanations concerning each case.¹

The way in which Pachymeres presents these potential objections makes it clear that he does not adopt them as his own. It might be suggested that his real purpose is to bring out Aristotele's superiority over Western medieval philosophers. This view receives some support from the next two chapters. But be that as it may, he obviously considers the objections to be based on superficial evaluations and interpretations, not on a profound understanding, whether of the ontological relations or of the syllogisms or of the corresponding notional schemata.²

In chapter 5 Pachymeres addresses the first charge against Aristotle. He points out that the *topoi* relating to accidents deal only with the predicate's existence or non-existence in the subject without proceeding to further analyses of structural characteristics or qualitative correspondences. By contrast, the *topoi* relevant to the remaining predicates are not concerned with their mere existence but aim at demonstrating whether they exist in a specific way or not. That is to say, they exclude from examination any question concerning general and indefinite presence. This, obviously, on condition that the concepts of genus, proprium and definition are taken in their proper sense as determining a strictly concrete presence and not abstract and ambiguous states.³ But, Pachymeres proceeds, some might still object that the "accidental" *topoi*

1. The expressions *δόξειεν ἄν* "it would seem", *δοκεῖ* "it seems", and *ὥς δοκοῦσιν* "as they seem to believe", are indicative of this attitude on Pachymeres' part.

2. *Ἡ διαίρεσις* 4, Nikitas 1990: 237.4-8.

3. *Ἡ διαίρεσις* 5, Nikitas 1990: 237.9-14: *οἱ μὲν πρὸς τὸ συμβεβηκὸς τόποι τὸ ὑπάρχειν μόνον ἢ μὴ τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ τὸν κατηγορούμενον πραγματεύονται, οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὰ λοιπὰ ὅτι μὲν ὑπάρχει οὐδαμῶς διαλέγονται.* "...that the *topoi* relating to accidents deal only with the existence or not of the predicate in the subject, while those relating to the other <types of predicates> are not at all occupied with their existence."

are deficient, namely those that are not concerned with the accident's simple, existing presence, but with its way of existing and functioning, — its dynamic aspect, in short. Pachymeres rejects this objection too. For one thing, he finds a logical error in the revelant syllogism. For another, he thinks an intervention is needed to provide more substantial underpinning of our expressions. So, he claims that once it has been proved that the accident exists in the subject there is a logical error involved in doubting that it exists in its proper state as an accident. He considers the (destructive) *topoi* of the other predicates useful for the elucidation of this problem. They may help prove that the accident exists in the subject thanks to factors relevant to its presence, and neither as genus nor as proprium or definition; and thus it will be shown that it exists in its proper state as an accident.¹ At this point Pachymeres quotes Aristotle, according to whom an accident is that which is neither a definition, nor a genus nor a proprium, but (that which) exists in its subject.² That is, it is a predicate relating to the subject, but incapable of being ranked in the highest category of substance. Thus, it cannot possibly form a clearly determining parameter of the subject, but it is descriptive of an expression or a new state of it, or of an addition it has received. A characteristic of such parameters is that they might not have existed. They arise in the course of the subject's evolution.

Next, Pachymeres addresses the apparent randomness and lack of rational order in Aristotle's presentation of the *topoi*. He rejects the critique and observes that the Stagirite was led to the discovery of the *topoi* by means of a methodical procedure.³ This, he says, is apparent from the Philosopher's words in the section on premisses in *Topics* I: "Whether this is truly so or not will be dealt with in the section on opposites."⁴ The quotation shows that Aristotle knew what he was to write

1. 'Η διαίρεσις 5, Nikitas 1990: 237.19-22: "...ἂν ἀποδειχθῇ ὑπάρχον μὲν τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ διὰ τῶν πρὸς τὸ συμβεβηκός, οὐ μέντοι ὡς γένος οὐθ' ὡς ἴδιον οὔτε μὴν ὡς ὅρος, ἀποδεδειγμένον ἂν εἴη ὅτι ὡς συμβεβηκός ὑπάρχει. "...if it is proved to exist in the subject through the <topoi> relating to accidents, though not as genus nor as individual not even as definition, it would be proved existing as accident".

2. Aristotle, *Topica* 1.8.103b17-19: τὸ γὰρ συμβεβηκός ἐλέγετο ὃ μῆτε ὅρος μῆτε ἴδιον μῆτε γένος ἐστίν, ὑπάρχει δὲ τῷ πράγματι.

3. 'Η διαίρεσις 5, Nikitas 1990: 237.24-238.1.

4. Aristotle, *Topica* 1.10.104a31-33: πότερον δὲ καὶ κατ' ἀλήθειαν οὕτως ἔχει ἢ οὐ, ἐν τοῖς περὶ ἐναντίων ῥηθήσεται.

before he actually did so. Pachymeres drives home his point by means of a further quotation, this time from book VII: "We have now produced a fairly complete list of the *topoi* by means of which we may successfully argue about each type of problem."¹ If Aristotle had not had some definite *topoi* in mind, how could he have known if the list was fairly complete? So, without doubt, he employed dihaeretic reasoning. This means that he articulated the contents of the *topoi* by determining their meanings and applications, and thus he created a secure foundation for his precise logical observations.²

Pachymeres admits that Aristotle does not reveal his method to his readers, but he reminds us that such silence is a standard feature of Aristotelian writings. He further observes that among all means employed by the Stagirite to produce obscurity the most efficient is his not revealing the rationale of division and order that he himself knew and was guided by when writing. To exemplify, Pachymeres mentions that in the *Categories* Aristotle lists the ten most general determinations without offering any reason for either division or order, and he even casts a veil over the division of each category into its species. Similarly, in *Peri hermeneias*, an apparent confusion reigns among the theorems, so that one must ask for a division to see whether the work is perfect, neither lacking any theorem nor having any superfluous ones. In short, Pachymeres concludes, this is how Aristotle behaves everywhere, so it ought to come as no surprise that he keeps true to character also in the *Topics*.³

Finally, in chapter 6, Pachymeres states that in spite of Aristotle's reticence about his method many men of outstanding education and wisdom have understood it, Boethius among them. Nonetheless, he points to a considerable difference between the Stagirite and the Latin thinker. While Aristotle applies a separate method to the treatment of each of the four predicates, Boethius treats all four together. The superiority of the Greek philosopher consists in the specific and separate treatment that he

1. Aristotle, *Topica* 155a37-39: Οἱ μὲν οὖν τόποι δι' ὧν εὐπορήσομεν πρὸς ἕκαστα τῶν προβλημάτων ἐπιχειρεῖν σχεδὸν ἱκανῶς ἐξηρίθμηνται.

2. 'Η διαίρεσις 5, Nikitas 1990: 238.-8: ὅτι μὲν οὖν λόγῳ χρώμενος διαιρητικῶς τούτους ἔγραφε δῆλον ἂν εἴη. "it ought to be clear that he made use of dihaeretic reasoning when writing them".

3. 35. 'Η διαίρεσις 5, Nikitas 1990: 238.11-23.

accords each *topos* within the framework of the four predicates. By this means he clarifies his syllogisms and examples in elaborate detail.¹

Thus, the important feature of Aristotle's logical analyses is that he articulates his syllogisms specifically. He conceptualizes them in depth, and thus reaches a clear formulation of the multiplicity of ontological situations and interrelations. With this functionalism his Logic acquires a broad content and reflects the multidimensional character of the objectively existant in a way that is both realistic and demonstrative. In other words, by virtue of its multiple and dynamic existence ontology turns out to be the permanent criterion for the verification or falsification of logical statements. Thus, human thought is limited to the decodification and theoretical anatomy of being.

In view of the above, three conclusions impose themselves. First, Pachymeres excludes every possible doubt about the validity and reliability of Aristotelian views. He presents the Stagirite as an authority in the field of logic and his thoughts as an indisputable and accurate criterion for the articulation of any syllogistic analysis.

Second, he refuses to subject ontology to logic and hence to gnoseology, since he not only indicates the real relations and differences among beings but also excludes unitary logical criteria, though he does maintain that there must exist certain firm *topoi*. Thus he severely limits the case for a homogenous and unified knowledge, and the prospect of formulating a universal science is brought under control. He blocks the development of dogmatism and introduces a fertile scepticism with regard to epistemologic standards and methodological tools.

Third, he offers a realistic estimation of the relation between a substance and its original qualities, and he attempts no metaphysical justification of general concepts. Instead, he proposes a graduation of their qualities according to the relation they have with the substance. In fact, he indirectly attempts to show that the ontologic separation of substance from its predicates is the result of misapprehension and lacks any foundation in the intrinsic structure of beings. In this way Pachymeres invites to a careful examination of the problem of *καθόλου* (*universalia*) and shows that the fight between nominalism and realism requires serious attention if a solution is to be reached.

1. 36. 'Η διαίρεσις 6, Nikitas 1990: 238.24-239.5.

Thus George Pachymeres has revealed himself as an excellent representative of the Byzantine philosophical tradition. He was an fine theologian whose works lend support to the dogmas of Eastern Christianity, but he also showed how philosophical discourse can function autonomously both as regards the formulation of its contents and as regards the choice of appropriate methodological tools. The delimitation of the borders between philosophy and theology is one of the greatest contributions of the Byzantine thinker to the development of ideas. Awareness of this delimitation makes it possible to signal accurately the points of contact between these two types of thought.

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