

Introduction: Dialectics in Dialogue

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1 Dialectic from Greece to Germany

Dialectic is a strange discipline indeed. The term διαλεκτική (sc. τέχνη) appears in Plato's dialogues and was transcribed in Latin (*dialectica*)¹ and then in all modern languages, where it has remained for centuries an almost purely philosophical piece of vocabulary, never abandoned but always changing both in meaning and value. Plato defined 'dialectic' as the highest science, relying solely on the intellect to grasp relationships and differences between intelligible forms, but Aristotle soon demoted it to a method of argumentation from accepted opinions (*ta endoxa*). The other main rooms in the Dialectic Hall of Fame are devoted to German nineteenth-century philosophy: Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* defined as a *dialectic* of reason the ever-repeating-but-doomed-to-fail attempts by human reason to find unconditioned principles, which turned metaphysics into a battleground.² Hegel claimed that this process by which reason contradicts itself when trying to reach unconditioned principles on its own was in fact the true 'logic' of thought and philosophy, mirroring the historical development of conscience, in which progress is achieved through contradicting an initial,

¹ In *On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury* 4.336, Martianus Capella claims that the Romans call dialectic by its Greek name 'as they call it in Athens'. This is contradicted by the frequent use of *Dialectica* from Cicero onwards, but might awkwardly refer to the fact that the Greek word has been merely transliterated in Latin, not translated, as noted by Augustine, *Contra Cresconium* 14, who claims that *disputatoria* could have been a good Latin translation.

² On the meaning of 'dialectic' in Kant, see his *Logic*, introduction, part 2 (*Ak.* 9.17), where he defines dialectic as a 'logic of appearance (*ars sophistica, disputatoria*)' and claims that, among the Greeks, the dialecticians were lawyers and orators capable of deceiving the people with their 'art of appearance', unworthy of any philosopher. While 'dialectic' is still restricted to a 'logic of appearance' in the *Critique of pure reason* (A63–64/B88, A293/B349), Kant introduces in this work a crucial distinction between transcendental appearance and logical appearance (see Lebrun 1970: 42–67): unlike the latter, the former cannot be dissolved by refutation, because it is a 'natural illusion', similar to optical illusions and not to sophisms or errors made out of ignorance. Consequently, there is a 'dialectic of pure reason' which is 'natural and inevitable', because it is intrinsic to human reason (A296–298/B353–355).

immediate situation or conception and thus reaching a higher, more complex unity.³ Marx later criticised this idealist conception of history and offered to put dialectic back on its feet by combining it to materialism, understanding history as structured and moved forward by the conflicts between classes fostered by contradictions located at the heart of successive systems of production. And when Hegel or Marx would be later criticised by thinkers such as Kierkegaard or Adorno and Horkheimer for their optimistic view of human condition or history, it would be again under the banner of dialectic, albeit an open-ended dialectic in which contradictions are not reduced to mediating steps towards reconciliation.⁴

How can the same name cover so many and so diverse, sometimes almost explicitly opposed, disciplines, methods or forms of thought? Attempts have been made to find at least a thin common thread in this long and chaotic history. The term was probably coined by Plato from the verb ‘διαλέγεσθαι’, which means ‘to hold converse with’ someone, ‘to discuss’ a question, ‘to argue with’ someone.⁵ In Plato and Aristotle, the connection between questions and answers exchanges and dialectic remains tight,⁶ and it seems that dialectic can be initially characterised as a form of thought or method which takes into account (at least) two points of view on the topic it deals with: at the very least, it requires the agreement of an interlocutor to hold a position as sound or valid. The best and most famous example of this form of dialectic is Plato’s first dialogues, where Socrates puts to the test the beliefs of his interlocutors, by asking them their opinion on a subject and securing their agreement at each step of the argument, intending to refute their initial opinion.⁷ While Plato’s full-fledged dialectic, defined in later dialogues as a true science, does not require any exchange of views between two interlocutors, its dialogical dimension is preserved through the definition of thought as the soul discussing (διαλέγεσθαι) with itself, questioning and answering itself.⁸

³ Strictly speaking, only the second negative moment is ‘dialectical’ according to Hegel, the whole three-steps process being termed ‘logical’ (see *Science of logic*, §13).

⁴ See Kierkegaard’s ‘inverted dialectic’ in *Either-Or* and Adorno’s *Negative Dialectic* (‘As early as Plato, dialectics meant to achieve something positive by means of negation ... This book seeks to free dialectics from such affirmative traits without reducing its determinacy’ writes Adorno 1973: 1). See also Adorno’s and Horkheimer’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, first published in 1947.

⁵ See Müri 1944, Sichirollo 1966 and Dixsaut 2001: 345–354 about the uses of διαλέγεσθαι and cognate words in Plato and before.

⁶ See the introduction to Fink 2012. For early definitions of dialectic in terms of questions and answers, see Plato, *Crat.* 390c10–11 and Aristotle, *SE* 2.165a38–b11. I owe these references to Gourinat and Lemaire 2016: 9.

⁷ See the seminal and now classical studies of the *elenchus* by Robinson 1953: 1–60 (first published in 1941) and Vlastos 1993: 1–38 (first published in 1983).

⁸ See for instance *Theaetetus* 189e8–190a1.

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As for Aristotle, he describes the object of his *Topics* as dialectical deduction (διαλεκτικός συλλογισμός), which is a method of deducing from received opinions (ἐξ ἐνδοξῶν) on all subjects.⁹ While the emphasis seems to be on the epistemological status of dialectic, characterised as a species of deduction defined by its premisses (which are less reliable than those of scientific proof),¹⁰ the initial definition of dialectic in fact refers implicitly to the questioner's role in a discussion, as shown by the end of the first sentence, which adds that, 'when submitting to argument ourselves', we will 'not say anything inconsistent'. The *Topics* are a rule-book for a game played by two interlocutors. While the bulk of the *Topics* (books 1–7) lists rules to argue effectively about various logical situations, their dialogical aims (refuting the respondent or not being refuted) are always kept in mind by Aristotle, and book 8 closes the *Topics* with a full description of the rules of dialectical engagement for both interlocutors,¹¹ and of the best way to prepare for them.

This essential connection of ancient dialectic with competitive interlocution is not ignored by Kant, who establishes the 'dialectic' of reason, theoretical or practical, chiefly by the *antinomies* it falls into when trying to solve metaphysical questions and defending contradictory and equally justified positions on these questions.¹² This is reminiscent of ancient scepticism and its method of collecting or producing contrary arguments on a question (known in Cicero as *disputatio in utramque partem* or, in Sextus Empiricus, as διαφωνία). Dialectic was hence associated by Kant with contradictions within reason, which then became its defining feature for Hegel, Marx or Adorno.¹³ While this pushed the ancient dialogical principle in the background,¹⁴ contradiction can be considered as already playing an important role in ancient dialectic (because of its close

⁹ *Top.* 1.1.100a18 (trans. R. Smith): 'The goal of this study is to find a method with which we shall be able to construct deductions from acceptable premisses concerning any problem that is proposed and – when submitting to argument ourselves – will not say anything inconsistent. First, then, we must say what a deduction is and what its different varieties are, so that the dialectical deduction may be grasped (for that is the one we seek in the present study).'

¹⁰ *Top.* 1.1.100a25–100b25.

¹¹ See Moraux 1968. Cf. *Rhet.* 1.1.1354a5 about dialectic as a common ability to 'examine and uphold an argument' (ἐξετάζειν καὶ ὑπέρχειν λόγον).

¹² See *Critique of pure reason* A406–407/B433–434, where Kant notes that transcendental appearance does not always take the form of an antinomy but that, when it does, it keeps reason awake but usually leads it and philosophy either to sceptical despair or dogmatic arrogance.

¹³ Pagès 2015: 55. For Adorno (1973: 5), 'Dialectics is the consistent consciousness of non-identity'.

¹⁴ This principle was however maintained by Schleiermacher, who defined (in unpublished manuscripts) 'dialectic' after Plato as the 'art of dialogue' and, as such, as the 'art (*Kunst*) of doing philosophy.' On Schleiermacher's and Hegel's conceptions of dialectic and the role they grant to conflict and scepticism, see Berner 1996.

association with refutation) and all these German thinkers still defined the dialectical process as taking into account two (or more) conflicting positions and going through one to the other.

2 The Dark Ages of Dialectic?

However, this grand history of dialectic connecting the giants of Greek and German philosophy projects a shadow on a (very) long span of time beginning with post-classical Antiquity and ending with the eighteenth century, a period during which dialectic survives only as a highly specialised discipline concerned with divisions, arguments and sophisms, which has apparently lost any connection with its dialogical origins and distinctive nature.

This is not the place to raise and solve the difficult historical problem of the ancient origins of the medieval list of the seven liberal arts, that was divided into a *trivium* including grammar, dialectic and rhetoric and a *quadrivium* corresponding to mathematical sciences. This list and the position of dialectic in it are firmly established at the end of the fourth century AD, as witnessed by Augustine's *De ordine* and Martianus Capella, but its date of birth has been variously assigned, from Cicero's time to Porphyry's.¹⁵ Still, it can be agreed that one of the ultimate sources of the *trivium* is Stoic 'logic', which was divided into rhetoric and dialectic, dialectic itself being divided into a part devoted to significations and another to utterances, the latter corresponding to the study of language and its parts and hence to what would be latter called grammar in Antiquity.¹⁶ The former included the study of definitions, propositions, their constituents and their combination into arguments, be they valid syllogisms or sophisms,¹⁷ thus roughly anticipating what medieval thinkers call 'dialectic'.¹⁸

The main responsibility for the change in meaning and scope of dialectic after Aristotle has hence traditionally been attributed to Stoicism,

¹⁵ See I. Hadot 2005, who refutes Marrou's (1969) early dating and locates the elaboration of the *quadrivium* and *trivium* in the context of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism.

¹⁶ See M. Frede 1987f and Ildefonse 1997.

¹⁷ DL 7.41–44 = LS31A and DL 7.61–62 (about definitions). Some Stoics did not include definitions under dialectic (see Gourinat 2000: 46–58).

¹⁸ On medieval 'dialectic', see Stump 1989. Aristotle's dialectic is influential during the Middle Ages through Boethius' *De topicis differentiis*, through various commentaries on the *Topics* and through the practice of *disputatio* in Universities, but, after Boethius, the *definition* of dialectic as distinct from the study of valid inferences faded away and even the study of topics were often seen as a subpart of the study of inferences.

who defined dialectic as ‘a science of what is true, what is false and what is neither’, thus fattening dialectic into a discipline covering all matters of language, deduction and even knowledge in general. While this ambitious reshaping of dialectic as a complete science of truth might have led the Stoics to anticipate several aspects of modern linguistics and logic, it also seems to carry dialectic away from the crucial philosophical problems which prompted its birth: it seems to cut off dialectic from its origins and strip it of its dialogical dimensions.¹⁹

A sign of this evolution has sometimes been found in the so-called defensive dimension of Stoic dialectic and its mistrust of refutation as a way of learning, emphasised by Chrysippus.²⁰ Zeno even remarked that a wise judge did not need to hear both sides in a trial, since he would immediately know upon hearing the first, whether it was right or wrong.²¹ Observing such an antidialogical doctrine and Epicurus’ criticism of dialectic, one might easily conclude that dialectic would have disappeared from the Hellenistic philosophical scene, were it not for the sceptics, and especially the Academics, who gave pride of place to refutation and arguing on both sides, thus preserving at least the Socratic dimension of dialectic and resisting the rise of dogmatic philosophy.

While this picture of the evolution of ancient dialectic has perhaps not been developed by any single historian of philosophy, aspects of it have been put forward by various authors, from Cicero onwards.²² It is the aim of this book to challenge many, if not all, aspects of this view and to bring us closer to a comprehensive understanding of the meanings and roles of dialectic during the 500–600 years in philosophy from the Megarics to Galen. While Hellenistic and Imperial, especially Stoic, conceptions of dialectic have already been studied individually by various scholars of post-classical philosophy, a comprehensive treatment was clearly lacking. The present volume covers almost all the central highlights from the Megaric school of the fourth century BC, early Peripatetics after Aristotle of the fourth–third centuries via Epicurus, the Stoics and a number of sceptics (from Arcesilaus in the third century and Carneades in the second century via Cicero to Sextus Empiricus in the second century AD) to Galen. Taken

¹⁹ Interpreters of Stoic syllogistic have for a long time only paid lip-service to its inclusion into *dialectic*, as shown by Gourinat 2000 and Castagnoli 2010b: see the introduction to Chapter 5.

²⁰ See Plut., *Stoic. rep.* 1036d = LS 31P and Chapter 8, p. 262. On this problem, see also Gourinat 2000: 327–329, Babut 2005, Bénatouil 2006: 79–97.

²¹ Plut., *Stoic. rep.* 1034e. See Repici 1993.

²² See Cic., *Luc.* 7–9, *Fin.* 4.8–10, *Tusc.* 2.9 or Plut., *Stoic. rep.* 1036a–1037c, and studies by Lévy 1992: 623–635, Opsomer 1998, Bonazzi 2012 and Chapter 6, p. 212–217.

together, these studies offer a richer and more complex picture of dialectic after Plato and Aristotle.

3 Ancient Dialectic as Practised and as Defined

Several chapters of this volume insist that one should start by focusing on the actual uses and meaning of the term *διαλεκτική* and its cognates in the post-classical sources available to us. Thus, Chapter 1, by James Allen, studies in great detail which authors were named ‘dialecticians’ or included in a ‘dialectical school’, and why this term was applied to them. This might seem a trivial rule of method, but influential approaches of Hellenistic dialectic have neglected it. For example, the New Academy is often supposed to offer a ‘dialectical’ approach to philosophy, in the sense that it did not advance any claim of its own but only drew problematic consequences from claims put forward by its Stoic and Epicurean rivals, in the manner of Socrates in Plato’s aporetic dialogues.²³ Before assessing this philosophical interpretation in his Chapter 6 about the New Academy, Luca Castagnoli shows that there is no evidence that the Academics themselves conceived and talked of their method and practice as a form of ‘dialectic’, while there is ample evidence that they criticised what their contemporaries called ‘dialectic’. A crucial consequence of this approach is that one cannot base the inquiry into Hellenistic dialectic upon Plato’s and Aristotle’s definitions of dialectic. The debate between Plato and Aristotle about dialectic, and *a fortiori* recent scholarly debates about the evolution of Plato’s conception of dialectic or about the roles of dialectic in Aristotle,²⁴ cannot be assumed to be relevant to understand Hellenistic texts. One must first ascertain what *διαλεκτική* and cognate words refer to in these texts and then compare them to earlier definitions.²⁵

To this effect, James Allen shows in Chapter 1 (which is implicitly followed by most chapters on this point) that one must distinguish between the practice of argument by question and answer and the various

²³ This interpretation was first developed by Couissin 1983 (first published in French in 1929).

²⁴ For recent contributions to these debates and up-to-date bibliographies, see Sim 1999, Fink 2012, Gourinat and Lemaire 2016.

²⁵ This does not mean that ‘dialectic’ or ‘dialectical’ should be applied to a doctrine or practice only when the Greek term is present in the sources and with the meaning it has in them. Attention to ancient uses of the term does not preclude using different definitions of ‘dialectic’ to study our sources, as long as they are made explicit. One can study for instance whether ‘dialectic’ defined in the manner of Aristotle or some of his dialectical concepts are implicitly used or were influential in later texts. This is what Tobias Reinhardt and Benjamin Morison’s Chapter 7 and 9 on Carneades and Sextus, respectively, offer.

discussions, interpretations, methods or theories *about this practice* (or aspects of it) advanced by philosophers. While Plato most probably coined the term ‘dialectic’ and ‘dialectician’, the characters in his dialogues sometimes present it as if it were already in usage and Aristotle dated the invention of dialectic back to Zeno of Elea, despite claiming to have himself elaborated most of its elements and rules.²⁶ This is a sign that dialectic was first and foremost characterised by an interest in a specific type of short, step-by-step and sometimes paradoxical arguments of the sort that were exchanged in questions-and-answers discussions.²⁷

In a list of the various ways in which philosophical schools were named, Diogenes Laertius mentions the ‘dialectical school’ as including all those who ‘busy themselves with extreme subtlety (τερθρεία) in arguments’.²⁸ It is uncertain whether this passage uses ‘τερθρεία’ to signal a derogatory (‘hair-splitting’) or neutral (‘minute analysis’) view of the achievements of the ‘dialectical school’,²⁹ but the negative meaning of the word is the most common. Isocrates (*Praise of Helen* §4) rejects ‘ταύτης τῆς τερθρείας τῆς ἐν μὲν τοῖς λόγοις’ in his criticism of recent authors such as Protagoras, Gorgias and Zeno, which he then blames (§6) for aiming only at making money by imparting to young people ‘a culture of dispute’ (περὶ τὰς ξριδας φιλοσοφία): this is clearly a negative view of the very practice Zeno, Protagoras, Socrates, Plato or Aristotle deemed useful and justified in various ways, including naming it ‘dialectic’ and defining it as an ‘art’ or a ‘science’. As noted by James Allen, the many figures who were called ‘dialecticians’ or said to engage in dialectic, for instance the Megarics, were also often referred to by their adversaries as ‘eristical’ or ‘sophistic’.³⁰

In our post-Aristotelian sources, ‘dialectic’ hence refers first and foremost to a specific type of discourse and reasoning or, to borrow Luca

²⁶ Aristotle, fr. 65 Rose (= DL 8.57 and 9.25) and *SE* 34. Dorion 2002: 200–208 dismisses the testimony about Zeno as inventor of dialectic because it also mentions Empedocles as inventor of rhetoric and because it contradicts Aristotle’s claim in *SE* 34. But Aristotle could be referring in fr. 65 to proto-inventors, who were the first to practice dialectic and rhetoric but did not offer any theory of these types of discourses. Still, one must take Diogenes’ testimony with caution.

²⁷ This manner of arguing is often contrasted by Plato and Aristotle with longer, ‘rhetorical’ discourses (Plato, *Gorgias* 448d–449c, Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.1.) or with more popular arguments, still included within dialectic (see for example *Top.* 8.2.157a18–19 (tr. R. Smith modified): ‘when debating (ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι), use deduction with those skilled in debate (πρὸς τοὺς διαλεκτικούς) more than with the public; contrariwise, use induction more with the public’, cf. *Top.* 1.12.105a18–19).

²⁸ DL 1.17: διαλεκτικοὶ δὲ ὅσοι περὶ τὴν τῶν λόγων τερθρείαν καταγίνονται.

²⁹ The second option is suggested by DL 2.106 about Dionysius of Chalcedon who, ‘was the first to name them “dialecticians” because they arranged arguments in the form of question and answer’. On the testimonies about the names ‘dialecticians’ or ‘dialectical school’, see Chapter 1, p. 24–25.

³⁰ See Chapter I, p. 32. This is in fact borne out by Aristotle, who acknowledges that sophistry is defined by its intention and not by a specific ability: *Rhet.* 1.1.135b17 and *Met.* 3.2.1004b22.

Castagnoli's phrasing, to 'the art of argument, to be tapped by anyone who wanted to use arguments proficiently, especially, but not exclusively, in a question-and-answer setting' (Chapter 6, p. 188). A very good example of this 'tapping' and use in an unexpected setting is examined by Sophie Aubert-Baillet's Chapter 8 devoted to Cicero's use of dialectical procedures in his letters, which can be studied along Cicero's explicit references to and evaluation of dialectic in his philosophical and rhetorical works.

Although the 'dialectical school' and, later, the Stoa were taken to be the best practitioners of this art, there was a meaning of 'dialectic' independent of the various and rival philosophical definitions and evaluations offered of it from Plato to Plotinus. Diogenes Laertius notes that 'so renowned was [Chrysippus] among dialecticians (ἐν τοῖς διαλεκτικοῖς) that most people thought that, if there was any dialectic among the gods, it could only be Chrysippus' (7.180). This implies that there were several ways of doing dialectic, all referring to the same practice or art of reasoning, with its formal rules, technical vocabulary and paradoxical arguments so often associated with Stoicism in later sources,³¹ albeit hardly exclusive to this school.

4 Dialectic in Debate

From this point of view, it is misleading to present Stoicism as widening the scope of dialectic, as if Aristotle had carved it to its natural joints.³² Both are offering a theory of what is needed to use efficiently a certain type of arguments which were usually cast in the form of questions and answers. Just as Aristotle characterised dialectic both by this form and by its starting from ἐνδοξα, the Stoics defined it both as a science of correct discussion by questions and answers and as a science of what is true, false and neither true nor false,³³ and they did not lose sight of the aim encapsulated in the first definition while turning dialectic into a complex discipline with its own special objects, as shown in both Chapter 4 on Stoicism, by Katerina Ierodiakonou and Chapter 5 on Stoic dialectic by Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, respectively.

³¹ See for example Lucian's *Philosophies for Sale* 22–23.

³² Just as it would be misleading to say that Aristotle clipped the wings of dialectic as if Plato had discovered the intrinsic aims of dialogue, argument and division. Both had a different interpretation of the epistemological value and scope of roughly the same practices. I will come back presently to the development of this debate during the Hellenistic period.

³³ DL 7, 42: τὴν διαλεκτικὴν [ἐπιστήμην] τοῦ ὁρθῶς διαλέγεσθαι περὶ τῶν ἐν ἐρωτῇ καὶ ἀποκρίσει λόγων· ὅθεν καὶ οὕτως αὐτὴν ὀρίζονται, ἐπιστήμην ἀληθῶν καὶ ψευδῶν καὶ οὐδετέρων.

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A confirmation that the Stoics saw themselves as part of a continuous tradition interested in dialectic can be found in a quotation of Chrysippus by Plutarch, which many chapters in this book cite and discuss. In the third book of his *On Dialectic*, after remarking that ‘dialectic was treated as a subject of serious concern by Plato and Aristotle and their successors down to Polemo and Strato and especially by Socrates’, and after exclaiming that ‘one would be willing even to go wrong with so many men of such stature as these’ he continues in so many words:

For, if it had been in passing that they spoke of these matters, one might perhaps have disparaged this subject; but, since they have taken such care to speak as if dialectic is among the greatest and most indispensable of capacities, it is not plausible that they, being on the whole such men as we surmise, are so utterly mistaken.³⁴

Despite the lack of context, these quotations clearly suggest that Chrysippus here appeals to the prestige of the dialectical tradition in order to answer people who ‘disparage’ dialectic. These people might be Epicureans or deviant Stoics such as Aristo of Chios,³⁵ but the inclusion of the Academy as a whole, from Plato to Polemo, and the stress put on Socrates suggest that Chrysippus might have been trying to answer the objections of those who claimed to be the legitimate heirs of this very tradition, namely Arcesilaus and his followers.³⁶ Be that as it may, when Epicurus, Aristo, the Academics or even Galen raised objections against ‘dialectic’,³⁷ they were not specifically targeting Platonic, Aristotelian, Megaric or Stoic dialectic, but the art of argument in general and those who studied and used it most intensively. David Sedley shows more precisely in his Chapter 3 that the various topics Epicurus associated with ‘dialectic’ and criticised included ‘syllogistic, definition, division, partition, the resolution

³⁴ Plut., *Stoic. rep.* 1045F–1046A (tr. H. Cherniss with changes): ‘Ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ περὶ τῆς Διαλεκτικῆς ὑπειπὼν ὅτι Ἰπλάτων ἐσπούδασε περὶ τὴν διαλεκτικὴν καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης καὶ [οἱ] ἀπὸ τούτων ἄχρι Πολέμωνος καὶ Στράτωνος, μάλιστα δὲ Σωκράτης’ καὶ ἐπιφωνήσας ὅτι ‘καὶ συνεξαμαρτάνειν ἂν τις θελήσειε τούτοις τοσοῦτοις καὶ τοιοῦτοις οὖσιν’ ἐπιφέρει κατὰ λέξιν ‘εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ παρέργου περὶ αὐτῶν εἰρήκεσαν, τάχ’ ἂν τις διέσυρε τὸν τόπον τούτον· οὕτω δ’ αὐτῶν ἐπιμελῶς εἰρηκότων ὥς ἐν ταῖς μεγίσταις δυνάμεσι καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάταις αὐτῆς οὔσης, οὐ πιθανόν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον διαμαρτάνειν αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς ὅλοις ὄντας οἷους ὑπονοοῦμεν.’

³⁵ A work entitled Πρὸς τοὺς διαλεκτικούς is attributed by Diogenes Laertius to Epicurus (10.24) and Aristo (7.163).

³⁶ Brunschwig 1991: 83, 87, Barnes 1999: 32. Arcesilaus and above all Carneades criticised ‘dialectic’ in general as a sterile and even self-defeating method, as already noted: see Chapter 6, section 1.

³⁷ On Galen’s objections, see Chapter 10, p. 323–326.

of sophisms and logical principles governing the assignment of truth and falsity'.³⁸ Galen also sometimes includes in dialectic the analysis of names or words and their meanings in ordinary language,³⁹ a practice which is attested in Stoicism but obviously goes back to Socrates and is mentioned by Aristotle.⁴⁰

5 Platonic and Aristotelian Dialectics after Plato and Aristotle

Once the distinction between dialectical practices and the debate over their philosophical ordering and justifications is established, it is entirely legitimate and important to inquire whether the Platonic and Aristotelian interpretations of dialectic remained alive in post-Classical philosophy or were at least known by some authors. An important thread in this volume is thus the following question: Was dialectic after Aristotle still modelled after Plato or Aristotle?

As for Aristotle, his successors in the Lyceum undoubtedly completed his inquiries into dialectic. This is shown by Paolo Crivelli, whose Chapter 2 leaves aside Theophrastus' application of dialectical methods in his remaining works and focuses on Theophrastus', Eudemos' and Strato's reflections about important aspects of Aristotle's *Topics*, such as the ordering of predicables, methods of division and specific types of inferences anticipating the Stoic indemonstrables.⁴¹

About two centuries later, Cicero and contemporary Greek philosophers like Antiochus of Ascalon and Philo of Larissa invoked and used various aspects of Peripatetic dialectic, but also epistemology, syllogistic and rhetoric, against Stoic logic.⁴² Moreover, Cicero sometimes claims that Hellenistic Academics took up their practice of arguing on both sides of each problem from Aristotle, but this statement and its connection to Peripatetic *dialectic* raises several problems, as shown by Luca Castagnoli in Chapter 6 and by Sophie Aubert-Baillet, who studies the use of this procedure in Cicero's letters in Chapter 8.⁴³

³⁸ See Chapter 3, p. 82–83. ³⁹ See Chapter 10, p. 325–326.

⁴⁰ See *Top.* 1.15 and, in a sense, all the rules pertaining to definition (*Top.* 6) as well.

⁴¹ However, the main formative influence on Stoic syllogistic still lies in the Megaric and Dialectical schools: see Chapter 1, p. 18–20.

⁴² Cic., *Fin.* 4.8–10. See also Cicero's *Topica* with Chapter 8, p. 256.

⁴³ See Cic., *De or.* 3.80 with Chapter 6, p. 185–190 and Chapter 8, p. 271–275. About discussion *pro et contra*, see also Chapter 10, p. 331–338 on its uses by Atticus and Galen.