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Introductory note

The articles in this special issue grew out of a conference on “Aristotelian Logic in Medieval Cultures: Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin” that took place in Jerusalem and Ramat Gan in June of 2019. The conference was the culminating finale of a year-long research group that Charles H. Manekin and I directed on “The Reception and Impact of Aristotelian Logic in Medieval Jewish Cultures” at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem. The purpose of the research group was to explore how and why medieval Jewish cultures studied Aristotelian logic. In doing so, we sought to examine not only what medieval Jews studied when they studied logic, but what social, cultural, and religious factors contributed to their interest in logic. For most medieval Jews, the study of logic was seen as the foundation of universal knowledge, that is knowledge not specifically tied to Jewish content. Indeed, while the study of logic grew and thrived in Hebrew throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the foundational texts were all translations into Hebrew either from Arabic or from Latin. As a result, the study of Aristotelian logic in medieval Jewish cultures was always closely tied in with the study of logic in medieval Muslim and Christian cultures. Additionally, the Aristotelian origins of logic meant that it was in some respect always connected to Aristotle, the Greek culture in which he arose, and the ensuing Greek and Latin commentary cultures. From the outset, then, the research group approached the study of Aristotelian logic in medieval Jewish cultures not only as a study of the logicians themselves, their logical contributions, and their writings, but as a general study of medieval logic and its social history as it arose and developed in the linguistic, cultural, and religious orbits of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

The articles in this special issue thus treat a broad spectrum of Aristotelian logicians in a range of medieval traditions. They concern not only well known thinkers like al-Fārābī, Avicenna, Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Maimonides, Averroes, and Gersonides, but also such thinkers as Abū l-Barakāt al-Baḡdādī, Jacob Anatoli, Shem Ṭob Falaquera, Samuel ben Judah of Marseilles, Ṭodros Ṭodrosi, and various anonymous writers and commentators in Arabic and Hebrew. Nearly every one of these thinkers operated in an independent cultural milieu in which Aristotelian logic was studied from somewhat different texts. Still, taken together, they present an interconnected world of study that traversed East and West, and translated and adapted Greek ideas into Arabic and Hebrew. Moreover, as the final two articles show, this world was closely tied into the intellectual currents of the Latin Scholasticism. These articles depict a series of cross-cultural, inter-lingual, inter-religious, and international attempts to understand the fundamental criteria for knowing and transmitting knowledge that we know of as logic.

We thank *Studia graeco-arabica* for the opportunity to present these papers here. We also thank the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, along with the other sponsors of the conference: Bar Ilan University, the University of Maryland, and the Edelstein Center for the Study of the History of Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Yehuda Halper

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