

ARGUING AGAINST. Logical Reasoning and Arguments in Religious Controversies (8th -10th Centuries)

Writing polemical theological treatises was a flourishing activity during the ninth and tenth centuries, in Byzantium, the Syriac Church of the East and at the Abbasid Court. In Greek, treatises were composed against Christian positions considered to be heretical (including the Armenian version of Miaphysitism, etc.), against the Latin addition of the *Filioque*, or against the Muslims. In Arabic, treatises were written both by Christian Arabs against Islam, or by Muslims, notably against the so-called incoherence of the doctrine of the Trinity. The object of this conference is to analyse the argumentative strategy deployed by the polemicists and more precisely to focus on their rational argumentation (in opposition, for example, to the use of textual authorities, florilegia, quotes or more rhetorical figures). Criticising a theological position is often the opportunity to demonstrate one's philosophical *acumen*, by the use of numerous tools: reducing the position of the other to absurdity, constructing syllogisms to demonstrate either the correctness of one's own position or the error

of the adversary, developing a thorough chain of arguments. To the historian, polemical writings offer an exceptional object for studying the technical knowledge of the polemicists, their familiarity with logic, their ability to use argument techniques. We will inquire how polemical religious texts, in Greek, Syriac or Arabic, are also a *locus* for elaborated reasoning.

Parts of the event may be photographed. By participating in this event, you consent to the publication of these photographs.

LOCATION

Hörsaal des Instituts für
Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik
Universität Wien
Postgasse 7/1/ 3. Stock
1010 Wien

INFORMATION

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9 SALT

REASSESSING NINTH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY.

A SYNCHRONIC APPROACH
TO THE LOGICAL TRADITIONS

ERC CoG 648298

International Conference
University of Vienna
Department of Byzantine
& Modern Greek Studies
28 February-2 March 2018

PROGRAMME

ARGUING AGAINST

**Logical Reasoning and
Arguments in Religious
Controversies**
(8th-10th Centuries)



Wednesday 28th of February



Lioba THEIS Director of the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies (Vienna)
Welcome Address

Keynote Lecture
Sarah Stroumsa (Jerusalem)
Logic as Interconfessional Weapon in the Early Islamicate World: *Maṅṭiq, Qiyās, Kalām*

Chaired by **Stephan PROCHÁZKA** (Vienna)

Reception

18.15-20.00

Thursday 1st of March

Chair: Mossman Roueché

Peter SCHADLER (Carlisle)
When a Heresy is not a Heresy: Locating Islam in the Christian Philosophical Thought of John of Damascus

Smilen MARKOV (Veliko Turnovo)
The Propedeutical, Hermeneutical and Polemical Function of Aristotelian Logic in the Early Byzantine Philosophy (John Damascene and Theodore Abu Qurra)

Coffee Break 11.00-11.30

Chair: John Watt

Vittorio BERTI (Padua)
Logicising Ecclesiastical Conflicts: The Synod of *Henanishō* II (775) as a Key Witness of the Aristotelian Vogue among East Syrian Scholars during the Early Abbasid Time.

Ute POSSEKEL (Cambridge MA)
Christological Debates in Harran and Eliya's *Letter*

Lunch 13.30-14.30

Chair: John Watt

Martin HEIMGARTNER (Halle)
Aristotelian Logic in the Disputations of the East Syrian Patriarch Timothy I

Alberto RIGOLIO (Princeton)
Theodore Bar Kōnī's *Book of Scholia*, Logic and Religious Controversies

Coffee Break 16.30-17.00

Chair: Guy Stroumsa

Zara POGOSSIAN & Barbara ROGGEMA (Bochum, ERC project JewsEast)
The Reception of Christian Arabic Polemics in Armenia: The Case of Abraham of Tiberias

Aho SHEMUNKASHO (Salzburg)
Syriac Studies in Salzburg

Conference Dinner 19.30 for invited guests

9.00 - 11.00

11.30-13.30

14.30 - 16.30

17.00-18.20

Friday 2nd of March

Chair: Guy Stroumsa

Elvira WAKELNIG (Vienna)
Muhammad ibn al-Layth's Letter to the Byzantine Emperor

Orsolya VARSÁNYI (Budapest)
Argumentation Terminology and Techniques in 'Ammār al-Baṣrī's *Apology*

Coffee Break 11.00-11.30

Chair: Guy Stroumsa

Sandra KEATING (Providence)
The Logic of Christian Doctrine: Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī's Philosophical Response to Islam

Peter ADAMSON (Munich)
Yaḥyā Ibn 'Adī against al-Kindī on the Trinity

Lunch 13.30-14.30

Chair: Mossman Roueché

Barbara ROGGEMA (Bochum)
Reasoning and Rhetoric in Near Eastern Christian Writings against Judaism and Islam

Christophe ERISMANN (Vienna)
General Concepts, Rational Arguments and Logical Deductions. Nicetas of Byzantium's Arsenal and the Byzantine anti-Islamic Polemic

Coffee Break 16.30-17.00

Chair: Mossman Roueché

Dirk KRAUSMÜLLER (Vienna)
Two Argumentative Strategies: Nicetas of Byzantium against the Armenians and against the Latins

Conference Dinner 19.30 for invited guests

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17.00-18.00