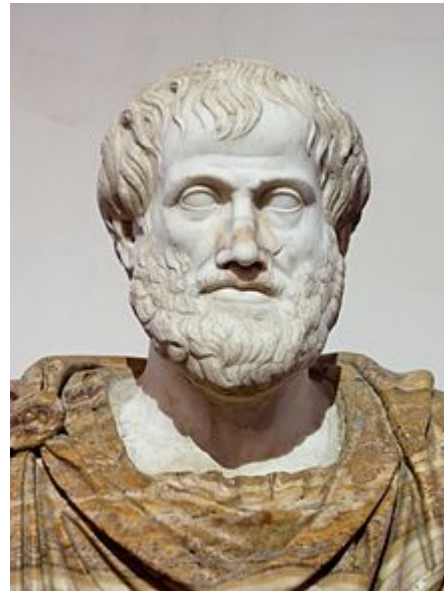


Some Signs Of Our Era



Aristotelis Hermeneutica Analytica Elenctica ex recensione Immanuelis Bekkeri seorsum edita
1843

Ἔστι δὴ τῶν ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι λόγων τέτταρα γένη, διδασκαλικοὶ καὶ διαλεκτικοὶ καὶ πειραστικοὶ καὶ ἐριστικοί· διδασκαλικοὶ μὲν οἱ ἐκ τῶν οἰκείων ἀρχῶν ἐκάστου μαθήματος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἀποκρινομένου δοξῶν συλλογιζόμενοι (δεῖ γὰρ πιστεύειν τὸν μανθάνοντα), διαλεκτικοὶ δ' οἱ ἐκ τῶν ἐνδόξων συλλογιστικοὶ ἀντιφάσεως, πειραστικοὶ δ' οἱ ἐκ τῶν δοκούντων τῷ ἀποκρινομένῳ καὶ ἀναγκαίων εἰδέναι τῷ προσποιουμένῳ ἔχειν τὴν ἐπιστήμην (ὄν τρόπον δέ, διώριστα ἐν ἑτέροις), ἐριστικοὶ δ' οἱ ἐκ τῶν φαινομένων ἐνδόξων, μὴ ὄντων δέ, συλλογιστικοὶ ἢ φαινόμενοι συλλογιστικοί.

Περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἀποδεικτικῶν ἐν τοῖς Ἀναλυτικοῖς εἴρηται, περὶ δὲ τῶν διαλεκτικῶν καὶ πειραστικῶν ἐν ἄλλοις· π δὲ τῶν ἀγωνιστικῶν καὶ ἐριστικῶν νῦν λέγωμεν.

"Rational discourse can be divided into four categories: didactic, dialectical, peirastic, and eristic..."

It is no longer surprising, for me and for a minority of others, how many people in this modern technological age:

- § seem to lack the ability to use logical reasoning when writing about or discussing a subject;
- § do not research a subject for themselves using scholarly methodology and primary sources;
- § commit fallacies of reasoning such as appeal to authority and ad populum; {1}{2}
- § use an Internet resource such as 'wikipedia' as a source of information about a subject even though it is a tertiary source and thus is based on interpretive secondary sources.

Scholarship And Primary Sources

For centuries in the West, primary sources - not secondary nor tertiary sources - have been regarded as the means for an individual to acquire a scholarly, an unbiased, knowledge of a subject, or a person, or a group or of some event historical or otherwise.

Primary sources include contemporaneous manuscripts, books, writings, letters, diaries, memoirs, personal journals, interviews, speeches, and other materials that individuals have used to describe (i) events in which they were participants or observers, and (ii) ideas or creations - such as a philosophy, music, literature, or art-work - which they were responsible for. The more primary sources used the more scholarly the work, with the criteria of scholarship being: (i) a detailed, meticulous, unbiased original research on and concerning a specific topic or topics or subject undertaken over a period of time, usually a year or more in duration and involving primary source material; (ii) an ability to be able to read primary sources in their original language; and (iii) a rational assessment of the knowledge acquired by such research, with such conclusions about the topic, topics, or subject being the logical result of the cumulative scholarly learning so acquired. If the researcher cannot read primary sources in their original language and has to rely on the translations of others then their conclusions are not original and not scholarly just as if they commit logical fallacies - such as the fallacy of Incomplete Evidence - then their conclusions are also not scholarly.

Secondary sources are those whose authors have not used only primary sources and drawn logical conclusions from those primary sources, but who reference and use the opinions, the interpretations and the conclusions of others, and/or who present their own opinion, interpretation, of a scholarly work or works by an author or authors who has or have only used primary sources.

To be learned, to be a scholar in the traditional sense, is to have a profound knowledge gained by study.

Scholarly (skɒˈlɑːli), *a.* [f. SCHOLAR + -LY 1.]
Not in Johnson or Todd.
Pertaining to, or characterizing, a scholar; befitting, or natural to, a scholar; learned, erudite.

Learned:

2. Of a person: In early use, that has been taught; instructed, educated. In later use with narrowed sense: Having profound knowledge gained by study, esp. in language or some department of literary or historical science; deeply-read, erudite. Const. *in. † of.* (Superseding the earlier LERED.)
Learned society: a society formed for the prosecution of some branch of learning or science.

However, in this era where the interpretations, the opinions, the often fallaciously made conclusions, of others are readily available by means of printed articles and books, by the Media, and by mediums such as the Internet, this personal, scholarly, rational, slow way to acquire a balanced knowledge and understanding of a subject is a dying, unpopular, Cræft {3} even in academia. For the designation 'academic' in this era does not necessarily imply that a person who is employed in academia is learned, erudite, in a particular subject. Instead, it is often the case that a published work by a modern academic is not based on their own detailed scholarly research using primary sources but on the opinions and/or on the conclusions and/or the interpretations of others, and thus often on fallacies such as Appeal to Authority. {1}

The Ability Of Logical Reasoning

An illustration of how the ability to use logical reasoning seems to have declined in the past hundred or more years are questions about Euclidean geometry asked of candidates for entry into the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the 1860s. For Euclid's Στοιχεῖα dating from c.300 BCE is a masterpiece of logical reasoning. It begins with definitions and axioms; then propositions are stated with the necessary logically derived proof of the propositions. In the English-speaking world textbooks such as the one titled *The Elements of Euclid*, first published in 1862 with reprints published until 1903, were used in schools and centres of learning in order to develop the ability of logical reasoning.

AXIOMS.

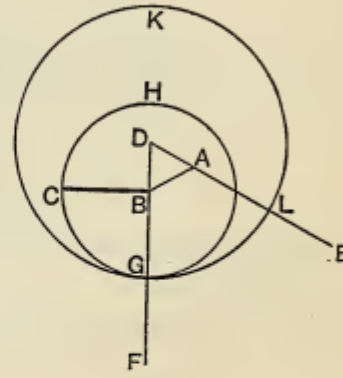
1. Things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another.
2. If equals be added to equals the wholes are equal.
3. If equals be taken from equals the remainders are equal.
4. If equals be added to unequals the wholes are unequal.
5. If equals be taken from unequals the remainders are unequal.
6. Things which are double of the same thing are equal to one another.
7. Things which are halves of the same thing are equal to one another.
8. The whole is greater than its part.
9. Magnitudes which can be made to coincide with one another are equal to one another.
[This method of placing one geometrical magnitude upon a second is called the method of **superposition**, and the first magnitude is said to be **applied** to the other.]
10. Two straight lines cannot enclose a space.
This axiom should be extended thus:
If two straight lines coincide in two points, they must coincide both beyond and between these points.
11. All right angles are equal to one another.
[This axiom admits of proof; see Note to I. 14.]
12. If a straight line meet two straight lines, so as to make the two interior angles on the same side of it together less than two right angles, these straight lines, being continually produced, shall at length meet on that side on which are the angles which are less than two right angles.

PROPOSITION 2. PROBLEM.

From a given point to draw a straight line equal to a given straight line.

Let A be the given point, and BC the given straight line: it is required to draw from the point A a straight line equal to BC.

Construction. Join AB, [Post. 1. and on it describe the equilateral triangle DAB, [I. 1. and produce the straight lines DA, DB to E and F. [Postulate 2. With centre B and radius BC, describe the circle CGH, meeting DF at G. [Postulate 3. With centre D and radius DG, describe the circle GLK, meeting DE at L. [Postulate 3. AL shall be equal to BC.



Proof. Because the point B is the centre of the circle CGH, BC is equal to BG. [Definition 15. Also because D is the centre of the circle GLK, DL is equal to DG; [Definition 15. and DA, DB parts of them are equal; [Definition 23. therefore the remainders AL, BG are equal. [Axiom 3. But it has been shewn that BC is equal to BG; therefore AL and BC are each of them equal to BG. But things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another. [Axiom 1.

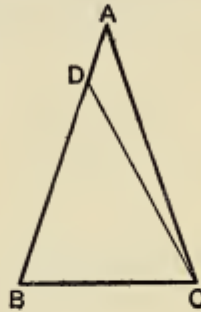
Therefore AL is equal to BC.

Wherefore from the given point A a straight line AL has been drawn equal to the given straight line BC. [Q.E.F.

PROPOSITION 6. THEOREM.

If two angles of a triangle be equal to one another, the sides also which subtend, or are opposite to, the equal angles, shall be equal to one another.

Let ABC be a triangle, having the angle ABC equal to the angle ACB: then the side AC shall be equal to the side AB.



Construction. For if AC be not equal to AB, one of them must be greater than the other.

Let AB be the greater, and from it cut off DB equal to AC the less, [I. 3. and join DC.

Proof. In the triangles DBC, ACB, because $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{DB is equal to AC,} \\ \text{and BC is common to both triangles,} \\ \text{and the angle DBC is equal to the angle ACB,} \end{array} \right.$ [Construction. [Hypothesis. therefore the triangles are equal in all respects, [I. 4. the less to the greater; which is absurd. [Axiom 8. Therefore AB is not unequal to AC, that is, it is equal to it.

Wherefore, if two angles, etc. [Q.E.D.

Corollary. Every triangle, which has three equal angles, is also equilateral.

Hence why candidates for Sandhurst were asked questions such as the following in order to show their ability to use logical reasoning.

1. Make a triangle of which the sides shall be equal to three given straight lines, *but any two whatever of these must be greater than the third.*

How does the construction in this proposition fail when the condition in italics is not fulfilled.

2. To a given straight line apply a parallelogram which shall be equal to a given triangle, and have one of its angles equal to a given rectilineal angle.

Could a rectangle be described on a line of any magnitude equal to any given equilateral triangle.

1. Describe an equilateral and equiangular pentagon about a given circle.

Compare the areas of the equilateral and equiangular pentagons inscribed in, and circumscribed about, the same circle.

2. When, according to Euclid, are four geometrical magnitudes proportional? Prove that triangles which have the same altitude are to one another as their bases.

Show that every trapezium is divided by its diagonals into four triangles which are proportional to one another.

How many people living in the West - from candidates to the Armed Forces, to politicians, journalists, academics, 'experts' and lay people who pontificate about a subject they have not personally researched in a scholarly manner using primary sources - could answer questions such as the above? How many could logically present arguments for their publicly expressed opinions and beliefs regarding a subject or a person?

Very few, with the majority committing fallacies of reasoning such as appeal to authority and ad populum, and/or supinely using an Internet resource such as 'wikipedia' as a source of information regarding a subject about which they are publicly expressing opinions.

Conclusion

This inability, by those publicly pontificating about a subject or about a person, to use logical reasoning, to not personally undertake research using scholarly methodology and primary sources; this committal of fallacies of reasoning such as the appeal to authority and ad populum, and this use an Internet resource such as 'wikipedia' as a source of information about a subject or a person, is not only an indictment of our modern era and societies but also of how far our modern societies, despite their often mandatory schooling of children and their tertiary educational system, is a departure from the cultured, rational, way of personally acquiring a balanced knowledge and understanding of a subject or of a person.

In many respects such public pontificating is often reminiscent of the 'witch trials' in less enlightened times when individuals were accused of witchcraft based on hearsay and statements by those motivated either by an ignoble zealous religious belief and/or because of some personal ignoble reason. {4} In our era, it is often adherence to some political belief, or a lack of the ability to use reason and personal research as a personal guide.

Whatever the cause, there is a 'following of the crowd', or a naive believing in what some 'authority' or 'expert' or spokesperson of some government or policy group or secondary source or some medium such as a newspaper or some digital resource such 'wikipedia' or 'social media' states about a subject, a topic, or about a person.

That is, there is the same unfairness, the same lack of reasoning, the same use of rumours, as occurred during those witch trials. Will we human beings, therefore, ever *en masse* adopt the maxim of being fair, honourable, and thus remain silent about what we personally have no rationally acquired or direct personal knowledge of?

For, thousands of years ago, Sophocles wrote: οὐκ οἶδ' ἐφ' οἷς γὰρ μὴ φρονῶ σιγαῖν φιλω, "I do not know, [and] about things I cannot judge for myself, I prefer to be silent." (Oedipus Tyrannus, 569)

Similarly, centuries later, and in a Hadith, it was recounted that the Prophet Muhammad said: "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either speak honourably or be silent..." (Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Naysaburi, Book 1, 47a)

حَدَّثَنِي حَرَمَلَةُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، أُنْبَأَنَا ابْنُ وَهَبٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي يُونُسُ،
عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ،
عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكَلِّمْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكَلِّمْ جَارَهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
فَلْيُكَلِّمْ صَيْقَهُ " .

Haereticus The Grandmother
March 2024 CE
27 Shaban 1445 AH

{1} Cræft: this older spelling implies more than the modern usage associated with the word 'craft'.

Cræft

III. † 5. The learning of the schools, scholarship. **b.** (with *a* and *pl.*) A branch of learning or knowledge, a science. *The seven crafts*: the 'seven arts' of the mediæval Universities: see **ART 7. Obs.**
c 1205 LAY. 10923 On bocken heo cuðe godne cræft. *Ibid.* 30493 An clarc þe com from Spaine . . feole craftes he cuðe.
a 1225 Leg. Kath. 522 Fifti scolmeistres, of alle þe crafetes þet clerc ah to cunnen. *a 1300 Cursor M. 4647* (Cott.) þe seuen craftes all he can. *a 1400-50 Alexander 33* þe pasage of þe planettis, þe poyntes & þe sygnes. þai ware þe kiddes of þat craft knawyn in þaire tyme. 1483 *Cath. Angl. 79* A Crafte, *ars liberalis, sciencia* [etc.]. 1530 **PALSGR.** 210/x Crafte of multiplyeing, *alquemenie*.
IV. A branch of skilled work.
6. An art, trade, or profession requiring special skill and knowledge; *esp.* a manual art, a **HANDICRAFT**; sometimes applied to any business, calling, or profession by which a livelihood is earned.
c 897 K. ÆLFRED Gregory's Past. i. 24 Se cræft þæs lareowdomes bið cræft ealra cræfta. *c 900 Bæda's Hist. iv. xiii*, Seo þeod ðone cræft ne cuðe ðæs fiscnoþes. *c 1040 Rule St. Benet 94* For ingehide his cræftes. 1340 *Ayemb.*

{2} The fallacy of appeal to authority, also known as the fallacy of Argumentum ad Verecundiam, is somewhat misunderstood in this age of the Internet. It is not only citing or quoting a person or persons who is/are regarded, by the person citing or quoting or by others, as an authority or 'expert' on a subject but also citing or quoting the opinion given by some institution, or 'policy/advisory group' or similar, on a subject, regardless of whether or not the 'expert' or institution or whatever has their opinion published by some means or some medium regarded as 'mainstream', academic, or 'respectable' or authoritative.

The crux of the fallacy is a reliance by someone or by some others on who or what is regarded in a particular society as an authority on or as having a detailed or 'expert' knowledge of a subject or subjects.

Thus a modern statement such as the fallacy of appeal to authority "is when the opinion of a non-expert on a topic is used as evidence" is itself fallacious because although it appears to be a decisive statement regarding 'authority' it is logically not so having not only restricted the fallacy to those are not 'experts' but does not define what an 'expert' or a 'false expert' is or are or who or what person or institution, or 'policy/advisory group' or similar has the 'authority' to declare someone an 'expert' or a 'false expert' in a certain subject or subjects, and from whence a person or an institution, or 'policy/advisory group' or similar derives their own authority to make such declarations.

The opposite of the appeal to authority is personal research by scholarly means of a subject, or of person, using only primary sources.

{3} The fallacy of ad populum is when a person either 'follows the crowd' and believes or claims that because so many others have claimed or believe something it is probably true, or when they are convinced, usually emotively, by a propagandist or politician or by some populist speaker that something is true or that someone or some many are guilty or culpable.

{4} The trials at Salem, Massachusetts, have been well-described. For an account of the less well-known Scottish

trials, qv. Julian Goodare, *The Scottish Witch-Hunt In Context*. Manchester University Press, 2002.

An account from 1696, a year after the execution by hanging and then by bonfire of Katherine Campbell, replete with the prejudices, intolerance, and the religious fervour of the period, is provided in the reprint titled *A History Of The Witches Of Renfrewshire* published in 1877. For example:

II.—Albeit witchcraft be the greatest of crimes, since it includes in it the grossest of heresies, and blasphemies, and treasons against God, in preferring to the Almighty his rebel and enemy, and in thinking the devil worthier of being served and revered, and is accompanied with murder, poisoning, bestiality, and other horrid crimes : yet I conclude only from this, that when witches are found guilty, they should be most severely punished, not with scourging and banishment, as the custom of Savoy was related to be by Gothofred, hoc tit. but by the most ignominious of deaths. Yet from the horridness

The Christian religious fervour of belief of the era is evident in such passages as:

But that there are witches, and that they are punishable capitally, not only when they poison or murder, but even for enchanting and deluding the world, is clear by an express text, Exod. xxii. verse 18,—“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” And it is observable, that the same word which expresses a witch here, is that which is used in Exod. vii. to express those magicians who deluded only the people by transforming a rod into a serpent, as Moses had done, though no person was prejudged by their cheat and illusion. Likeas, Lev. xxix. and 27. It is ordained that “a man or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death ; they shall stone them with stones ; their blood shall be upon them.” Which laws were in such observation amongst the Jews, that the witch of Endor, 1 Sam. xxviii., was afraid to use her sorcery before the king, because the king had cut off those who had familiar spirits and wizards out of the land. And so great indignation did the eternal God bear to this sin, that he did destroy the ten tribes of Israel because they were addicted to it.