

ON PROSLEPTIC SYLLOGISMS

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1. As a rule modern textbooks of traditional logic distinguish only two kinds of syllogism: the categorical syllogism, which has originated with Aristotle, and the hypothetical syllogism, which goes back to the early Peripatetics and to the Stoics. Rarely, if ever, is mention made of the third kind of syllogism namely the *prosleptic* syllogism. Yet, the prosleptic syllogism, for which we seem to be indebted to Theophrastus, appears to have been regarded at least by some logicians in later ages of antiquity as a legitimate part of logical theory.

Like the expressions 'categorical' and 'hypothetical' the expression 'prosleptic' is a technical term and its full significance can only emerge at a later stage of our enquiry. At this stage suffice it to say that 'prosleptic' is meant to render the Greek expression 'κατὰ πρόσληψιν' in its adjectival use.

Although the prosleptic syllogism has not played as important a rôle in the development of logic as the other two kinds of syllogism, it deserves our attention particularly for the following two reasons. First, the validity of prosleptic syllogisms is based, as we shall see, on certain logical notions which in modern logic find their expression in the use of the universal quantifier. Secondly, the theory of prosleptic syllogism bears witness to the resourcefulness of Theophrastus as a logician.

In what follows I propose to reconstruct the theory of prosleptic syllogisms to the extent to which the scarcity of textual evidence permits, and to examine it from the point of view of modern logic.

2. A very brief and fragmentary exposition of the theory of the prosleptic syllogisms can be found in the anonymous scholium preserved in the Codex Parisinus Graecus 2064, f. 261v-263v, and published by M. Wallies in the Preface to his edition of *Ammonii in Aristotelis Analyticorum Priorum Librum I Commentarium, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, Vol. 4, pt. 6, Berolini 1899, p. IX sq. The scholium is entitled 'On all the forms of syllogism' (Περὶ τῶν εἰδῶν πάντων τοῦ συλλογισμοῦ). It consists of three parts. Having stated that there are three forms of simple syllogism, the categorical, the hypothetical, and the prosleptic,¹ the anonymous scholiast