Hermann Weidemann’s new Teubner edition of Aristotle’s *De interpretatione* is the first critical edition of the whole treatise based on adequate evidence. It relies on more manuscripts than the 1949 OCT by Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, which limited its use of the direct tradition to just two mss. On the other hand, Weidemann’s edition also improves on Elio Montanari’s 1984/1988 edition of chs. 1–4 (‘La sezione linguistica del *Peri hermeneias* di Aristotele. Volume primo: Il testo, Volume secondo: Il commento’, Florence), which took into account more mss. than Minio-Paluello, by considering some additional material and especially by being a complete edition of the treatise. These features, together with the care and exactitude with which the evidence is set out, already suffice to make the appearance of this edition a welcome event in Aristotelian studies. A further asset is the simultaneous publication of the «dritte Auflage» of Weidemann’s translation and commentary (‘Aristoteles: Peri Hermeneias’, Boston/Berlin 2014), which can be studied in parallel with the critical edition. Indeed, even more recently Weidemann has also published an abridged and revised version of both edition and commentary in the Tusculum series (‘Aristoteles: Hermeneutik / Peri hermeneias’, Berlin/Boston 2015). In what follows I shall illustrate in more detail the edition’s main characteristics. My discussion will bring to light both some further merits and some questionable aspects of Weidemann’s work.

I. The manuscripts: Weidemann of course uses the two manuscripts which Minio-Paluello regarded as sufficient to represent the whole direct tradition, i.e. B = Marc. gr. 201, coll. 780 (written in 954) and n = Ambros. L 93 sup. (9th/10th c.). But, like Montanari before him, he reinstates others which had been used by previous editors: A = Vat. Urb. gr. 35 (completed between 888 and 902); C = Par. Coisl. 330 (11th c.); d = Laur. 72.5 (10th c.). He also uses V = Vat. Barber. gr. 87 (9th/10th c., ‘R’ in Montanari, who was the first to collate it). Moreover, Weidemann is the first editor who relies on two further mss.: Q = fragments from a lost palimpsest from Damascus (9th c., collated in 2000 by Dieter Harlfinger on the basis of extant photographs); S = fragments from the ms. Sinaiticus gr. N(éa) E(υρήματα) M 138 (9th/10th c.).

Now, Weidemann’s selection of mss. is the first problematic point we encounter. As a matter of fact he seems to have decided not to take systematically into account any witness later than the eleventh century. This was already Montanari’s avowed policy (vol. 1, 52–4). Montanari, however, acknowledged «l’arbitrarietà di tale scelta» and at the same time tried to justify it, especially by pointing out that from the thirteen century onwards the number of mss. becomes too huge. Weidemann, by contrast, provides no such explanation and makes no attempt to account for his restriction of the evidence – although his reasons were presumably the same as Montanari’s. His silence on this point is all the more surprising in the light of two further facts. First, while Montanari (vol. 1, 46–51), following Minio-Paluello (xix), regarded the transmission of *De int.* as too heavy.

My thanks to Jonathan Barnes for searching written comments and to an audience in Lille for discussion.
ly contaminated for it to be possible to form a clear view of the relations among mss., Weidemann confidently offers a detailed account of those relations, which finds expression in an intricate stemma. One would therefore expect such an account to be grounded also in an investigation of the later mss. – or accompanied by an explanation of why they have been left aside. Secondly, in several cases (17b17–18, 23a3/8, 24b4, 24b5) Weidemann makes crucial use of some recentiores: Par. gr. 1843 (12th c.); Basil. gr. F II 21 (12th/13th c.); Laur. 72.3 (13th c.); Oxford, New College 225 (14th c.); Vat. gr. 1693 (14th/15th c.); Vat. Pal. gr. 74 (15th c.). More precisely, he takes two or more of these mss. to bear the correct reading as against all or most other witnesses. He lists these cases in his preface (XLVI and nn. 131–3), and pays lip service to the adage recentiores non deteriores, but he gives no substantial information about these recentiores and how they might be related to each other.

As for the indirect tradition, Weidemann has used the standard witnesses, taking advantage of recent research – but also with some limitations. Here his sources are Δ = the anonymous Armenian translation (5th c.), for which he has been able to take advantage of Tessier’s studies; Λ = Boethius’ translation; Σ = the anonymous Syriac translation (which he ascribes to Probus and to the sixth century on the wake of work by Hugonnard-Roche and Brock); Γ = the Syriac translation by George, bishop of the Arabs (7th/8th c.); and of course the late antique commentaries by Ammonius (α), Probus (π), Stephanus (ς), and the Anonymous (τ). As far as Ammonius is concerned, Weidemann (XLVII) limits his evidence to the mss. collated by Busse for his 1897 CAG edition instead of following in the footsteps of Montanari, who collated more mss. It is unclear whether this also means that he has failed to use William of Moerbeke’s 1268 translation of Ammonius’ text more extensively than Busse did. As for Probus, Weidemann still depends on Hoffmann’s (1873) partial edition, which he corrects on some points (XXV); hence more progress remains to be made. Finally, as far as I can see, Weidemann does not mention the two Arab translations here (though see his Commentary, 74–7).

II. The stemma: Let us now come to Weidemann’s stemma, set out at XXVII and justified at XXVIII–XLII. As I said above, both Minio-Paluello (xviii–xix) and Montanari (vol. 1, 46–51) took it to be impossible to draw a stemma for De int. Moreover, Montanari (vol. 1, 46–7) denied that the tradition can be traced back to an archetype, on the grounds that «non si danno errori significativi comuni sicuri che consentano di ipotizzarlo». Weidemann disagrees. The alternative picture which he proposes is awfully complicated.

– There are conjunctive errors which establish the existence of a common source of the whole tradition, an archetype α. From α derive two hyparchetypes: ψ, a common source of the direct tradition, and υ, a common source of the indirect tradition.
– The indirect tradition, however, is heavily contaminated and, besides deriving from υ, also draws (in some cases to an even greater extent) on the tradition descended from ψ. Indeed, some representatives of the indirect tradition (Boethius, George’s Syriac translation, and Stephanus), besides drawing both on υ and on the ψ tradition, also offer some good readings which must come from an ancient lost source α, independent of the archetypal archetype α.
– As for the direct tradition, from ψ, via two intermediate steps η and χ, derive α and β. From α, via respectively γ and δ, derive mss. A and B; from β, via ε, derives n. The other mss. (CSVd) are contaminated: each of them depends both on γ and δ (hence on α) and on
ε (hence on β), A and B (which derive from γ and δ, hence from α) and n (which derives from ε, hence from β) themselves, instead, are not contaminated.

But α was contaminated: besides deriving from φ (and hence from the hyparchetype ψ) it also contained variants derived from the other hyparchetype υ, the common source of the indirect tradition. Therefore whatever derives from α – i.e. any ms. except n – may have inherited from it a reading which belongs to the υ tradition.

It is impossible to discuss all the nodes and details of this account. Some of Weidemann’s arguments contain obscurities (e.g. I found his statistical considerations at XXXIII, XXXVIII–IX less than perspicuous; nor did I understand what his reasons for hypothesizing β are, given that β lies on a single, non-branching line going from χ to ε'). Here, however, I shall just comment on a couple of relevant points. In doing so I shall, following Weidemann, write ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘n’ etc. to indicate that a reading is added either by the hand of the scribe of A, B, n etc. or by a different hand.

First, the reconstruction of the archetype o and the hyparchetype ψ. Weidemann marshals (XXVIII) a number of passages which, in his view, contain errors common to the direct tradition, in some cases (hence ψ), and even to the whole tradition, in other cases (hence o). In some cases he is certainly or at least probably right.

7.17b17–18. Here Aristotle characterizes what it is for an affirmative and a negative sentence to be contradictorily opposed to one another. Weidemann rightly rejects as meaningless (following P. Crivelli, ‘Aristotle on Truth’, Oxford 2004, 239–53) the vulgate text printed by Minio-Paluello, i.e. ἄντικε ἄσθαι μὲν οὖν κατάφασιν ἀποφάσει λέγω ἀντιφατικῶς τὴν τὸ καθόλου σημαίνουσαν τῷ αὐτῷ ὅτι οὐ καθόλου. In its place he prints a text which he derives from two recentiores and partly from a reading found in some ms. of Boethius: ἄντικεθαι ... ἀντιφατικῶς τὴν τὸ καθόλου <ὅτι καθόλου> σημαίνουσαν <τῇ> τὸ αὐτὸ ὅτι οὐ καθόλου. It is not clear whether this is really the best option available (see the alternatives in Crivelli); but there can be little doubt that the main mss., and most witnesses, share a conjunctive error.

8.18a21. Weidemann endorses Minio-Paluello’s deletion of οὐδὲ ἀπόφασις μία, which looks like an inappropriately repetition of the occurrence of the same phrase at the previous line.

14.23a38. Weidemann writes ποία δόξα ψεύδης ἀληθεὶς ἀντικε ἄσθαι μία (B'C', various recentiores – possibly a conjecture) in place of ποία δόξα ἀληθεὶς ψεύδης ἀντικε ἄσθαι (ABCdVΔΔΑΣΓυ), printed by Minio-Paluello. Aristotle’s main question here is just what sentence is contrary to a given sentence, and it is irrelevant which is true and which is false. Still, the following lines (23a40–b2) show that Weidemann is probably right: Aristotle inclines to frame the question by asking which of various possible false sentences is contrary to a given true sentence.

14.24b4–5. Weidemann writes τῇ ὅτι πᾶν ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθὸν [sc. ἐν αὐτῷ] ... ὅτι οὐδὲν. Here τῇ ὅτι is the reading of A, of some recentiores, and of Λ as against ὅτι ABCdVΔΔΑΣΓυ, ή V, and τῷ n'. Here Weidemann is right about both the text (the same as that of Minio-Paluello, who however presented τῇ as his own supplement) and the conjunctive error. I should only like to know more about how the correct reading reached the witnesses which attest it. He supposes that Λ drew τῇ ὅτι from the extra-archetypal source o: see XXXVI–VII. But what of A and the recentiores?

In other cases, however, Weidemann’s confidence is excessive, because it is actually far from clear whether the alleged common error is really an error at all: all that we have is either a highly controversial variant or a dubious conjecture by

1 Thanks to Claire Louguet for drawing my attention to this.
Weidemann himself or some other scholar. Ascribing stemmatic significance to such cases is perilous.

- 3.16b22–3. Weidemann reads οὐ γὰρ τὸ εἶναι σημείον ἐστὶ τοῦ πρᾶξματος ἢ μὴ εἶναι with Porphyry and other indirect witnesses as against the vulgate οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ εἶναι ἢ μὴ εἶναι σημείων ἐστὶ τοῦ πρᾶξματος – and also against the view of many other scholars, myself included.
- 14.24b5. Weidemann writes ἦ ὁτι οὐ πῶς, the reading of d, of the same recentiores as in 24b4 (see above), and of Γ. In place of ἦ οτι the other witnesses read ἦ οτι (Minio-Paluello’s text), or ἦ, or ὁτι, or ὅτι, or ἦ, or ἦ, or just nothing. Here a further problem arises: even granting that ἦ οτι is right, how can we be sure that all other readings derive from one single archetypal error?
- 10.19b30–1. Weidemann endorses Soreth’s deletion of the cross-reference to the Analytics.
- 11.21a19, 13.22b36–7. Weidemann unnecessarily emends τὸν τινὰ ἄνθρωπον ἄνθρωπον τὸν τινὰ <λευκὸν> ἄνθρωπον and ἦ εἶναι ἢ βαδίζειν τὸ ἦ εἶναι <ἡ μὴ εἶναι> {ἡ βαδίζειν}. This is nineteenth-century-style textual criticism. In the second case his reason for deleting ἦ βαδίζειν is the following: Aristotle cannot be saying ‘Not everything which is capable of being or walking is also capable of their opposites’, because everything that is capable of walking is also capable of not walking (Commentary, 411). But the transmitted text can mean, innocuously, just this: it is not the case that, for any x and any F, if x is capable of F-ing, then x is also capable of not F-ing.

Secondly, there is something quixotic about Weidemann’s stemmatic tour de force. The presence of contamination may sometimes project a distorted image of the relations between mss. and mislead us into reconstructing hyparchetypes which in fact never existed in order to explain the errors common to some mss.1 And even if we leave this worry aside, owing to contamination our choice between alternative readings cannot rest on purely mechanical criteria and has to be carried out on the basis of the usual intrinsic considerations: philosophical implications, fit with Aristotle’s style, lectio difficilior, etc. Only other things being equal can we let the stemma decide for us.

Weidemann seems to be at least partly aware of this. For he lists (XXXIV–V, XLIV) a number of cases in which, as a result of contamination, the correct reading is preserved either (i) by A against Bn, or by B against An, or (ii) by some indirect witness against all mss. He describes such cases as «exceptions» (XLIII–IV). But this is of little or no help in adjudicating individual readings; for we can never be sure in advance that we are not in the presence of such an exception. And the situation actually seems to be even more radical: according to Weidemann’s own reconstruction any single witness – whether direct or indirect – might on occasion be alone in preserving the correct reading. Which also means, incidentally, that it is unclear whether we really have to hypothesize an extra-archetypal source o as the source of the good readings in Boethius, George’s Syriac translation, and Stephanus.

There is no question but that the investigation of the relation among textual witnesses is a worthy enterprise. But I suspect that in this particular case – as indeed in many others – it belongs more in the field of Textgeschichte than in that of Textkritik.

III. The text: Weidemann is an interventionist editor. This may have already become clear by now. But besides the cases (discussed in § II above) on which he rests his case for the existence of the archetype ω and the hyparchetype ψ, there are many others in which he takes the transmitted text to be corrupt and endorses or (much more often) advances a conjectural correction. He does not explain what the difference between the two groups of corruptions is. Perhaps some of those which he detects, but does not reckon as evidence for ω and ψ, are cases of which he feels less sure. Some are large interpolations which he must take to date back to some ancient edition of Aristotle, and therefore to be too ancient for his stemma.

Interventionism is not necessarily a bad thing. Historians of ancient philosophy with little philological training, not conversant with the many ways of corruption, are sometimes hyper-conservative as regards textual matters; they go out of their way to squeeze some philosophical sense out of an implausible reading on the grounds that it is found ‘in all mss.’ – as though all mss. could not unanimously have a wrong reading if they all derive from a single ms. which happened to have precisely that reading. Therefore there is something liberating about Weidemann’s boldness. Sometimes, however, this boldness verges on temerity. This is no surprise to long-time readers of his commentary, where most of these conjectures (which constitute the majority of cases in which his text differs from Minio-Paluello’s) were first formulated.

— 4.16b32–3. Weidemann now endorses Montanari’s deletion of ἐν δὲ τοῖς διπλοῖς σημαίνει μέν, ἀλλ᾿ οὐ καθ᾿ αὑτό, ὥσπερ ἔριπτο, which he rejected as unwarranted in the first two editions of his commentary. The earlier Weidemann was, I think, right.

— 7.17b12–16. Aristotle rules out sentences whose predicate is quantified universally, e.g. ‘Every human is every animal’. According to the text of Bn and of some mss. of Δ (endorsed by Minio-Paluello), he starts out by claiming that ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ κατηγορούμενον τὸ καθόλου κατηγορεῖν καθόλου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθῆς, ‘Of the object of predication [ἐπὶ ... τοῦ κατηγορούμενου, i.e. of the subject] it is not true to predicate a universal universally’. This is unsatisfactory, because it looks like an expression of a genuine universal predication such as ‘Every human is animal’. Now, most other witnesses have a different word order and read καθόλου not after κατηγορεῖν but after ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ κατηγορούμενου. And among these, some mss. of Boethius and Stephanus’ lemma have καθόλου in both places: ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ κατηγορούμενου καθόλου τὸ καθόλου κατηγορεῖν καθόλου. Weidemann accepts this reading, as he also does in his commentary, where he ingeniously construes it as follows: ‘of that which is an object of predication universally [ἐπὶ ... τοῦ κατηγορούμενου καθόλου] it is not true to predicate a universal universally [τὸ καθόλου κατηγορούμενου καθόλου]’ – which gives the required meaning. Then, when in the next sentence (7.17b14–15) Aristotle justifies his initial claim, as follows: οὐδεμία γάρ καταφάσις ἀληθῆς ἔσται, ἐν ἣ τοῦ κατηγορούμενου καθόλου τὸ καθόλου κατηγορηθήσεται (again seemingly describing an ordinary universal predication), Weidemann brings this into line with the previous formulation by writing τὸ καθόλου <καθόλου>.3


2 For this atypical use of τὸ κατηγορούμενον Weidemann (Commentary, 212) aptly refers to APr. 1.32.47a40–b2.

3 This line contains two other editorial decisions. (i) Weidemann reads ἀληθῆς ἔσται with ACVdες as against the rival reading ἐσται, which was printed by Minio-Paluello, and which made Aristotle seem to oscillate between an initial claim to the effect that no sen-
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7.17b20–1. Here, immediately after defining contradictory sentences (17b17–18, see above), Aristotle according to all mss. claims that contrary sentences are τὴν τὸν καθόλου κατάφασιν καὶ τὴν τὸν καθόλου ἀπόφασιν. This is disappointing; for at 17b3–6 he has just characterized contrary sentences as stating something not just ἐπὶ τὸν καθόλου, ‘about a universal’, but also καθόλου, ‘universally’. Hence Weidemann emends the text to τὴν τὸν καθόλου κατάφασιν καὶ τὴν τὸν καθόλου ἀπόφασιν. This sets things right; but it is somewhat worrisome that the word καθόλου should have been the object of so many errors within a few lines, even in such a technical and repetitive context.

10.19b20–2. Aristotle claims of the copulative ἐστὶ that it τρίτον . . . συγκείσθαι ὄνομα ἢ ῥῆμα in a sentence. Weidemann rejects the most obvious construal, according to which the copula is ‘the third name or verb’ in the sense that it is the third among names and verbs counted together, and persists in his earlier emendation ὄνομα<τι> ἢ ῥῆμα<τι>: the copula ‘is combined as a third element with the name, or rather with the verb’. He does so because he ascribes to Aristotle the view that the copula is not a verb, while the complement ‘P’ in a sentence of the form ‘S is P’ or ῥῆμα (Commentary, 155, 178–87). The interpretation is controversial; the correction is uneconomical. I wish Weidemann had renounced both.

12.22a11–12. Weidemann deletes the last entry in Aristotle’s list of contradictory expressions: δυνατὸν – ὦ δυνατὸν, ἐνδεχόμενον – ὦ ἐκδεχόμενον, ἀδύνατον – ὦ ἀδύνατον, ἀναγκαῖον – ὦ ἀναγκαῖον, {ἀλήθες – ὦ ἀλλήλες}. He does so presumably because the members of the ‘true – not true’ pair, unlike those of the other pairs, are not mentioned either in the list of subjects of inquiry at 12.21a34–7 or in the list of implications at 13.22a14–22 (Commentary, 419). I am not sure that such a drastic measure is warranted. The ‘true – not true’ pair may be equivalent to ‘is – is not’, and the reason why it it not listed elsewhere may be that it is not a proper subject of inquiry here, but is included just to provide a parallel, as well as a contrast, with the modal terms: cf. 21b26–33.

13.22b38–23a6 πρῶτον μὲν . . . κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ εἴδος. Weidemann deletes the whole passage mainly on the grounds that it is too metaphysical for the context, which centres on issues in modal logic (cf. Commentary, 447–51; he is partly following Becker). Yet the passage seems to be presented by Aristotle himself as somewhat digressive and not completely relevant; and it is carefully connected to what follows by the correspondence between 22b38, 23a5 μέν and 23a6 δὲ. (Actually in the 2015 Tusculum edition Weidemann deletes also the δὲ-sentence – and together with it also 23a11–13 καὶ ὁπτί – ὅκινητος, 18–20 καὶ ἐστὶ – ἔστοικας δὲ, in an unrestrained attempt to expurgate the text from anything that has a whiff of metaphysics about it.)

13.23a21–6 φανερὸν δὴ – δυνάμεις μόνον: Weidemann deletes this too. Here the deletion has some plausibility and had been suggested previously: ‘This paragraph reeks of notions central to the Metaphysics but out of place in the present work and only tenuously connected with what preceded. It is safe to regard it as a later addition, whether by Aristotle or by another’ (J.L. Ackrill, ‘Aristotle: Categories and De interpretatione’, Oxford 1963, 153). Still, it is not impossible to regard it as a digression whose presence in De int. is made possible by such passages as 9.19a9–10 and (provided it is genuine, see above) 13.22b38–23a6.

14. Weidemann brackets the entire chapter, whose authenticity was doubted already by Ammonius and Stephanus and denied by Bonitz. I cannot properly discuss the matter here; but the chapter is really problematic.

14.24b5–6. Inside the bracketed chapter occurs the sentence καταφάσει ἐναντία μὲν ἀπόφασις ἢ περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ καθόλου, οὐν τῇ ὅτι πᾶν ἄγαθον ἄγαθον ἢ ὅτι πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἄγαθος ἢ ὅτι οὐδὲν ἢ οὐδείς ἢ αντιφασικὸς δὲ ὅτι οὐ πᾶν ἢ οὐ πᾶς. Weidemann deletes the tence with a universally quantified predicate is true (ὦκ ἔστιν ἀλλήλες) and the ensuing justification to the effect that there is no affirmation with a universally quantified predicate (οὐδὲμα ... καταφάσεις ... ἐσται). (ii) Weidemann pointlessly adds γε after καταφάσεις: see his Commentary, 213–14, for the apparently odd justification that only thus will καταφάσεις mean specifically ‘affirmation’ as opposed to ‘declarative sentence’ in general.
on the grounds that they «non ab eo, qui cap. 14 conscripsit, orta, sed ab alio, qui Aristotelis doctrinae peritior erat, addita esse videntur». Now, the chapter has apparently been arguing that the sentence or belief which is really contrary to an affirmative one is its negation, indeed its **contradictory**. Therefore, one may think, it cannot now claim that a universal affirmation has both (a) a universal negation, which is its contrary, and (b) a contradictory negation. Hence one might be tempted to get rid of (b) as Weidemann does. But this solution is objectionable. First, the deleted clause is anchored to the context by the contrast ἐναντία μέν ... ἀντιφατικῶς δέ. Secondly, if the chapter is the work of someone not well versed in Aristotelian logic, then why should we expect perfect consistency of this unknown author?

You may disagree with some or many of Weidemann’s conjectures. But reflecting on them will invariably enhance your understanding of the text; and he does an admirable job laying out the evidence you need to form your own view. From now on, serious work on the De *interpretatione* will be inconceivable without his edition.

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Die Einleitung (‘Introduction’, S. 1–14) beginnt mit Überlegungen zum Genre von Lycophrons *Alexandra* als typisch hellenistischer Kombination von Ele-