

“Aristotelian vs. Contemporary Perspectives on Relations”

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There is a longstanding tradition in philosophy according to which all relations can be explained in terms of individuals and their monadic properties. This tradition, which enjoyed ascendancy in the West prior to the 20th century, has its roots in antiquity, especially in the work of Aristotle, and received its most sustained development and careful defense at the hands of philosophers during the Middle Ages. In this paper, I provide a systematic introduction to the types of theory characteristic of this tradition. By drawing on the work of medieval philosophers in particular, I identify, motivate, and explain the most important points of difference, as well as the most fruitful points of contact, between Aristotelian and more contemporary theories of relations.