

Wilfrid Hodges: Where Frege is coming from

Abstract: What came next in logic after Frege is well known, even if his direct influence is often exaggerated. But there is less agreement about how he relates to his predecessors. Comparing him with German-speaking logicians and philosophers of his times, one easily gets the impression that besides giving original answers, he also devised his own questions. But if one takes for comparison the high points of the Aristotelian Logic tradition - and for this purpose I would include Ammonius, Ibn Sina, Leibniz and the Port-Royal Logic - we get a different picture. Frege's starting point seems to have been his own formulation of largely unspoken fundamental assumptions of the Aristotelians. Looking at the same tradition, his best predecessors often gave similar formulations. Seeing that, we can better appreciate the originality of his answers.