

The New Criterion

Poems

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Against the logicians

by [Eric Ormsby](#)

Logicians are predators. They pounce
on quavering fallacies. They eviscerate
shaky premises that wobble, poor colts on
spindle-shanks. Logicians are dogs
who disembowel the ambiguous, ermine-
throated ladies of inconsequence.
I'm leery of logicians with their
Chinese cleaver jaws and bone-saw fangs,
their claw curettes and scalpel talons.
They sever my fogs, they vivisect
my mists, they savage all my smogginess.

Yes, they are hyenas. After the lions leave
they sterilize the gut-buckets of the veldt.
They suck up red marrow for their syllogisms.
They cauterize horizons with astringent snouts.
The blatant, the vacant and the bald,
the gnawed, the scraped, the flensed, the pithed,
ignite their jubilation. They bask
in Namibian thistles. They gorge on horse
radishes. In the salt-flats of the zero
you hear their hollow yowls: *Barbara!*< ...

Eric Ormsby's latest book is *Ghazali* (Oneworld).

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