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*Routledge History of Philosophy: II. From Aristotle to Augustine*  
edited by David Furley

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The second volume of the *Routledge History of Philosophy* covers the eight centuries stretching from Aristotle (–383 to –321) to the end of Greco-Roman antiquity. This is not only a very long period but one which saw the emergence of various philosophical schools. In his general introduction, David Furley attempts an overall characterization of this period, paying some attention to its impact on later times and to the nature of our evidence, which is defective for the last three centuries BC (i.e., the Hellenistic period) in particular. Of the twelve chapters that follow, five, written by different authors, are devoted to Aristotle and the ancient Aristotelian tradition. The major Hellenistic schools—Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Scepticism—get one chapter each. Next are two chapters concerned with the sciences in the Hellenistic period. Two final chapters are devoted to Neoplatonism from Plotinus (205–270) up to and including Proclus (410–485), and to the Christian thinker Augustine (354–430). As often, then, by far the most space is given to Aristotelianism, although later developments, the subject of important advances in research over the past three decades, are not neglected.

This volume is part of a series intended for philosophers and students of philosophy, but also (so it is said in the General Editors' Preface [x]) for the general reader. It aims to do full justice to the historical context of the philosophies discussed and to bring out their persisting relevance to present-day debates. It seeks to do so in an accessible style, that is, without undue technical vocabulary. On the whole it is successful in these respects, although I suspect that readers of the 'general' kind will find certain parts rather tough. There is, for instance, a brilliant but demanding chapter by Michael

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Frede on the nature and motivation of ancient Scepticism in its different varieties, a highly complicated subject in itself. In general, the constraints of space that obtain here could easily have resulted in a concrete-like density not conducive to readability. Even so, the contributors, all foremost authorities, emerge gloriously from their task. I may single out for special mention the happy combination of conciseness and clarity displayed by Gerard O'Daly in his chapter on Augustine. The book is made still more user-friendly by good, up-to-date bibliographies at the end of each chapter, a chronological table of the main personalities and events, a list of sources, a glossary, and indexes of names, subjects, and passages.

By the appearance of this paperback edition, the *Routledge History* has come within financial reach of a wider audience. I would certainly commend it to historians of science looking for an up-to-date account of ancient philosophy. However, it should be noted that the book does not consistently trace the relations between philosophy and science in Greco-Roman antiquity. In fact Alan C. Bowen, in his chapter, 'The Exact Sciences in Hellenistic Times: Texts and Issues', argues that ancient science has been too often approached from the perspective of the philosophical tradition, in part because the philosophers pointed to special sciences such as mathematics and astronomy as providing a model for their philosophical method. According to Bowen, ancient science has a nature and tradition of its own that we are only beginning to understand [287]. For this reason, he declines to present a continuous survey of the period covered by the book, providing three case studies in ancient mathematics (Archimedes), astronomy (Geminus), and harmonics (Ptolemy) instead. I do not wish to detract from the value of such competent studies by a leading expert. Yet I am not convinced that the present stage of research on ancient science makes case studies the inevitable or even the most sensible course to adopt in a book of this kind. A more general, if at times provisional survey would not have been out of place. R. J. Hankinson in his account of the biological sciences (i.e., human biology or the physiological part of medicine) does take the reader through the whole period. Thus, he discusses landmarks such as the work of the great Alexandrian medical scientists Herophilus and Erasistratus (first half of the third century BC), who were the first to practise human anatomy and even vivisection, which was performed on convicted criminals furnished by the Ptolemaic kings. He

then explains the rationale behind the different medical schools that soon emerged, and ends with the great Galen of Pergamon (129–*ca.* 213), who in many ways built on the work of his Hellenistic predecessors. As usual, Hankinson focuses on methodology and causal theory, referring in the process to points of contact between medicine and philosophy. Thus, he rightly points to the Aristotelian inspiration behind the work of early Alexandrian scientists such as Herophilus, and to the interaction between philosophical Scepticism and the Empiricist school of medicine.

It is difficult to produce a book of this kind which is to everybody's taste. But, given the aims set for the series as a whole, there is a lot to be said in favour of this volume, providing as it does a well-balanced, judicious, concise, yet readable, account of an extremely rich period in the history of philosophical thought. David Furley is to be congratulated on this result.