

REVIEWS

A COMPANION TO ARISTOTLE

Edited by G. Anagnostopoulos, Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2009 *

Georgios Anagnostopoulos' Greek and American education, on the one hand, and his teaching and writing on classical philosophy of mind, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology and the arts and sciences, on the other, provided the requisite background for editing a comprehensive collection of essays on Aristotle's thought that aims to provide in-depth studies of the central topics of his philosophy. In addition, the success of the editor in lining up such a large number of contributors to author the forty essays of *A Companion to Aristotle* speaks to his ability to bring together many distinguished scholars who do not necessarily hold identical views about Aristotle. Yet all these essays rely on the same method—close readings of the Aristotelian texts and philosophical argument—, an approach that will also be found in the editor's earlier work (see Anagnostopoulos' critical examination of Aristotle's views on exactness and inexactness in ethics in his *Aristotle on the Goals and Exactness of Ethics*, 1994; the edited volume *Aristotle on Philosophy of Mind, Ethics, and Politics*, 1996; and his contribution to the volume on ancient Greek bioethics, *Bioethics: Ancient Themes on Contemporary Issues*, 2007).

While no single collection of essays on Aristotle is likely to include a study of every topic Aristotle touches on in his extant corpus, the *Companion* offers substantive discussions on nearly all the central topics of the Stageirite's philosophy, with essays on all the major parts of his extant works. The volume opens with two essays offering a systematic discussion of Aristotle's life and works and the relation of his thought to Platonism (Part I), followed by a number of chapters discussing issues pertaining to *The Tools of Inquiry* as Aristotle presents them in his *Organon* (Part II: five chapters on types of reasoning, demonstrative knowledge, knowledge of first principles, truth, methods of inquiry); a section on *Theoretical Knowledge* (Part III: seven essays on Metaphysics, three on Physics, three on Psychology and three on Biology); a section on *Practical Knowledge* (Part IV: eight essays on Ethics and five on Politics); and, finally, a section on *Productive Knowledge* (Part V: two essays on Rhetoric and two on Art).

The reader of the *Companion* will find information and interpretations about a variety of Aristotelian topics, concepts and problems, such as Aristotle's discussions of the abstract issues of being, substance, essence, form, matter, as well as other perennial debates related to the natural world, the faculties of the soul, the human good and excellences, the political association, the types of constitutions, the art of rhetoric, the nature and elements of tragedy, and so on. While the essays review the widely

accepted views on Aristotelian problems such as the above and analyze difficult arguments, they also often offer new approaches to analyzing arguments and articulate original interpretations.

To the above merits of the *Companion* should be added the inclusion in each chapter of a specific bibliography, listing the sources cited in it and additional works on the discussed topic.

Thus the *Companion* will be an excellent aid not only for undergraduate and graduate students but also for researchers and scholars of Aristotle's works around the world. The *Companion* is most welcome to Anagnostopoulos' Greek colleagues and friends, who, less than a year ago, dedicated a volume of *Skepsis* (XX 2009) to him in recognition of his many contributions to the teaching and study of ancient Greek philosophy.

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