

*The Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy*. Edited by JAMES WARREN – FRISBEE SHEFFIELD. Routledge, New York 2014. ISBN 978-0-415-99126-1. XXX, 693 pp. GBP 125.

*The Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy* is a comprehensive collection of essays on ancient Greek and Roman philosophy. The co-editor James Warren states in the brief "Introduction" that the chapters in the volume are intended to offer an introduction not only to "the philosophers from the period of, roughly speaking, the sixth century BC to around the sixth century AD", but also to "the practice of reading, thinking about, and engaging with those philosophers" (p. xxix). The latter aim that highlights the importance of interpretative and methodological issues to the study of ancient philosophers is distinctive of the present collection. Therefore, each chapter should be judged by reference to that aim, either separately or in unison.

In my judgment, that is an important aim. Whilst introductory works usually ignore scholarly debate on methodology, and take "standard" interpretations more or less for granted, the present collection aims to make transparent and problematize the way in which we acquire understanding of ancient philosophy. Some chapters of the collection achieve that aim better than others.

The companion is divided into five parts: I Before Plato, II Plato, III Aristotle, IV Hellenistic Philosophy, V Philosophy in the Empire and Beyond. The division is chronological and, I would say, typical of the genre in question. A similar structure can be found in other comparable collections such as *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy* (Blackwell, 2006), with which the present companion shares seven contributors. What is special about the Routledge companion is that each part except for the last one begins with a chapter that sets the stage for the subsequent chapters by foregrounding the interpretative and methodological issues in compliance with the aim set in the "Introduction".

A second distinctive feature of the Routledge companion is its comprehensiveness. It features no less than 47 full-length articles, which is substantially more than the "only" 35 items in the aforementioned Blackwell companion. As a result, the Routledge companion is in some respects more fine-grained in its coverage. For example, Pierre-Marie Morel discusses all major aspects of Epicureanism in the Blackwell companion, whereas in the Routledge companion, he has the chance to focus on ethics and politics as Tim O'Keefe takes the responsibility for discussing physics and epistemology.

In one respect, the Routledge companion is not only more fine-grained, but also more extensive in its coverage. By including a paper by Peter Adamson on the Arabic reception of Greek philosophy, it extends the concept of ancient philosophy several centuries beyond the sixth century AD proposed in the Introduction quoted above. There is nothing to complain about with this choice. On the contrary, Arabic philosophy can be considered a continuation of Greek philosophy. As Adamson states at the beginning of his paper, "To tell the whole story of how Greek philosophy was received in Arabic would be to tell the story of Arabic philosophy itself" (p. 672).

The distinctive features just mentioned are likely to explain why the editors and the publisher have considered it necessary to produce the present collection. It is worth noting, however, that even if the Routledge companion is more comprehensive than the Blackwell companion, for example, it does not follow that it is for that very reason more useful for the intended readership: students and their professors. I venture to conjecture that very few readers have the chance to delve into the entire collection, that is, 693 pages of densely laid text. Instead, I suppose, most readers will want to use the collection selectively. For that purpose, the collection includes a useful general in-

dex, but an *index locorum* is missing. There is no uniformity in the "References and further reading" section appended to each chapter. Few chapters include an annotated bibliography, which would have been helpful for a beginning student. However, the editors have assisted the reader by indicating the related chapters in the volume.

Having made these general observations, I will proceed to look more closely into some chapters. It is not possible for me to address each one of them in the present connection. Instead, I will choose one chapter from each part and make some observations on how they manage to address the methodological issues raised by the editor in the Introduction. I should like to add that my choice of the chapters is not based on any judgment on their relative merits in the collection. My aim is just to give some idea of the diversity of the papers.

In part I, Gábor Betegh addresses two different methodological issues in his paper "Pythagoreans and the Derveni Papyrus". He first raises the "Pythagorean Question" about how we can tell what is genuine and what is a later addition in our sources about Pythagoras' teaching. The question is pressing because the textual evidence that we have is strongly influenced by either New Pythagorean "aggrandizement" or Platonizing reinterpretation. According to Betegh, it is even more difficult to reconstruct the philosophy of Pythagoras than that of Socrates because, unlike in the case of Socrates, his immediate followers did not write anything. After discussing early evidence about Pythagoras, Betegh addresses a second methodological question, namely that concerning the criteria by which we treat someone as a Pythagorean philosopher. He singles out Empedocles as a controversial example because the ancient sources refer to him as a Pythagorean, whereas the majority of historians of philosophy resist this practice. In the rest of the paper, Betegh concentrates on discussing Pythagorean cosmology, relying mainly on fragments that can be attributed with some confidence to Philolaus, but also on a charred papyrus scroll that was discovered near Thessaloniki in 1962, known as the Derveni papyrus. To my mind, the most enjoyable part of this paper is the interpretation of the Philolaus fragments, a fine specimen of philosophical scholarship at its best.

In part II, Raphael Woolf discusses Plato's method of enquiry into definition. This topic is central because many of Plato's dialogues focus on defining what a given item such as courage or piety is. In other words, these dialogues attempt to answer a "What is it?" question. Woolf starts by arguing that when the Socrates of the dialogues asks his interlocutor to answer that question, he regards the method of "testing" or "refuting" (*elenchus*) the answer as a way of revealing an inconsistency in the interlocutor's set of beliefs, rather than the truth or falsity of some belief in general. Then Woolf proceeds to examine what constitutes an adequate answer to the "What is it?" question. The discussion is subtle and engaging, but it presupposes at least basic knowledge of several dialogues. That is why the paper can hardly be considered introductory in the sense of "introducing a beginning student to the subject matter". Furthermore, unlike in the case of all the other chapters of the volume, there are no section subtitles apart from Roman numbers. In my view, the editors should not have allowed this exception because that makes it even more difficult for a beginning student to grasp the structure of the paper.

In part III, Giles Pearson explores Aristotle's psychology, concentrating on the soul-body relation, perception, *phantasia*, and thought. In each case, he draws the reader's attention to an interpretative issue that has exercised scholars over the past three or four decades: the "Ackrill problem" about the contingency of the soul-body relation, the "literalism-spiritualism debate" concerning the reception of perceptible forms without matter, and the issue concerning the nature of the intel-

lect, that is, the claim that the intellect be not mixed with the body. Although Pearson, for obvious reasons, cannot properly take sides in these debates, he succeeds in outlining concisely the major positions that are being defended in scholarly literature. He concludes the chapter by reviewing Myles Burnyeat's contentious claim that Aristotle's psychology is no longer credible. Pearson has good reason to reject that claim because the claim is crucially based on a spiritualist interpretation of Aristotle's account of perception, an interpretation that oddly separates perception from the kind of affections of the soul that require bodily changes. And yet, as Pearson shows, there are other interpretations available that manage to align perception with those affections, and therefore elicit a much more favourable judgment on the plausibility of Aristotle's psychological theory in general.

In part IV, Katerina Ierodiakonou introduces the reader to Stoic logic and epistemology. The chapter is very clearly written, and covers all the elements that can be reasonably expected from an introduction to the subject. However, given the general aim of the present companion, it is disappointing that the author has chosen not to address interpretative and methodological issues at those places in which it would have been appropriate. For example, in describing conditional claims, she is content with spelling out the Stoic view that a conditional is true when the contradictory of its consequent conflicts with the antecedent (p. 448). But here it would have been illuminating to contrast this "non-truth-functional" understanding with the alternative truth-functional understanding that the Megarian logicians preferred. Philo of Megara, for example, held that a conditional is true simply when it does not have a true antecedent and a false consequent. Pointing out this controversy would have been helpful because we know that Chrysippus, the most distinguished of all Stoic logicians, criticized the Megarians' views. Note that Ierodiakonou considers the controversy, and compares the relative strengths of each view in the chapter that she has contributed on the same topic to the Blackwell companion. There she also gives a more detailed and accessible account of how the Stoics applied logical rules for analyzing non-simple syllogisms to simple, that is, indemonstrable syllogisms. Against this background, her Routledge chapter regrettably appears to be an abridged version of a more complete introduction to the topic.

In part V, Mark Edwards gives an overview of ancient philosophy in Christian sources. He chooses to treat in more detail five authors: Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian of Carthage, Origen of Alexandria, and Eusebius of Caesarea. The choice is well grounded, given the volume and importance of these authors' works. In each case, Edwards makes several brief observations on how they use philosophical sources for their own purposes, either in a critical or a constructive way. This exposition is most informative. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that a slightly different approach, namely a case study such as the one applied by James Wilberding in the chapter on the ancient commentators on Aristotle, might have been more effective.

To conclude, I think that the Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy is a significant addition to the genre, although, for the reasons explained above, it will not entirely replace some of its predecessors. Based on the most recent scholarship, it does, however, provide several new starting points from which a student can enter into ancient philosophy. But the companion serves no less more advanced students and specialists who wish to update their overview of an area outside their field of expertise.