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THE HISTORY OF  
WESTERN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

VOLUME 1: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

VOLUME 2: MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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THE HISTORY OF  
WESTERN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Edited by Graham Oppy and Nick Trakakis



VOLUME 1  
ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

ACUMEN

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## CONTENTS

<i>Editorial Introduction</i>	vii
<i>Contributors</i>	xi
1. Ancient Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction GEORGE BOYS-STONES	1
2. Pythagoras CONSTANTINOS MACRIS	23
3. Xenophanes JAMES H. LESHER	41
4. Socrates and Plato MARK MCPHERRAN	53
5. Aristotle SARAH BROADIE	79
6. Epicurus JOHN PENWILL	93
7. The Stoics TAD BRENNAN	105
8. Cicero MARGARET GRAVER	119
9. Philo of Alexandria DAVID T. RUNIA	133
10. The Apostle Paul STANLEY K. STOWERS	145
11. Plutarch of Chaeroneia JOHN DILLON	159

CONTENTS

12. Sextus Empiricus RICHARD BETT	173
13. Early Christian Philosophers: Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian ERIC OSBORN	187
14. Origen JEFFREY HAUSE	199
15. Plotinus LLOYD P. GERSON	211
16. Porphyry and Iamblichus MARK J. EDWARDS	223
17. The Cappadocians: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa ANTHONY MEREDITH	235
18. Augustine GARETH B. MATTHEWS	247
19. Proclus DIRK BALTZLY	263
20. Pseudo-Dionysius KEVIN CORRIGAN AND MICHAEL HARRINGTON	277
<i>Chronology</i>	291
<i>Bibliography</i>	299
<i>Index</i>	311

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Bertrand Russell's *History of Western Philosophy* (1946; hereafter *History*) provides a model for *some* of the significant features of the present work. Like Russell's more general history, our history of Western philosophy of religion consists principally of chapters devoted to the works of individual thinkers, selected because of their "considerable importance". Of course, we do not claim to have provided coverage of all of those who have made important contributions to Western philosophy of religion. However, we think that anyone who has made a significant contribution to Western philosophy of religion has either seriously engaged with the works of philosophers who are featured in this work, or has produced work that has been a focus of serious engagement for philosophers who are featured in this work.

Like Russell, we have aimed for contributions that show how the philosophy of religion developed by a given thinker is related to that thinker's life, and that trace out connections between the views developed by a given philosopher and the views of their predecessors, contemporaries and successors. While our primary aim is to provide an account of the ideas, concepts, claims and arguments developed by each of the philosophers under consideration, we think – with Russell – that this aim is unlikely to be achieved in a work in which "each philosopher appears as in a vacuum".

Again like Russell, we have only selected philosophers or religious writers who belong to, or have exerted a significant impact on, the intellectual tradition of the West (i.e. western Europe and the Anglo-American world). We realize that this selection criterion alone excludes from our work a number of important thinkers and religious groups or traditions, such as: Asian philosophers of religion, particularly those representing such religions as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism; African philosophers of religion; and individuals, texts and traditions emanating from indigenous religions, such as those found in the native populations of Australia and the Pacific Islands. Clearly, the non-Western world has produced thinkers who have made important, and often overlooked, contributions