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978-1-108-81985-5 — Pseudo-Aristotle: *De Mundo* (On the Cosmos)
Edited by Pavel Gregorić, George Karamanolis
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PSEUDO-ARISTOTLE: *DE MUNDO*
(*ON THE COSMOS*)

De mundo is a protreptic to philosophy in the form of a letter to Alexander the Great and has traditionally been ascribed to Aristotle. It offers a unique view of the cosmos, God and the relationship between them, which was inspired by Aristotle but written by a later author. The author provides an outline of cosmology, geography and meteorology, only to argue that a full understanding of the cosmos cannot be achieved without a proper grasp of God as its ultimate cause. To ensure such a grasp, the author provides a series of twelve carefully chosen interlocking analogies, building a complex picture in the reader's mind. The work develops a distinctly Aristotelian picture of God and the cosmos while paying tribute to pre-Aristotelian philosophers and avoiding open criticism of rival schools of philosophy. *De mundo* exercised considerable influence in late antiquity and then in the Renaissance and Early Modern times.

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PSEUDO-ARISTOTLE: *DE
MUNDO (ON THE COSMOS)*

A Commentary

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Preface

This volume has its origin in the 6th Conference of the Southeast-European Association for Ancient Philosophy (SEAAP), which took place from 4 to 6 June 2010 in Rethymno, on the island of Crete. The conference was organised by George Karamanolis, who invited a group of scholars from Central and Southeast Europe to present chapter-based papers on *De mundo*. Most of the contributions to this volume are descendants of the papers originally presented there. When Pavel Gregorić and Gábor Betegh each made a presentation on one half of Chapter 6 and independently arrived at interpretations that converged to a surprising degree (and were in many regards at odds with the dominant view), they decided to further develop their ideas in a joint paper. They presented their paper at a conference in Paris in February 2011 and then further developed it in the article ‘Multiple Analogy in Ps.Aristotle, *De mundo* Ch. 6’, published in the *Classical Quarterly* in 2014.

George Karamanolis organised a meeting at the University of Munich in July 2012 to discuss the possibility of publishing a volume based on the papers presented in Rethymno. A number of points were agreed upon in Munich: first, it was decided that the volume would be a philosophical commentary on *De mundo*, focusing on the doctrines and arguments actually expounded in the treatise rather than on questions of authorship, dating and the sources of the treatise, which characterise most of the modern scholarship on *De mundo*. Second, it was proposed that Hynek Bartoš team up with the Spanish scholar specialising in ancient geography, Irene Pájon Leyra, who was also invited to the meeting. Third, it was acknowledged that instead of using the presentation on Chapter 5 given at the conference in Rethymno, a paper would be commissioned anew.

Unfortunately, a number of events conspired against the successful completion of the task at hand. The commissioning of a paper on Chapter 5 failed, some papers were delayed, and we learned that Johan Thom had been preparing a new English translation and commentary on

De mundo, so work on the present volume was postponed for some time. Thom's book *Cosmic Order and Divine Power: Pseudo-Aristotle, 'On the Cosmos'* appeared in 2014 and was met with well-deserved praise. By late 2015 it had become clear that Thom's book – with an informative introduction to *De mundo*, an excellent new translation, brief notes and a set of essays on select topics related to the content and reception of *De mundo* – far from interfering with this project, would in fact be nicely complemented by the commentary presented in this volume.

In early 2016, Pavel Gregorić joined George Karamanolis as co-editor of this volume, the contributors were asked to revise their papers in the light of Thom's book, and Pavel Gregorić took up the task of writing the paper on Chapter 5. With some minor delays, the manuscript was completed and submitted to the publisher in autumn 2018.

We would like to thank all the participants in the memorable Rethymno conference on *De mundo* in 2010. We are grateful to Professor Christof Rapp for his assistance in organising the 2012 meeting in Munich and to Gábor Betegh for all his substantive comments, encouragement and generous help in the course of preparing the manuscript. We are grateful to the editor, Dr Michael Sharp, who guided us through the process of preparing the manuscript for publication, and to two anonymous readers for Cambridge University Press for their helpful suggestions. We are also indebted to Mr Anthony Kroytor of the University of Vienna, who proofread the entire manuscript and improved our English.

Abbreviations

General words and titles of ancient works are abbreviated in accordance with the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition). In addition, the following abbreviations are used in this volume:

CAG	<i>Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca</i> , 23 vols (Berlin, 1882–1909)
DG	H. Diels, <i>Doxographi Graeci</i> (Berlin, 1879)
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 6th ed., 3 vols (Hildesheim, 1951)
DL	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Lives of Eminent Philosophers</i> , ed. T. Dorandi (Cambridge, 2013)
KRS	G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, <i>The Presocratic Philosophers</i> , 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1983)
LS	A. A. Long and D. Sedley, <i>The Hellenistic Philosophers</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1987)
SVF	H. von Arnim, <i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> , 3 vols (Leipzig, 1903–5)