



# Necessity, Cause and Blame: Perspectives on Aristotle's Theory

*Richard Sorabji*

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A discussion of Aristotle's thought on determinism and culpability, *Necessity, Cause, and Blame* also reveals Richard Sorabji's own philosophical commitments. He makes the original argument here that Aristotle separates the notions of necessity and cause, rejecting both the idea that all events are necessarily determined as well as the idea that a non-necessitated event must also be non-caused. In support of this argument, Sorabji engages in a wide-ranging discussion of explanation, time, free will, essence, and purpose in nature. He also provides historical perspective, arguing that these problems remain intimately bound up with modern controversies.

"*Necessity, Cause and Blame* would be counted by all as one of Sorabji's finest. The book is essential for philosophers—both specialists on the Greeks and modern thinkers about free will—and also compelling for non-specialists."—Martha Nussbaum

"Original and important . . . The book relates Aristotle's discussions to both the contemporary debates on determinism and causation and the ancient ones. It is especially detailed on Stoic arguments about necessity . . . and on the social and legal background to Aristotle's thought."—*Choice*

"It is difficult to convey the extraordinary richness of this book. . . . A Greekless philosopher could read it with pleasure . . . At the same time, its learning and scholarship are enormous."—G. E. M. Anscombe, *Times Literary Supplement*

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