MICHAEL FREDE

Michael Johannes Frede
1940–2007

When Michael Johannes Frede died (11 August 2007), by drowning in the Corinthian Gulf at a beach near Itea below Delphi, Greece, the world of ancient philosophy lost the most accomplished philosopher and scholar, and one of the most distinguished and influential teachers, of the generation of specialists in this field internationally who began their careers in the 1960s and 1970s. He was born 31 May 1940, in Kreuzberg, a working-class district of Berlin, the first child of Roman Catholic parents (a second, Stefanie, was born several years later). He was brought up in Germany and educated there through the Ph.D. and beyond, emigrating later, first to the United States in 1971, then to the United Kingdom, where he was Professor of the History of Philosophy at Oxford University and Fellow of Keble College from 1991 until he chose to retire two years before required, in 2005.

In 1943, at the age of two, the apartment building where his family lived was reduced to rubble in an Allied bombing attack while his mother had taken him out for a walk in his carriage, so the family had to move, first to Lippstadt in Westphalia and then in the early 1950s to Hamburg, where Frede attended the Sankt Ansgar-Gymnasium, a Jesuit school, studying classics and the classical languages (*Abitur* 1959). At university, he studied first in Munich (1959–60) then back in Hamburg (1960–2), where he became a student of Günther Patzig; he rejoined Patzig at Göttingen in 1963 to complete his Ph.D., after a momentous year (1962–3) at Oxford, on Patzig's suggestion and with his assistance, as a visiting research student, working on his dissertation on Plato's *Sophist,* in consultation with G. E. L. Owen and J. L. Ackrill. This marked the high point of

Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy, XIV, 167–182.

Oxford's international appeal as a centre for study in ancient philosophy, and Owen's two weekly B.Phil. seminars during full term, one on Plato and the other on Aristotle, were major fixtures of the academic calendar, drawing graduate students from everywhere in the English-speaking world and beyond, including many who later became important scholars in the field. In these seminars, over a two-year cycle, all the major works of these two central figures in classical philosophy were read and discussed, with students being treated to Owen's philosophically brilliant and innovative insights on ancient logic, metaphysics and methods of argumentation in the Pre-Socratic philosophers and in Plato and Aristotle, delivered in gripping and scintillating readings and discussions of particular Platonic dialogues or particular topics in Aristotle's physics, metaphysics, ethics and other works, as their turn came up as the cycle progressed. Frede regularly attended both seminars during his time in Oxford, as well as having regular private meetings with his two advisers, and getting to know and engaging in discussions with the other graduate students who flocked around Owen and Ackrill. In the two-year period 1961–3 these included many who later became among the most important figures in the field of ancient philosophy, including Richard Sorabji, William Charlton, David Bostock, Christopher Taylor, Russell Dancy, and myself, among others.

When Frede returned to Germany, fortified by his Oxford experiences, it was to Göttingen, not Hamburg, that he went, bringing a dissertation on Plato's *Sophist* well in hand; beginning with the winter semester of 1963, Patzig had been called back there, where he had studied for his own Ph.D., as Professor of Philosophy, in succession to his own Doktorvater, Josef König. According to Professor Dorothea Frede, Frede worked intently over the next three years on his dissertation, while attending the usual seminars and *Oberseminars* of the professors (especially Patzig's *Oberseminar* which was by invitation only and always dealt with a text of Greek philosophy), but also, most importantly, taking part in a reading group of philosophy and classics students and lecturers that met at Patzig's house once a week to read and discuss together texts of Greek philosophy, in an informal and open atmosphere that encouraged the formation of a well-knit group for further discussions outside those meetings, just the sort of cooperative work at which Frede excelled and in which he thrived. In his second year the reading group community was joined by Dorothea von Nicolai (later Frede: she and Michael married in summer 1966), as well as Gisela Striker, forming an eventual trio of very distinguished Patzig Ph.D.s (1966, 1968, 1969) that, as Patzig later used to say, misled him into expecting a continuing string of distinguished Patzig students

working in ancient philosophy that never materialized. Frede completed his Ph.D. in 1966 (for a thesis, submitted in late 1965, entitled in English translation, 'Predication and existence-statement: Plato's use of '. . . is . . .' and '. . . is not . . .' in the *Sophist*'); Patzig immediately appointed him *assistent* (assistant professor) for his chair, with a teaching obligation of a single proseminar of two hours per week (Dorothea Frede recalls one of these on Plato's *Phaedo* and another on Aristotle's *Categories*), and the expectation that he would help Patzig with his work, especially by offering assistance in reading and selecting articles for publication in the leading journal for ancient philosophy, *Phronesis*, for which Patzig was at the time German co-editor, and helping to edit book manuscripts for the series *Hypomnemata,* a series of studies on antiquity and its after-life edited by Göttingen professors of classics and classical studies. In addition, as Patzig's *assistent,* he attended and helped organise Patzig's *Oberseminar* and, of course, continued to participate in Patzig's reading group and in the frequent discussions on texts and topics of common interest among the members of the Göttingen ancient philosophy community. For the rest, with Patzig's encouragement, he devoted himself to his own work.

This idyllic existence lasted only about two years: Frede, on the strong recommendation of Owen, was invited to spend the 1968–9 academic year at the University of California at Berkeley as visiting assistant professor of philosophy, which led to a subsequent invitation to join the philosophy department as a regular assistant professor, which he did beginning in fall term 1971. After his return to Göttingen in autumn 1969, according to Dorothea Frede, Patzig treated him like a future colleague, making even fewer demands on his time and encouraging him to begin work on a *Habilitationsschrift* on Stoic logic; during the interval between his return in 1969 and the Fredes' permanent departure for the US in 1971, Dorothea Frede recalls that Frede only gave one proseminar, on Stoic logic, and cotaught with Patzig two *Oberseminars* on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Z–H, and Θ. Work on the *Habilitationsschrift* proceeded apace (it was completed in Berkeley and accepted by the Göttingen philosophy faculty in 1972). Frede's appointment at Berkeley was postponed, at his request, to begin in Fall term 1971. Among other reasons, Owen, by now professor of philosophy and of classics at Harvard, had invited Frede to spend the spring semester of 1971 there as his European visiting fellow in ancient philosophy, while continuing work on the Stoic logic project.

By the time the Fredes left Göttingen permanently for California together with their infant son Sebastian, Michael Frede already had a widespread reputation in Germany, but also in the UK and the US as

well, based on his early publications on Plato's *Sophist* and on his participation in seminars and discussions at Oxford, Harvard, various places in Germany, as well as several universities in California too during his visiting year at Berkeley, as a sharply analytical as well as philologically astute and well-informed philosopher and scholar of the highest potential. There is no question that should he have wished to he could have stayed in Germany and made a distinguished career there. But he did not like the hierarchy and constriction of German academic life, and he found the freedom and informality of daily life in California and in the US more generally much more congenial than life in Germany.

Already before he first went to Oxford, Frede had published in *Phronesis* an important article deriving from his early work in Hamburg on Plato's *Sophist* ('Bemerkungen zum Text der Aporienpassage in Platons *Sophistes*').[1] This concerns two nearby passages (*Soph.* 238b2–239a3, 240b7–13) of the first, preliminary part of the long concluding section of the dialogue, in which the unnamed Eleatic philosopher discusses and investigates the natures of being and not-being, and, on the basis of a new theory he develops of being and of not-being, then argues that sophistry is to be defined as an expertise in deceit about morally and politically important matters. About the first of these two early passages Frede argues, completely convincingly, that in light of a proper philosophical appreciation of what the Eleatic and his interlocutor Theaetetus have just been agreeing (238b2–239a2), the text of all our mss at 239a3 requires a different and much more interesting, readily available emendation than a previous commentator (Cornford) who (rightly, as Frede clearly and convincingly explains) recognized a manuscript error, thought.[2] Elegant and professionally satisfying though Frede's suggestion in this case is, the Eleatic's overall argument is, however, not significantly changed if one adopts it. More consequential issues for the interpretation of the dialogue hang upon the correct textual readings in the second passage, to which Frede applies the same fruitful combination of philosophical acumen and philological sophistication as he shows in his treatment of this first one. Here, he argues that editors since the early nineteenth century have wrongly felt required to offer emendations at three places in the received text (including the extreme measure of even reassigning to Theaetetus as

[1] *Phronesis*, 7 (1962), 132–5.

[2] D. B. Robinson and W. S. M. Nicoll in the revised Oxford Classical Texts of the *Sophist* (Oxford, 1995) strangely seem ignorant of Frede's proposal, which they omit to mention in their textual apparatus; they unfortunately adopt into their text Cornford's emendation instead.

speaker one line which the chief mss give to the Eleatic visitor). Frede shows that the texts of two of our oldest and generally most reliable manuscripts, belonging to two different manuscript families, give a text that is both perfectly intelligible and, in the wider context of what seem to be the Eleatic's argumentative intentions and accomplishments in connecting this preliminary passage to later ones, provides a much better sense. [3] I think Frede is undoubtedly right in these claims, too, although one might still find oneself inclining towards the emendations, which are plausible and do produce an intelligible and otherwise acceptable text.

In his dissertation (*Prädikation und Existenzaussage*: Platons Gebrauch von '. . . ist . . .' und '. . . ist nicht . . .' im *Sophistes, Hypomnemata* 18, Göttingen 1967) the same extraordinarily fruitful combination yields a ground-breaking interpretation of the Eleatic's proposed new theory of being and not-being, and of Forms in general, that in its main lines became right away the standard from which further work on this and related Platonic dialogues would proceed. Before Frede's work, it was very widely claimed, especially in the English-language secondary literature (and most notably in a well-known 1957 paper of Ackrill) that Plato in the *Sophist* draws sharp and philosophically systematic distinctions between an 'is' of predication, an 'is' of existence and an 'is' of identity. Frede offered convincing new interpretations of the places in the text on which these interpreters based these claims, according to which Plato's Eleatic philosopher is saying nothing of the kind. Instead, in these passages (254d–257a) the point being made is that the being of any Form includes both what it is just by being itself, i.e. in being that one particular Form (thus Man is whatever the definition of Man says it is, e.g. rational featherless biped), and also what it is 'in relation to other' Forms (thus Man is different from every other Form, by participating in the Form of Different and also the same [viz., as itself], by participating in the Same): on Frede's interpretation, for the Eleatic, to say of Man that it is different—for example, from Being—directly implies, or rather actually asserts, that it <u>is</u>, i.e. is a being. Hence, as the Eleatic concludes (256d–e), in the case of each Form (including the form of Being itself), there is <u>much</u> that it is (it <u>is</u> as many times as it is <u>something,</u> in either of these two ways). However, there is <u>even more</u> that it <u>is not</u> (because, in being different from each of the huge number of other Forms that there are than it, it <u>is not</u> each of those). Given this analysis, Frede can go on to show how on Plato's theory in the *Sophist*

[3] Here again Robinson and Nicoll regrettably show no knowledge of Frede's arguments, retaining the traditional emendations in the text they print.

there exists a specific Form, among the other Forms, which is, quite precisely, the Form of Not-being, namely one of the individual parts making up the Form of Difference: viz., that part of the Different that is specified as the different-from-Being, consisting in each and every one of the other Forms, in its difference from Being in particular. All in all, Frede's achievement in his early work on Plato's *Sophist*, achieved through the combination of philosophical astuteness and philological sophistication that I mentioned, both of them of the highest order, is a lasting and, even today, indispensable contribution to the understanding of one of the most difficult and important texts in all of ancient philosophy.

Though he continued to teach and write frequently on works of Plato and Aristotle, and their philosophies, throughout his career, already during his Göttingen period Frede began, quite unusually for philosophers at the time, to teach and write on Hellenistic philosophy, beginning with his *Habilitation* on Stoic logic, and did so with increasing frequency and emphasis as time went on.[4] Since, apart from three 'letters' summarising Epicurus' basic doctrines, no complete work of any Greek philosopher of the Hellenistic period survived antiquity, work in philosophically reconstructing and appreciating the theories and ideas of these philosophers requires in each case surveying and assembling for scrutiny a large number of mostly short passages, mostly from later authors, most often quite unsympathetic witnesses, who cite or discuss the contents of these lost writings—unlike for work on Plato or Aristotle or other major figures in medieval and post-Renaissance philosophy, for which we have ample complete writings to consult. Frede's method and style of work, combining as I have said philosophical talent of the highest order with philological alertness and expertise, was ideally suited for this work, and he excelled at it. Within Hellenistic philosophy, he devoted attention especially to Stoicism and ancient Skepticism (both Academic and Pyrrhonian), and especially to issues in logic, metaphysics and epistemology; there were articles also on Empiricist epistemology, in opposition to Stoic and to medical rationalism. In the 1970s and 1980s, while still at Berkeley and after moving to Princeton in 1976, he published a veritable flood of articles on these topics, each one of which was immediately recognised in the field as a standard account, and as such has influenced deeply all subsequent

[4] His *Habilitationsschrift* was accepted by the faculty of philosophy of the University of Göttingen in 1972, leading to his promotion at Berkeley to tenured Associate Professor, after only one year as Assistant Professor; it was published as *Die Stoische Logik* in 1974 in the series, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*.

work on their topics, often of course by stimulating disagreement leading to new proposals. These included ones on the Stoic theory of causes, the Stoic theory of affections of the soul, or emotions, Stoic vs Aristotelian syllogistic, the (Stoic) origins of traditional grammar, the Empiricist attitude towards reason and theory, and several articles on the proper interpretation of ancient scepticism. These latter formed part of a very productive dispute about the nature of ancient scepticism among Frede, Myles Burnyeat and Jonathan Barnes, which established the foundation for all recent and current work on this very active subject. Many of Frede's later papers on Hellenistic philosophy similarly attained the status of standard accounts, though of course (these being works of philosophy) often contested ones: these include articles on the Stoic conceptions of the good, of reason, of a lekton (a 'sayable'), and Frede's comprehensive account of 'Stoic Epistemology' in the *Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (1999).

By the early 1990s, when Frede left Princeton, to which he had moved as successor to Gregory Vlastos upon Vlastos' retirement, for Oxford, he had already begun to teach and write extensively also on post-Hellenistic, late ancient philosophy—the Middle Platonism of Plotinus' predecessors such as Plutarch and Numenius, and the neo-Platonism of Plotinus and his successors, which were at the time an area of the history of philosophy very much neglected by philosophically, as opposed to theologically, oriented scholars; in his last years he was drawn through these studies to expand his active interests to include the philosophical theology of the Christian Church Fathers and their pagan Greek opponents. (I return to this final stage below.)

Frede approached all his work, from the very beginning, whether on Plato or Aristotle or Hellenistic or late ancient Philosophy, with—in my experience in this field—a uniquely self-conscious, quite distinctive conception of what a philosophical study in the history of philosophy ought to try to achieve, and both how to go about it and how not to, which he articulated, explained and defended in mid-career in several contexts (first in the introductory essay, 'The Study of Ancient Philosophy,' to a collection of seventeen of his early papers, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis, MN, 1987), then in an American Philosophical Association symposium paper printed in *The Journal of Philosophy* (1988), in French in *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* (1992), and most comprehensively in his so-far unpublished Nelly Wallace Lectures in the Faculty of Literae Humaniores at Oxford in 1990). He practised one kind of what he calls the philosophical history of philosophy, so as to distinguish it from social or

political history or other such historical investigations in which philosophy and philosophers are invoked for their explanatory connections in one direction or another to political or social or educational, or even literary, developments of historical interest from the point of view of such other historical studies. Indeed, in the Introduction to his collection of essays cited above he declared his interest in ancient philosophy to be neither an interest directly in philosophy itself nor part of an interest in the history of philosophy in general, but an historical interest specifically in ancient philosophy, including an acute interest in all the other histories of antiquity in which philosophy and philosophers are or might be cited, as such, as playing a role (see also Frede's 'Figures du Philosophe' in *Le Savoir Grec*—edited by Brunschwig and Lloyd, Paris, 1996, and later translated into English and other European languages). As for the philosophical history of philosophy which, as concerns specifically ancient philosophy, was the main focus of his own work, Frede explains that as being a study of the philosophy of the past considered as philosophy, that is, as work arguing for philosophical conclusions on philosophical questions, as philosophy itself has defined what those are, arguing for those conclusions on the basis of reasons and via modes of argument given in support of them that count as specifically philosophical ones, as, again, the philosophical tradition itself determines what counts as such, such a study being conducted by philosophers through an interest in the philosophical past, considered as philosophy.

The kind of philosophical history of ancient philosophy he favoured, and promoted in all his work with his many Ph.D. students throughout his career, involved seeking to reconstruct the philosophical views of a specific philosopher of antiquity or philosophical movement and the modes of argumentation employed by them, in terms of the surrounding philosophy at their specific time, and in terms of the history of philosophy in the ancient tradition that preceded them. If, as often happens when studying the philosophical thought of a time so far distant from our own, we see what seem clearly to us bad reasons or grossly inadequate ones being advanced by an ancient philosopher and seeming to have been persuasive to his contemporaries, Frede wanted to know how, in philosophical terms, it came about that those reasons were regarded as carrying that weight at that time. This is a doubly internal history of ancient philosophy: it investigates ancient philosophers and ancient philosophical theories not just philosophically, but also in relation to the standards for philosophical argument holding sway and to the prior history of philosophy, at the specific places and times where the philosophers in question worked.

Frede contrasted this practice of the philosophical history of philosophy with another, also philosophical, sort of study of the history of philosophy, one particularly popular in recent and current times, in which the historian begins from engagement in their own contemporary philosophical questions and issues and seeks to find in previous philosophers' work arguments, theories and ideas which the historian can use to make contributions of their own to current debates of their own time. Frede did not totally disparage such studies (he remarks once, in his French article, that it seems to him that Aristotle's ethical theory can measure up, as a viable theory in our current philosophical context, to any other one now being advanced in our contemporary philosophy), but he did think that there was much more of philosophical value to be achieved in work on ancient philosophy through his preferred sort of philosophical history, because by showing us the interest and philosophical excellence of ancient philosophical ideas, with their grounding in ancient philosophy's own evolving history, besides showing us the philosophical viability of markedly different philosophical ideas from our own, based on different basic assumptions than ours, however strange to us nowadays, and even in some cases totally outdated in terms of current science, it constantly makes us aware of the contingency of our own current standards, which are certainly themselves evolving in for us unpredictable ways, and gives us the means of recovering the philosophically very interesting steps by which our own current philosophy, with its own standards and commitments, came into being, through a constant evolution, from the earliest philosophers to the present.

I can illustrate these two differing sorts of philosophical history of ancient philosophy by considering briefly Frede's intentions and accomplishments in *Die Stoische Logik*, as opposed to those of a contemporary logician and philosopher of language, in reconstructing Stoic logical theory. Frede remarks in his preface to the book that up to his time Benson Mates's 1953 book *Stoic Logic* (Berkeley, CA), the first full-length study of the subject, along with Martha Kneale's sections on Stoic logic in her and her husband William Kneale's 1962 *The Development of Logic* (Oxford), had contributed the most to our understanding of this part of the history of philosophy. So far as concerns Mates, as Ian Mueller correctly noted in his 1977 *Philosophical Review* review, Frede's book

> . . . should not be seen as a replacement for or alternative to Mates's. The philosopher looking for a clear survey of Stoic logic should still turn first to Mates. . . . Mates used his knowledge of modern logic and semantics to produce a coherent logical and linguistic theory out of the isolated, hostile, and sometimes incomprehensible reports which constitute our evidence concerning Stoic

> logic, [with the result that] there are places in his book where an analogy with a modern idea seems to be his strongest evidence for attributing an idea to the Stoics.

For example, Mates adopts the modern terminology of 'propositions' in referring to what in the Stoics' technical Greek are *axiômata*, the thought-contents or meanings of sentences that express assertions, which, among other things, when connected together by conjunctions such as 'if . . . then, . . .', 'or' and 'and', form the basis of modern propositional logic, an interesting forerunner of which Mates found in the Stoic theory of logically valid inferences. But he did this without regard to the fact that, for the Stoics, the same *axiôma* could have different truth-values at different times (for example the thought expressed in an assertion of the sentence 'it is daytime'), and that an *axiôma* can even perish: *axiômata* have these, to us, strange features because on the Stoic theory of meaning an *axiôma* contains a tense indicator, and can include what we nowadays call an indexical (expressed by a demonstrative pronoun). Hence the true thought about someone dead that he is dead cannot be expressed with the sentence 'that man is dead', but only with his proper name or a definite description such as 'the man I met yesterday'. The false thought 'this man is dead', referring to someone present to the speaker when they think it, has perished by the following day if the one in question dies later on the day on which it was thought, which is why it isn't any longer thinkable the next day. There are many other such discrepancies, including the fact that there is strong evidence that Chrysippus, the most important Stoic philosopher of logic and language, did not construe the sentential connectives 'or' and 'if . . . , then . . .' truth-functionally, in the modern manner, as Mates accordingly construes them in his reconstruction of Stoic theory. Frede's book rigorously avoids all such idealisations, valuable and necessary as they nonetheless are from a contemporary logician's or philosopher of language's approach to the study of Stoic logic. By contrast, Frede's interest is in the relevant Stoic theories as they were developed by the Stoics themselves in their own historical context and as they were understood by themselves, and in helping us to understand <u>why</u> (i.e. for what philosophical reasons) they developed and understood their theories in just the way they did. He succeeded brilliantly in this effort, through a patient and penetrating, fresh examination of <u>all</u> the ancient evidence bearing on these topics, while explaining and leaving open all the questions of interpretation of Chrysippus' and other deviating Stoics' intentions where the evidence, when interpreted with the requisite

philosophical care, is indecisive. Accordingly, a great merit of this and Frede's other work on Stoic logic, philosophy of language and logic, metaphysics and epistemology, is that through its thoroughness and care in identifying issues, both ones he regarded as open and those he adopted decisive opinions upon, it opened the way to fruitful work by others proposing reconsiderations and differing interpretations of all the crucial issues. By laying out the issues and the alternatives for interpretation in this comprehensive way, Frede's work on Stoicism has been a decisive factor in the recent, current and ongoing healthy and productive state of scholarly studies on these aspects of Hellenistic philosophy.

While still at Princeton, Frede spent a leave year (1984–5) as Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, researching and preparing with Patzig, also a Fellow that year, a joint text and commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Zeta, a revival of their collaboration in the joint seminar in Göttingen mentioned above on that important central book of the *Metaphysics*. During that year (he had already divorced Dorothea Frede), he met and married his second wife, Gabriele Thiede, who returned with him to Princeton in 1985, where their twin daughters, Julia and Natalie, were born shortly afterward. The year's work resulted in Frede's third major book, the magisterial two-volume *Aristoteles: Metaphysik Z. Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Munich, 1988), co-authored with Patzig. The book proposes a new and excellent Greek text that improves at over 130 places on the long-standard edition of Jaeger, through its well-argued lowered estimate of the authority that ought to be accorded to one of the main manuscript families, with the resulting raised estimate of the authority to be assigned to the two oldest exemplars of the other one, which the Frede–Patzig text follows whenever they provide a grammatically possible reading. In their commentary they seek to find in Zeta a connected argument for a single coherent theory of the immediate source of the being of physical objects, instead of the exploratory, aporetic discussion that others have found in this book of a variety of points of view on what one might conclude after a final, postponed, metaphysical analysis, count as the fundamental beings, on whose being all other realities depend. As one critic, Mary Louise Gill, accurately observed upon its publication, Frede–Patzig 'will be recognized as the classic defense of the thesis that Aristotle identifies *ousia* (substance, the basic and fundamental being) with <an > individual form (*eidos*)', an entity unique to each single physical object, separate and distinct from the matter of which it is made, distinguishable from every other such form belonging to other individuals of the same species by the accidental properties and history of that single object that

it belongs to, but without deriving its status as a particular entity from the attributes or history of the single composite object whose form it is. She goes on to say that the Introduction 'provides a superb overview of the argument and interpretive problems of Zeta' and that 'the commentary . . . is more thorough and penetrating than existing commentaries', and adds, in an accurate prediction, that the book 'will be widely used for years to come'. Though its main positive theses have by no means been universally accepted and virtually every issue touched remains deeply controversial, the book is essential reading for anyone working on Zeta or indeed the *Metaphysics* in general, since the main value of the book lies in the overview it provides of issues and alternatives for interpretation, as well as the value for readers of exploring its own interpretive proposals.

This is only one of the many important contributions Frede made as a mature scholar to Platonic and Aristotelian studies, even while devoting himself extensively to Hellenistic and later ancient philosophy: he published twelve important articles on topics in Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* some related closely to his work in Frede-Patzig (including three notable and influential articles on substance in Aristotle, and several other such ones on *Metaphysics* book Lambda), plus some others not so closely related, though still involving questions of metaphysics (especially noteworthy are four articles on Aristotle's theory of the soul and of the intellect); he also returned to the *Sophist* on several occasions, and contributed several noteworthy papers on topics in Plato's metaphysics and epistemology outside the *Sophist*.

However, as I have said, once Frede resigned from Princeton in 1991 (having been divorced from Gabriele Thiede-Frede, who returned with their daughters to live in Berlin) and became Professor of the History of Philosophy at Oxford, largely out of the wish and intention to refurbish and strengthen graduate work in ancient philosophy there, he worked increasingly on texts and topics in late-ancient philosophy and on the philosophy of the Church Fathers in relation to pagan philosophy. Especially noteworthy in this connection is a coedited book (with P. Athanassiadi) on *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1996) and his personal contribution to it. These explorations reached their premature culmination in Frede's Sather Classical Lectures at Berkeley in the spring term of 1998 on the topic of 'The Origins of the Notion of the Will' (published posthumously as *A Free Will: Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought,* with permission of Katerina Ierodiakonou, his literary executor, and edited from typescripts, with added notes, by A. A. Long, Berkeley, CA, 2011). Characteristically, Frede set as his task in the lectures

to answer these three questions: 'When in antiquity did one first think of human beings as having a free will, why did one come to think so, and what notion of a free will was involved when one came to think of human beings in this way?' He argues that this original notion was a technical one, not at all a notion from ordinary Greek life and language (merely cleaned up for philosophical use), and that as such it came burdened with quite particular and distinctive philosophical assumptions belonging to the ancient philosophical tradition and not at all necessarily ones we could accept. He opposes the prevalent view, most effectively argued for by the distinguished classicist, Albrecht Dihle, in his own Sather Lectures (published Berkeley, CA, in 1982 as *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*), that it was St Augustine who discovered the idea of free will and was the first philosopher who employed it, in his attempts to come to terms philosophically with the Christian doctrines of divine providence and original sin. Instead, Frede argues, the notion emerged gradually in pagan philosophy and in earlier work by Christian writers (for example Origen in the third century), and already existed in full-blown form in pagan Greek philosophy, most notably in late-ancient Platonists such as Plotinus: Augustine simply appropriated it for his own use. Specifically, through a careful examination of a large variety of relevant texts, Frede argues, with both great erudition and penetrating philosophical insight, that the classical Stoics developed the idea of the will, a technical notion that did not exist before them (either in Aristotle or Plato, for example), in the Stoic psychological theory of 'rational assent' to desires as required before any human action could be initiated, and that later Stoics, notably Epictetus in the second century AD, developed on the basis of that theory the notion of a free will, through the postulation of an 'inner' mental life as belonging by nature to adult human beings alone among animals: this notion was taken up and applied by Plotinus and other later ancient Platonists both to God (i.e. for them, the One or the Good) and to human beings, from whom Augustine then took it over, adding specifically Christian elements as needed for his own purposes of spiritual edification.

Frede, who had been elected to the British Academy in 1994, took early retirement from his Oxford Professorship in 2005, and moved to Athens, where his partner since 1990, a philosopher working on ancient and Byzantine philosophy, Katerina Ierodiakonou, had bought and renovated for his retirement a house high up the Acropolis hill above the Plaka. It was Katerina who in 1990 had first enticed Frede to make a visit to Greece; she was scheduled to speak at a conference on Samos and he came along, then a 50-year-old devotee of ancient philosophy who oddly and

very surprisingly had never before wished to visit the sites where his philosophical heroes had lived and worked. In these final years in Athens he made up handsomely for this earlier disinterest and neglect, as he visited and acquired a deep and extensive knowledge of sites on the mainland and the islands relevant to ancient philosophy, including Aristotle's home in ancient Stagira, not far from Katerina's childhood home of Thessaloniki in northern Greece. He became an active presence in the philosophical life of Athens and in Greece more widely, working closely in seminars and conferences with the professors of ancient philosophy at the University of Athens and the National Technical University, including Katerina herself, and their Ph.D. students.

I have already discussed the posthumous publication of Frede's Sather Classical Lectures as *A Free Will*. In addition, Katerina Ierodiakonou plans to edit for publication, from the manuscript, revised, from which he spoke, Frede's 1990 Nelly Wallace Lectures at Oxford on the historiography of philosophy. Two volumes of so-far uncollected papers are also planned: one, under the editorship of Frede's former student, Charles Brittain, collecting his articles on the Stoics, expected soon from Oxford University Press (OUP); and one collecting his papers on Plato and Aristotle, with a second former student, Hendrik Lorenz as editor. In addition, Dominic Scott has edited for publication by OUP a volume (with the title *The Pseudo-Platonic Seventh Letter*, 2015) drawn from a joint seminar on the topic given at Oxford in Michaelmas term 2001 by Frede and Myles Burnyeat, which consists of a readable exposition of Frede's presentations to the seminar, prepared by Burnyeat from Frede's manuscript notes, and a lengthy paper of Burnyeat's own derived from his work for the seminar, but written later. Though the original plan had been for Frede to argue the inauthenticity of this Letter, with its long excursus on Platonic philosophy, and for Burnyeat to defend it, shortly before the beginning of that term Burnyeat became convinced of the philosophical incompetence of the excursus and so to doubt the letter's historical value altogether; in the course of the seminar Frede argued that all of the so-called Platonic Epistles are forgeries, so in the end Burnyeat and Frede both agreed, and they argue there, with mutually supportive arguments, philological and philosophical, for the view, one that many readers of the book, including me, will welcome, that *Ep. VII* is not in any sense or degree the work of Plato himself, but is an outright forgery.

It was through seminars such as this and reading groups, from the time of his arrival at Princeton in 1976 and continuously after his move to Oxford right up to his death, that Frede won the allegiance and became

the dissertation advisor or co-advisor of the truly extraordinary number of his students who have gone on to occupy important positions themselves at major UK and North American universities (including Oxford, Durham, University College London, Cornell, Columbia, Pittsburgh and Princeton) and to become leading scholars in the subject, emulating their teacher through their dedication to the philosophical history of ancient philosophy in Frede's manner in their own teaching and research. The extraordinary on-going effect that Frede has had on current work in his field is even more visible in these students' teaching and writing than through the effects of Frede's own writings on the field at large, great as that has been. His former students all remark upon the unique hours-long private meetings in cafes or in Frede's home study or even by telephone that he regularly had with them to discuss their dissertations and other work in progress.

Frede participated in and gave his very influential paper 'The original notion of cause' at the conference on Hellenistic Philosophy at Oxford in 1978 that gave rise, beginning at a 1980 Paris conference, in which he also took part, and whose proceedings were published with the title *Science and Speculation* (Cambridge, 1982), to the by now well-established triennial conferences of the Symposium Hellenisticum, at one of which at Delphi in August 2007 Frede died. He was a regular participant in and often gave papers at these conferences since the Symposium's initiation. The Symposium Hellenisticum was itself modelled on the older Symposium Aristotelicum, also a triennial event, dating from a meeting at Oxford in 1957 that brought together for discussion and interchange British Aristotelians with Aristotelians working on the European continent. It later expanded its scope to its current global ambitions. Frede was a regular participant in this Symposium's work, too, beginning in 1978, and after 1990 he attended and gave papers on a regular basis; after 1996, he had an influential or even dominant role in the organisation of the meetings and the selection of topics and texts, speakers and other participants, as a member of the 'Nocturnal Council' that oversees the activities of the Symposium; he was co-editor of the conference volume for the 14th Symposium held at Oxford in 1996 on *Metaphysics* Lambda, besides contributing a paper of his own as well as writing an important overview essay on that book as the Introduction to the volume.

Finally, it is worth recording that Katerina Ierodiakonou has entered into an agreement with the British School at Athens to house together in their Library as the Michael Frede Collection, the 8,000-plus books of Frede's comprehensive personal library of texts, editions, and other books

and monographs on ancient philosophy and related subjects, to assembling which he devoted much energy, beginning already during his student year at Oxford, if not already in Hamburg. The books are shelved until she reaches 80 years of age in Ierodiakonou's Athens home where they were left at his death, but the British School's Library, where his papers will also be stored, already catalogues them and she makes them available for the use of scholars on request.

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Note. In preparing this biographical memoir I have been greatly assisted in different ways by many people. First, I am grateful to Myles Burnyeat, FBA, who had initially intended to write this memoir himself, for sending me a large file of materials he had collected for the purpose, together with the first few pages of a draft of his projected article. I have relied throughout for bibliographical information concerning Frede's publications given in A. U. Schmidhauser's online 'Michael Frede—a bibliography', as updated to 3 February 2011 <http://schmidhauser.us/2007-bib.frede.pdf> (accessed 24 March 2015). I have made free use of Wolfgang Mann's 'In Memory of Michael Frede', printed as the Introduction to what had initially been intended as a Festschrift of papers by former students of Frede's, but due to his premature death reached publication as a special number of Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy, vol. 40 (2011), *Essays in Memory of Michael Frede*, edited by James Allen, Ejólfur Kjalar Emilsson, Wolfgang-Rainer Mann and Benjamin Morison. Dominic Scott provided information about the forthcoming Frede–Burnyeat book on the Platonic letters. Dorothea Frede gave me or confirmed personal information, as did the Fredes' daughter Victoria, whose position as Associate Professor in the University of California, Berkeley, Department of History maintains the family connection to that university. Finally I had the assistance of Katerina Ierodiakonou, Victoria and Dorothea Frede, Benjamin Morison, Myles Burnyeat and Hendrik Lorenz in correcting errors in and vetting my first draft of the article. I thank all of them for their devoted commitment to making this memoir as accurate and complete as possible and for their help.