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### **Georges Canguilhem, 1904-1995.**

Canguilhem is known mainly as the intellectual *éminence grise* lurking behind some of the most influential post-World War II French social theorists, notably **Michel Foucault** and **Pierre Bourdieu**. Although he was an influential teacher and thinker, he published few major texts and, to date, these are not readily accessible in English translation. Born in south-west France, he was taught in Paris by the philosopher Alain, before entering the Ecole Normal Supérieure in the same year, 1924, as **Raymond Aron**, Jean.-Paul Sartre, and Paul Nizan. He wrote a postgraduate thesis on **Auguste Comte** under the supervision of Célestin Bouglé and taught philosophy at Toulouse from 1936-40 whilst commencing medical studies. He was active in the Resistance in the Auvergne during the Vichy regime and resumed teaching at Strasbourg in 1944. He submitted his doctoral dissertation in medicine in 1943. This was published in 1950, and republished many times after 1966 as *On the Normal and the Pathological*, famously, in 1978, with an introduction by Foucault (whose dissertation on madness and unreason had been examined by Canguilhem in 1960). He succeeded Gaston Bachelard as professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne in 1955 and retired in 1971. He specialised in the history and philosophy of science, with particular reference to the life sciences, publishing *Ideology and Rationality in the History of the Life Sciences* (1977) [1988]. He made important contributions to **epistemology** and his discussions of **health** and disease relate as pertinently to the societal as to the individual condition.

250 words.

Derek Robbins.