

Preface

THE brave, large aim of this book has been to bring philosophy together between two covers better than ever before. That is not a job for one man, or one woman, or a few, or a team, although it is tried often enough. So 249 of us joined forces ten years ago for the first edition. We have now been reinforced by forty-two more contributors for this second edition. To the 1,932 entries in the first edition, about 300 more have been added. Also, many of the entries in the first edition have been considerably lengthened and revised. Many others have been updated. The list of contemporary philosophers in the first edition has been adjusted in order to reflect what McTaggart denied, that time is real.

The philosophy brought together includes, first of all, the work of the great philosophers. As that term is commonly used, there are perhaps twenty of them. By anyone's reckoning, this pantheon of philosophy includes Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, the blessed Hume, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. These, together with others who stand a bit less solidly in the pantheon, are the subjects of long essays in this book.

Philosophy as this book conceives it, secondly, includes all of its history in the English language, a history mainly of British and American thinkers. In this history there are many figures not so monumental as Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Among them, if they are not admitted to the pantheon, are John Stuart Mill, Charles Sanders Peirce, Bertrand Russell, and, if an Austrian can be counted in this particular history, and should be, Ludwig Wittgenstein. They also include Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Reid, William James, and F. H. Bradley.

Thirdly, if the book cannot include all of the histories of philosophy in languages other than English, it does attend to them. It attends to more than the great leaders of the philosophies in these languages. Thus Descartes is joined by such of his countrymen and countrywomen as Simone de Beauvoir, Henri Bergson, and Auguste Comte. Kant and Hegel are joined by J. G. Fichte, Jürgen Habermas, Karl Jaspers and others. There are also general entries on each of the national philosophies, from Australian to Croatian to Japanese to Russian.

A fourth part of the book, not an insignificant one, consists in about 150 entries on contemporary philosophers, the largest groups being American and British. It would have been an omission to leave out contemporaries, and faint-hearted. Philosophy thrives. Its past must not be allowed to exclude its present. It is true, too, that one of these contemporaries may one day stand in the pantheon.

What has now been said of four subject-matters within philosophy as the book conceives it can be said differently. These subject-matters can be regarded less in terms of individual thinkers and more in terms of ideas, arguments, theories, doctrines, world-views, schools, movements, and traditions. This contributes to another characterization of the book, more complete and at least as enlightening, perhaps more enlightening. In particular, it brings out more of the great extent to which the book is about contemporary philosophy rather than the subject's history.

There are perhaps a dozen established parts of philosophy: epistemology, metaphysics, moral philosophy, political philosophy, philosophical logic, logic, the philosophy of mind, aesthetics, and so on. In the case of each of these, the book contains a long essay on its history and another on its problems as they now are, by contributors not at all new to them.

In the case of each of these established parts of philosophy, more light is shed by very many additional entries—for a start, by the aforementioned entries on the great philosophers, on their lesser companions in English-language history and other-language histories, and on contemporaries now carrying on the struggle.

In the case of each of the established parts of philosophy, there are also very many subordinate entries not about individual philosophers. They are quite as important and perhaps take up more of the book. They range from shorter essays down to definitions. To glance at subordinate entries just in the philosophy of mind, the two long essays go with such shorter entries as *actions*, *animalism in personal identity*, *anomalous monism*, *body*, *Brentano*, *bundle theory of the self*, *cognitive architecture*, *cognitive science*, and *determinism*, *double-mindedness*, *dualism*, and *duck-rabbit*. That is but a very small start on the philosophy of mind.

I have now said something of the philosophy which it is the aim of the 2,230 entries of this book to bring into clear view. But whose clear view? The book is for all those who want authoritative enlightenment, judgement by good judges. Thus it is directed partly to general readers for whom philosophy has a fascination greater than, or at least as great as, any other part of our intellectual and cultural existence, and who want accounts of it that they can trust. The book is also directed to those who study and practise the subject, and are scrupulous about their guides. If it did not also have the second aim, it could not have the first. No accounts of a subject can be authoritative for the general reader if they do not also attract and aim to survive the scrutiny of its experts.

If that is one description of the two classes of intended readers of this book, there is another quite as important. There are different ways of reading. The general readers and the experts can be taken together and then divided into two other classes of readers. The first class has in it readers who are on the job, the second those who are not. Not even your most conscientious postgraduate, or your academic of truly careerist inclination, or your zealous autodidact, is always attending to duty. Reading is not always work. Fortunately, it is more often not work. It is not done to get answers to pre-existing questions, to pass exams or write essays, to get promoted to full Professor. It is not done out of a stern determination to become informed, to pursue truth. To read is often to browse, dally, and meander. It is to satisfy curiosity, or a curiosity owed just to a page that falls open. It is to be intrigued by the sight of *affirming the consequent*,

agglomeration, American philosophy today, arthritis in the thigh, Baudrillard, beatitude's kiss, closure, feminist philosophy of science, quantum logic, slime, slingshot arguments, tarot, tarwater, Thrasymachus, vague objects, or the new Wittgenstein.

A Companion, then, in what there is excuse to call the correct sense of that sometimes abused word, is not only a book for diligent readers, to be studied and perhaps laboured over. It is not only a complete reference book. It is more amiable than that. It diverts. It suits a Sunday morning. Hence, not all that is in it was chosen by the high principle of nose to the grindstone. There are entries in it, as already noticed, that are owed to their intrinsic interest rather than their proven place in a sterner editor's list of headwords.

Only three things remain to be said in this Preface, the first of them about the nature of philosophy and hence of the book. Isaiah Berlin, one of the contributors, once characterized philosophy not only as lacking answers to many questions but also as lacking an agreed method for the finding of answers. (He may have had in mind a contrast with science, perhaps a contrast not dear, albeit for different reasons, to a fellow contributor or two, say Paul Feyerabend or W. V. Quine.) Certainly it is true that philosophy, no doubt because of the peculiar difficulty of its questions, is at least as much given to disagreement and dispute as any other kind of inquiry. In fact it may be more given to disagreement and dispute than any other inquiry. It has the hardest questions.

As a result, this book cannot be wholly consistent. Even with fewer than 291 contributors, if they were as committed to their views as philosophers usually are, and no doubt should be, there would be disagreement. There would be disagreement if the book was limited to the thirty-four Oxford philosophers in it, or, say, the various Californians. As it is, there are entries, occasionally cheek by jowl, that fight among themselves, or at any rate jostle. As an editor, I have not tried too hard to subdue or get between my colleagues, but only succumbed to a thought or two about *unlikely philosophical propositions*. (Nor have I bullied my colleagues about what sort of thing to put into the bibliographies at the ends of their entries, or ruthlessly excluded an entry whose subject is also treated, somewhat differently, somewhere else.) To do so would have produced more decorum but less truth about philosophy. It would also have touched what I hope is another recommendation of the book: it has not only different views but different voices in it.

That brings to mind a second matter, that of the 150 contemporary philosophers on whom there are entries in the book. The aim was to give to the reader, mainly the general reader, a sense of the philosophical enterprise as it is now being carried forward. (Philosophy, as already remarked, is not a dead or dying subject, but one whose vigour—I am tempted to say its youth—is as great as ever it has been. It is only the sciences and the superstitions that come and go.) Another editor, quite as sane, would have looked around at his cohorts, contemplated a reputation or two, no doubt mused on the fact of philosophical fashion, and chosen somewhat differently.

For the first edition, a list of contemporaries was initially drawn up mainly by me. The list was subsequently the subject of a kindly suggestion or two from possible contributors to the book who laid eye on it, and perhaps a letter or two of hurt pride or disbelief. Notice was taken of these pleas, in a certain way. The initial list of contemporaries was submitted to a jury of a dozen distinguished

philosophers from all parts and inclinations of the subject. They agreed about the large and indisputable core of the list, but not much more. They did not much agree about their proposed additions to the rest of the list, or their proposed deletions from it. No proposed inclusion or deletion got more than two votes from the twelve good philosophers and true. Any contemporary who did get two votes was added in. No deletions were made.

For this second edition, opinions were taken from thirty philosophers, of all or anyway various persuasions, as to how to make the contemporaries in the book representative of the new millennium well under way. The results of this poll contained some biffs to my loyalties and sensibilities. But, being a true as against merely a hierarchic democrat, I acted on the advice. Should you be certain, reader, that this little anointing is a very serious matter, remember David Hume, Saint David, the greatest of British philosophers. He did not get elected to professorships at Edinburgh and Glasgow, which accolades went instead to Mr Cleghorn and Mr Clow.

Finally, my gratitude, of which there is a lot. I am grateful to many people, first the 291 contributors. They did not do too much satisficing. Contributors to the first edition put up with a change of mind about entry lengths. Many of them put up with a lot more, including a lot of letters about revising their work or making new starts. Some were stalwarts who did a goodly number of entries very well. They rush to mind, and produce glows of gratitude there. Some were philosophical about the sad fact that their prize entry, say the Frankfurt School or the indeterminacy of translation, did not get into the book because the editor had blundered and earlier assigned it to someone else. Some contributors and others were decent or anyway silent when their proposed entries, say *marital act* and *Ayn Rand*, did not penetrate my fortress of philosophical principle.

My special thanks to Peter Momtchiloff, doyen of the world's philosophy editors, the Philosophy Editor of Oxford University Press. This book is almost as much his doing as mine, despite my sole responsibility for errors, infelicities, and one or two judgements with which he is not in absolute agreement. I am also grateful to the following fourteen philosophers who read all or parts of the first manuscript and issued proposals for its improvement: Christopher Kirwan, David Hamlyn, and Jonathan Lowe, above all, and also Simon Blackburn, Alexander Broadie, Jonathan Cohen, Ross Harrison, Ronald Hepburn, Michael Inwood, Nicola Lacey, David Miller, Richard Norman, Anthony O'Hear, and Richard Swinburne.

My thanks as well to the jury of distinguished philosophers who cast an eye over the initial list of their contemporaries, and then to the thirty advisers in this matter for the second edition.

Thanks too to all of these: Ingrid Coggin Honderich; Jane O'Grady; Alan Lacey, who did the Chronological Table of Philosophy and the Maps of Philosophy; John Allen of the library at University College London; Helen Betteridge, Vivien Crew, and Ann Wooldridge for some secretarial assistance; Tim Barton, Laurien Berkeley, Angela Blackburn, and Frances Morphy of Oxford University Press, all of whom were fortitudinous, and almost always right.