

THE FUTURE OF PHILOSOPHY

Towards the twenty-first century

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THE FUTURE OF PHILOSOPHY

Oliver Leaman

There are some events which have a future that is easy to predict. Many of the phenomena of natural science fall into this category, and their regularity has lent to the theories which describe them an enviable status. After all, if one can start off with a few observations, and then use a theory to make a prediction about what future observations will be like, and if one is invariably right, one can have great confidence in the theory. Once we move away from the natural sciences, though, it becomes much harder to predict the future. We may be able to form vague generalizations, but that is all. Philosophy is in a particularly difficult position here. It is not difficult to explain the changes in philosophy *after* the event, although even then the explanations may seem implausible. The trouble with predicting what is going to happen in philosophy is that the history of philosophy is rather like old-fashioned history with its fascination with outstanding individuals. The history of philosophy emphasizes the role of ‘Great Thinkers’, and it is impossible to predict the arrival of a ‘Great Thinker’ or the direction that he, and it generally is a he, will take. After the event one can find some sort of explanation for the existence of a cultural context which provides the background for the thinker’s ideas. But the explanatory power of a theory which operates only after the event is very weak, and is hardly worth trying to discover.

The position would be a bit better if there was some way of linking ideas with material events in the world, perhaps along the lines of some of the cruder Marxists. They sometimes argued that there was a close link between the material basis of a particular culture and that culture, so that by examining the former one could work out what was going to happen to the latter. One of the advantages of such a theory is that it downgrades the status of the ‘Great Thinkers’; these individuals only seem so remarkable because we do not properly understand how natural is their emergence from the material base. But this attempt at establishing a link between the material base and the cultural superstructure never really worked, and successive Marxist theories only succeeded in making it progressively more sophisticated, and less like an explanatory hypothesis.

We might try to link philosophical ideas with history in some other way, of course, and there have been plenty of theories which have done this. The idea that history is basically rational, and so its structure can be extrapolated into the future, is surely the basis on which most ordinary lives take place. We often tend to expect the future to mirror the past, or at least follow a comprehensible pattern, since otherwise it would be difficult to explain behaviour such as my writing this introduction, which is based on my past experience that the writing of chapters results, eventually, in the publication of books. More complex views of the nature of the future would make such assumptions less attractive. As Wittgenstein suggests:

When we think of the world's future, we always mean the destination it will reach if it keeps going in the direction we can see it going in now; it does not occur to us that its path is not a straight line but a curve, constantly changing direction.

(Wittgenstein, 1980:31)

PHILOSOPHY AND FASHION

Philosophy, like everything else, has its fashions. When one visits the philosophy section in secondhand bookshops one sees interesting-looking books written by people who were important in their time, and in which there is no interest at all today. The dust lies in undisturbed layers on these books, and eventually they are probably thrown away regardless of the grand university crests on their spines or their splendid titles. Yet why are these books now of little interest (actually, of no interest) while others of the same period, and much earlier, are of greater and continuing interest? They are no longer of any interest to any but the historians of thought because they do not raise the sorts of questions which currently interest philosophers, not necessarily because they no longer raise interesting questions. There are few more embarrassing sights than that of a philosopher expounding views and principles which simply no longer interest his or her audience. It is a bit like watching a speaker who appears to be good at what he or she is doing speaking in a language which no one in the audience can understand.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Is there anything about philosophy in the twentieth century which distinguishes it from earlier periods, and which indicates likely future developments? If a philosopher from thousands of years ago were to arrive today and observe the philosophical scene, would he feel at home? On

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thewhole he probably would. Plato and Aristotle would find that there is still an enormous amount of interest in their views, and in trying to get straight what their views really are. Even the Sophists would find much to support in the views of the deconstructivists, especially the idea that there is no privileging of particular points of view. The Presocratics might be pleasantly surprised at the amount of attention which is paid to their views today. Political philosophers from the past would discover that we are still interested in working out what the principles of the just society are, as are moral philosophers in the nature of duty and the ethical concepts attached to it. Epistemologists are still trying to work out what we can be said to know, and philosophers of religion continue to think about the nature of God and his attributes.

Of course, there are some new techniques and theories which would interest the visiting philosopher from the past. The whole area of symbolic and mathematical logic would probably perplex the visitor just as much as it does most of us who are not familiar with those areas. In general, the professionalization of philosophy has led to its departmentalization in ways which would seem strange to the visitor, and the fact that many philosophers today only write on one, perhaps quite narrow, area of philosophy would be novel. After all, most philosophers in the past covered a whole range of ideas and problems in their work, and would have felt it strange to be expected to deal with only a restricted number of topics. This is again a function of the size of the profession today, which consists largely of teachers who are paid to expound the views of others, rather than their own views. Perhaps this vindicates the views of Socrates, who claimed that there was no merit in philosophers being paid for their work. He argued that if philosophers were paid, then they would tend to produce ideas and arguments which they felt would be appreciated by their paymasters, and would no longer be able to range as widely as they would like over philosophy as a whole and express whatever views they wanted.

PROGRESS IN PHILOSOPHY

Does the fact that the visiting philosopher from the past would feel at home today mean that there is no such thing as progress in philosophy? One might think that if there is a constant examination and re-examination of the same questions with no generally acceptable conclusions, then this means that no progress has taken place. This is certainly how many in the public see the situation, especially when they compare philosophy with what they see as the progress which has taken place in the natural sciences. Philosophers seem to be arguing with each other over the same sorts of issues all the time, and equally intelligent individuals appear to be unable to come to any generally acceptable conclusion. The public tends to suspect this

sort of activity, which they often identify with politics, and they cynically attribute impure motives to politicians' variety of opinions. Of course, the fact that philosophers do not tend to agree with each other does not prove that there is no such thing as progress in philosophy. There may indeed be progress, and the fact that many in the profession are too benighted to appreciate it is neither here nor there.

There is a very popular trend in philosophy which does not look for progress in philosophy, but values the fact that the subject consists of variety and constant disagreement, and that is the trend which emphasizes the notion of philosophy as a form of literature. After all, we do not seek to criticize Tolstoy's *War and Peace* on the grounds that it fails to make much progress in our understanding of human conflict as compared, say, with Homer's *Iliad*. We accept that in different times different authors have expressed a range of views on important personal and political affairs, and we do not look to progression here as a criterion of success. After all, many would argue that a work of art can be deeply flawed morally and yet remain a considerable work of art (although there are others who for philosophical reasons would argue against this view). The notion of philosophy as a form of literature has the disadvantage of making it seem subjective, but this serves as an explanation for its apparent inability to come to any final conclusions about the main issues which it raises. After all, if philosophy really is just a form of literature, a particular type of cultural expression, then we should not be surprised that it does not lead to any final denouement.

Much philosophy does not see itself in this way, though. Most of what we call the Anglo-American tradition of analytical philosophy, although analytical philosophy really has far wider scope than this description suggests, regards philosophy as an objective enterprise, and the conditions of the validity of arguments are indeed quite hard and fast. The rules governing *modus ponens* in logic, for example, are hardly a matter of taste. This is not only the case in logic, but even extends to areas like ethics. A colleague of mine once got so fed up with being told in his ethics class by his students that 'everything is relative' that he marked the essays of the students by tossing a coin. If it came out heads he gave the particular essay an A, if it came out tails he failed it. When the students complained he replied that 'everything is relative', and so there could be nothing inherently unfair about his procedure. Indeed, he could have argued that his procedure had the merit at least of being entirely consistent, and not potentially favouring some students over others because he knew them to be good performers in class, or because he preferred the presentation of their essays. Many adherents of the analytical tradition are prepared to come to definite decisions about which arguments work and which do not, and also about which moves in philosophy have had a positive effect on the subject and which have not.

Yet even they would be reluctant to talk about progress in philosophy. They may think that a particular solution works, and so a longstanding problem has now been resolved, but they will often still respect the views of those who differ from them. That is, they will regard those views as irretrievably flawed, but not as a result to be dismissed. After all, it is the force of the flawed views which brings out what is held to be desirable in the correct views. They will also (usually) accept that someone might not be able to see what is attractive about the right view and yet remain a decent philosopher. This makes philosophers sound like a rather charming collection of liberals, people who admire the views of others even when they disagree with them. This is not necessarily the case, and there can be little doubt but that philosophers are given to exactly the same prejudices and irrationalities in their private lives and opinions as are the rest of the community. On the other hand, there is a general respect which philosophers have for those who pursue the *process* of philosophy, regardless of where that process takes them in particular. It is the theoretical nature of the subject which makes this possible, of course. Car mechanics and dentists tend to be very critical of each other's work, at least in front of clients and patients, but then something is going to happen as a result of that possibly bad work. A repair which is not done properly will result in the car not working, or something dropping off. A metaphysical error, by contrast, will upset the person who thinks he or she has discovered it, but nothing in real life hangs on it.

PHILOSOPHY AS TRIVIAL

Is philosophy then a trivial activity? It looks as though the argument here is that it is divorced from real life so anything goes. A better approach would be to suggest that philosophy tends to take place at such heights, or depths, of abstraction that it tends to skip the real world. Wittgenstein pokes fun at the strangeness of much philosophy when he gives this example:

I am sitting with a philosopher in the garden; he says again and again 'I know that that's a tree', pointing to a tree that is near us. Someone else arrives and hears this, and I tell him: 'This fellow isn't insane. We are only doing philosophy.'

(Wittgenstein, 1969: §467)

The moral philosopher Richard Hare once gave a talk in which he suggested that Oxford philosophy was so committed to understanding particular instances of real life because of the duties of the Oxford Fellow. This individual, on top of his regular academic tasks, had duties to his college which might involve climbing up a ladder to examine a roof (although

not presumably the task of actually carrying out the reroofing!) or examining the solidity of drainpipes in the quad. As a result of this, he argued, the English philosopher tends to have his, and it generally was his, feet on the ground, as compared with the continental variety who spend all their time in cafés drinking coffee and expatiating on the meaning of being and death and similarly airy concepts. One of the aspects of this talk which is amusing is the assumption that the life of a Fellow of an Oxford college is indeed one immersed in the practicalities of the everyday world, but it had a more serious point also. What is the relationship between philosophy and the ‘real world’?

There is the romantic conception of the philosopher as the other-worldly being who has no interest in practical matters at all. There are reports of the early Greek Sceptics actually living their scepticism, and not acting on any evidence which could be doubted. They apparently kept on falling into holes, since the observation of a hole in front of them could not be regarded as incontrovertible evidence of an actual hole, and they had to be rescued by their disciples who followed at an appropriate distance to ensure that they came to no serious harm. The disciples also had to persuade the sceptics quite forcefully that they ought to eat, since the latter were not convinced that there was real knowledge of the connection between eating and staying alive. Most philosophers do not live in accordance with their philosophies, though. Most modern sceptics are happy to sit on chairs and get into cars without constantly checking that they really are chairs and that the cars have engines in them, and it is unlikely that moral philosophers, for example, spend any longer on deciding what to do than do other members of the public. When new entrants to the profession go to their first conferences and see groups of philosophers huddled together deep in conversation they assume they must be engaged on some protracted philosophical issue, only to discover on coming nearer that they are discussing premature retirement, or who applied for the latest vacancy and did not get it.

We should not be surprised at this, since philosophy is far removed from the activities of the everyday world, in just the same way that the study of linguistics is very different from the actual practice of language. Philosophy is even more abstract in that it usually does not seek to describe the ways in which people use language, but rather sets out to evaluate those uses. An awareness of what goes on in the real world is useful in providing examples of issues to be considered theoretically, but it is not as though those examples will *lead* the theory. This loose relationship between philosophy and the practical world makes it look again as if philosophy is a trivial activity, a subject in which virtually anything can be argued since there are no criteria of validity which range over the subject as a whole. But what we should bear in mind is that philosophy

should really be seen as a process rather than a series of products, and the variety of processes which exist in the subject is a sign of philosophy's richness, not evidence of triviality.

PHILOSOPHY IN THE FUTURE

Will the nature of philosophy in the future change? This is unlikely. For one thing, the main effort in philosophy remains the understanding of the thought of past philosophers, and this will no doubt continue in much the same way as it has in the past. Even those thinkers who are intent on creating a new way of looking at philosophical issues, or philosophy itself, will tend to use some of the ideas of past thinkers as at least their launching pad. Of course, how the history of philosophy is going to be carried out may well change, as readers will discover in the first two chapters of this book, but there can be little doubt about the continuing importance of this area of philosophy. One of the interesting aspects of recent developments in the history of philosophy is the growing importance of trends and thinkers who once were regarded as only of secondary importance. To a certain extent this may be because philosophers are looking for something new to discuss, but more plausibly there is a feeling that many of the decisions which have been taken about what is to be studied in philosophy are rather arbitrary. For example, in the Anglo-American tradition there tends to be something of a leap which gets us from Aristotle right up to Descartes, as though there was little between ancient philosophy and modern philosophy worth studying. Even within ancient philosophy itself there is now increasing interest in the Presocratics and in the Hellenistic and Neoplatonic thinkers. The effect of this is to broaden what we think of as 'Greek' philosophy and bring in a range of issues and developments which are generally ignored.

It will be said that this is a damaging development, in that the primary concentration in the study of philosophy ought to be on the 'Great Thinkers', those whose ideas have played the leading part in shaping the subject. There is also the related point that students cannot be expected to cover everything in detail, and if there is a choice between studying the thought of one of the 'Great Thinkers' or a group of lesser philosophers, then the former should take priority. On the other hand, there are also good arguments for allowing people to concentrate on whichever thinkers they find the most interesting. Once they have been introduced to the ideas of the 'Great Thinkers', surely they should be allowed to concentrate upon those philosophers with whom they feel the greatest rapport. Sometimes their decisions will doubtless surprise or even shock their teachers, but they should be respected none the less.

'ACADEMIC' VS 'POPULAR' PHILOSOPHY

One of the features of philosophy as a subject which may horrify the teacher of the subject is that it has a far wider sense than academic philosophy. It is fun to look in the philosophy section in libraries and bookshops, since a large number of books which one finds there have little or nothing to do with academic philosophy at all. In most bookshops in North America and Europe today the sections on philosophy are smaller than the sections often next to them, or even integrated with philosophy, on 'Mind and Spirituality'. The latter usually exists as a section independent of 'Religion', which tends to concentrate on the traditional religions. There is a great deal of interest in issues of spirituality in the *fin-de-siècle* world. Now, it might be thought that this has nothing to do with philosophy; it is just a series of vague and rambling thoughts about how one might live one's life and how that relates to the meaning of existence. It all seems to be very subjective, with little argument or analysis, the sort of thing that much philosophy has traditionally opposed. Yet in the mind of the public this is what philosophy is primarily about, and the public is not entirely wrong here. What 'popular' philosophy talks about is quite similar to much of 'academic' philosophy, although the style is very different.

In the future these two ways of doing philosophy are likely to come closer together. This is because of the rapid growth in the education of the population generally throughout the world. As societies become wealthier, they invest more in education, and their populations become more capable of reading, and of reading more complex material. Societies which become wealthier also tend to become more concerned with understanding themselves and the directions in which they are going, which leads to an interest in philosophical and spiritual issues more widely diffused among the population. The globalization of capitalist economic values is likely to lead to a reaction against those values, in the sense that their emphasis on the individual and on increasing levels of private consumption will often be felt to be features which require questioning. Perhaps this is why we have the current explosion of interest in issues such as self-development, spirituality and the occult. People are looking for ways to challenge the ethos of the society of which they are a part, since that ethos seems to be devoid of any values which go beyond the practical.

FUTURE ISSUES

Although we may well be entering a postmodern society, we are certainly not entering a post-philosophy society. There have been periods in the past

when it looked like the only way in which philosophy could survive was by identification with the sciences, but in the future it is through emphasizing the distinctions between philosophy and science that progress is likely to be made. The benefits of scientific advance are all around us, as are in most parts of the world the advantages of the free market economy, and yet these material advantages do not address what is often labelled as the spiritual dimension of humanity. Many people think, perhaps wrongly, that there are a range of questions and problems which are not resolved by their increasing material well-being, and it is these questions for which a wide variety of answers is likely to be proposed. Some of these answers will come from 'popular' philosophy, and the academic subject has an important potential role here in getting more involved in trying to address these issues in ways which are accessible to the public at large. Unless we do, we are leaving the field to the puzzled and puzzling, and missing out on an opportunity to establish a major connection with the cultural events of the future as these are experienced by the majority of the population. Lest we despair of the ability of that population to understand what we say, it is worth remembering that future societies are going to be increasingly well-educated, and so will be more ready to understand the arguments and theories of academic philosophical thought.

Philosophy in the future should be seen as more than a reaction to the materialism of everyday life, though. Philosophy should seek to understand and conceptualize that materialism. Although there have been thinkers who have defined and defended the principles of liberalism in politics and economics, this is still a rather unstudied area as compared with authoritarian and socialist philosophies. The coming hegemony of the free market will require conceptual investigation. The apparent ending of the clash between different political systems may lead to a decline in the interest in political philosophy, and the free market may through its ubiquity become almost transparent in its effect upon our society and characters, but this would be a shame. A vast range of important philosophical issues arise in the structuring of any form of society and economy, and it is incumbent on philosophers to address these issues. If we do not, then they will be left to others, and philosophy will be seen to retreat from the leading aspects of our daily life and experience.

One of the conceptions of philosophy which was criticized earlier was that of the thinker cut off from the realities of the practical world. Of course, there is such a subject as practical or applied philosophy (see Chapter 7) and philosophers have usually applied themselves to the practical issues of the day. In the future this may be expected to increase. A wealthier and better educated society will also be a society which wants to think more about what it is doing, and this will necessarily involve philosophers. There are certainly present trends which look as though they are going to carry on in this way. It is unlikely that this growing involvement with

the public will change philosophy itself, but it will increase the public image of the profession. As issues of dispute in society become increasingly about how to ensure ever-higher levels of consumption at acceptable levels of exploitation of the environment, philosophers will be involved in the complex ethical calculations which need to be made here. At present not nearly enough philosophical input enters into these and similar discussions, although there is some. As a result, these issues tend not to be dealt with as competently as they might.

Let me give an example. There are often panics among the public about things which are supposed to be bad for them. Many people in Europe have given up eating beef because of the perceived risk of acquiring a fatal illness from BSE animals, once the possible implications of this disease on human health was publicly acknowledged in the 1990s. In the past there were similar panics about other foods, and no doubt in the future there will be panics about different products. Yet the public is not encouraged to evaluate the risks which are involved in activities such as eating their ordinary diet as compared with other activities they select which may easily have a far higher risk. Or take a similar example involving risk. A lot of public money is put into deterring people from what are perceived as harmful and risky activities such as smoking, taking drugs and indulging in unprotected sex. Attempts are made to persuade the public that these activities should be avoided, since they are dangerous and are likely to end in the premature death or disablement of those who ignore the warnings. What makes these strategies often unsuccessful is that many members of the public have a different notion of what counts as an acceptable risk as compared with those warning them.

What counts as an acceptable risk? This is not just a technical question, but a philosophical one also. Is it affected by one's domestic responsibilities? Are there not some activities in which the risk is a part of the nature of the activities, so that without the risk they would no longer be worth doing? What is our attitude to our deaths? How far is it better to have a longer but less interesting life as compared with a shorter but more enjoyable existence? These are the sorts of questions which those who resist the urgings of the government contemplate when they rationalize their unwillingness to give up their risky behaviour, and they are serious questions. The questions are going to be asked more and more as the human lifespan is progressively extended and as governments try to reduce the health bill. It is important that philosophers enter this area of debate, or rather, it is important that part of the cultural climate makes informed discussion of these sorts of issues possible. It is difficult to think that this will not happen given the vacuity of the present discussion of these sorts of issues, and the availability of philosophical techniques which can offer the debate sophisticated and also accessible conceptual tools.

THE FUTURE AND WORLD PHILOSOPHY

There is likely to be another effect of the increasing homogenization of the world's culture, and that is the widening of the traditional philosophical curriculum. At the moment in the West there is little knowledge by philosophers of traditions of philosophy which stem from the East, especially where this involves the Far East—Japan, China and India. There is even little knowledge or interest in the philosophy which has been produced by non-Christian thinkers in the West, in particular Jewish and Islamic philosophers. Yet while the teachers of philosophy tend to be uninterested in these forms of thought, their students are often very interested, and students in the East are themselves very curious about the sorts of philosophy produced in the West. As the world becomes culturally far more unified it is difficult to think that philosophy will not follow, and that some aspects of the philosophical creativity of the East will not enter into the curriculum in the West. There is a tendency for Western philosophers to think of Eastern philosophy as just a part of Eastern religions, or far too tied in with mystical forms of thought, but there is just as much, if not more, conceptual variety in what is taught in Eastern philosophy as there is in the West. In some ways there is more, since Eastern philosophers are interested in Western thought, a compliment which is rarely returned.

It is anticipated that several of the major countries of the East will become economically very powerful along with Japan in the future, and this may have the effect of whetting the curiosity of the rest of the world about their cultural output. This is a very positive possibility, since it is about time that we stopped teaching philosophy as though it were the preserve of a few Western thinkers. The philosophy of the East has entered the West through the channels of 'popular' philosophy, but this has only succeeded in giving a partial and inaccurate view of the riches which are to be found in the East. In economic and political terms the countries of the world are coming closer and closer together, and there can be nothing but advantage in philosophers seeking to understand and use each other's theories and ideas. In such a way they may contribute to the process of different cultures understanding each other, which in the past has proved to be such a potent catalyst of intellectual progress. It is often when one culture tries to work with a concept from a different culture that new possibilities become evident, and fresh life is breathed into both cultures. We may with some confidence hope that this will occur if and when different philosophical traditions come into contact.

Many will say that an even further weakening of the basic philosophical curriculum by the introduction of entirely different ideas and traditions will be damaging to the status of philosophy. It certainly is true that the students in higher education who are today studying philosophy do not in

most cases have the same grasp of the original languages in which much philosophy is written as compared with their peers in previous generations. Even students who are reading a philosopher in their own language, but of an earlier period, will often have difficulty in understanding the language, let alone the ideas. Would it not be the case that bringing in philosophy from all over the world will make the student aware only of a general flavour of a range of ideas and theories without being able to enter deeply into a narrower range of work? This is possible, but it seems both inevitable and not to be feared. The days when students could be expected to read texts in the original languages, where these are not their own, are gone, since the education system in much of the world, East and West, no longer provides that basic education in the classical languages which were available, albeit to limited numbers, before. It may even be the case that the nature of what is studied in higher education should change accordingly, and we should not expect students to spend a lot of time concentrating upon particular texts at undergraduate level, but rather to encompass a wide variety of texts which provide them with an accurate view of some of the leading theories from all over the world. If they decide to do further work in the subject at a higher level, then they can specialize in a particular area, and can be expected to acquire the technical background to enable this to happen.

One of the problems of the present system of specialized philosophical education at undergraduate level is that it often neither prepares students to engage in depth with particular ideas or arguments, nor does it introduce them to the richness of world philosophy. It certainly may attempt to do the former, but since their earlier education has not really made them able to acquire the skills which the philosopher urges on them, few students are successful in doing what is required. Since a philosophy programme is often presented in a very *ad hoc* way, students are presented with arguments out of context, as though they came from nowhere. It is only through presenting a view of philosophy as an aspect of cultural history that many students will be able to get to grips with the arguments involved, and weak students will at least get some idea of the range of views which have been produced across the world over time. In fact, the students themselves often have a much wider interest and even knowledge of world philosophy than do their tutors, and although those of us who were brought up in very different times by different methods may regret the weakening of philosophical depth as a result, we might think that there is something to be said for an increase in philosophical breadth. After all, the understanding by students of the variety of theories which exist in world philosophy will prepare those who wish to continue with the subject at a higher level with information about what they will need to learn to make this possible. Those who wish to acquire some understanding of philosophy and its history will obtain a grasp of the role of philosophy in the world

as a whole. As a result they will be encouraged to view themselves as part of a world of ideas, not as members of the only part of the world which appears to have produced ideas.

Philosophers require a sense of history, of the history of their subject and the context within which that subject takes place. Not many people would disagree with such a claim. But we also need to think about where our subject is going, and what implications our present concerns have for the future. That is not to say that our ideas about the future have to be accurate. To quote Wittgenstein again, 'You can't *build* clouds. And that's why the future you *dream* of never comes true' (1980:41). Thinking about the future is very much part of thinking about the present. Our experience of material objects is in a sense thicker than those experiences themselves, because we assume that the objects have more features than we actually experience. Similarly, our views on how philosophy should be conducted do not just apply to the present but go back into the past and also into the future. Thinking about the future helps us to see where we are now, and the following chapters invite us to reflect not only on the arguments of philosophy, but also on where it is going.

RECOMMENDED READING

One of the most interesting publications which was still being completed while this chapter was being written is the Routledge *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward Craig, which is going to contrast radically with the earlier Macmillan publication edited by Paul Edwards in having very substantial accounts of philosophy from around the world. David Cooper's *World Philosophies: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) is a relatively concise and very clear account of the richness and variety of world philosophy.