

Preface

This book contains nothing original, except perhaps by mistake. It is meant to be used as a text-book to familiarize the philosophy students in English with basic concepts and ideas that they encounter in other philosophy courses. It is divided into four sections dealing with ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy, respectively. The goal is not attempted by selections from great philosophers' writings, such as Aristotle's, Leibniz', or Kant's. Experience has shown that there is no great correlation between the importance of a philosopher's writings and the intelligibility and clarity of these writings to undergraduate students. The intention was, thus, to provide, in each case, a simple and clear text containing the basic terminology and themes of the philosopher discussed. However, in order to arrive at a unified structure for various units I had to depend on different sources and often to edit some of the texts heavily. This made it difficult to provide references in the usual manner. At the end of the book one can find a whole list of references from which the book is derived.

The book contains two appendices, the first one is a guide to *How to write a philosophy paper*, and the second is *A Glossary of Philosophical Terms* for further elucidation of philosophical terms used in the text.

Obtaining the Best Result

Each of the four parts of the present book contains 12 units, each of which contains a section entitled "Comprehension Focus". In the final exam, at the end of the term, students are required to answer, in English, seven or eight questions chosen from those provided in the units. But, in order to prepare the students for the final exam, I used to arrange a five minutes quiz, at the beginning of each class, asking the students to answer in English just one question chosen from those in the previous unit. The result of this procedure at the end of the term was striking. In some cases, students were able to write whole pages, answering philosophical questions in English, and sometimes with beautiful handwritings. The students too seemed to be pleased with their progress. I concluded that the students could make the effort, because they knew what they were expected to know.