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impossibility of not being fully capable of attaining it. This does not mean that political activity is fruitless; it means only that the fruition of our greatest longings lies elsewhere, an insight achieved only by thinking and acting in the world, and by discovering that such longing reorients our being in the world. Between our political activities and that fruition, we long and live in hope' (260-1). So far from 'giving up' on politics, the Augustine whom we meet here locates that activity within the ample space of our inbuilt longing for human fruition in its divine source: a telling example of the way in which faith in a creator who calls us individually and collectively beyond ourselves restores to us the dream of the *humanum*. Without that dream, we are delivered into the hands of a 'structural realism' which, by subverting human longing to raw power, leaves generations unable to dream and so incapable of participating in the political arena. As one twenty-five-year-old Israeli protestor remarked when I observed how the current regime was busy converting the Zionist dream into a nightmare: 'I am too young to have dreamt.' Yet unlike many of her contemporaries, her very protesting that regime vindicates the reach of this analysis, for she had not in fact lost her capacity to dream, however much the 'facts on the ground' had belied the dream her parents had once dreamt. It was that dream she had never allowed herself to dream, but so far nothing had been able to squelch the abiding longing for a political order that respects all that is human.

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*The Philosophical I:*  
*Personal Reflections on Life in Philosophy.*  
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2002.  
Pp. xxix + 295.  
US\$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7425-1341-6);  
US\$27.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7425-1342-4).

*The Philosophical I: Personal Reflections on Life in Philosophy* is a collection of autobiographical essays by sixteen working philosophers. It joins a growing list of recent autobiographical writing by philosophers, including books by Colin McGinn, Bryan Magee, and Ted Honderich, and a tradition of earlier writings by St. Augustine, Descartes, Rousseau, Collingwood, and Russell. The editor says nothing about why these particular sixteen were chosen or whether they are meant to be representative, except that he dislikes the

distinction between 'superstar' philosophers and 'average run-of-the-mill' philosophers.

The authors collected represent a wide range of professional and life experience: Most contributors are somewhere mid-career, while the editor (who also contributes an essay) is a graduate student at time of writing. The most senior philosophers to contribute to the project are Joseph Margolis and Nicholas Rescher. The contributors come from a variety of social backgrounds. Some describe very humble or working-class origins (Linda Martín Alcoff, Sandra Harding, John Lachs, Nancy Tuana, Nancey Murphy, and Yancy). Not surprisingly, several are the children of an academic (including Lorraine Code, Charles W. Mills, and John Stuhr, the only contributor whose mother was a philosopher). Several of the authors have served in the armed forces (Richard Shusterman, Bat-Ami Bar On, and Margolis), while others were active in anti-war movements (Thomas Wartenberg, Douglas Kellner and Tuana). The tone of the essays ranges from humility to self-effacing humour to cozy self-importance.

The contributors describe a variety of paths that led them from an initial encounter with philosophy to their current professional status. Some took a single philosophy course or read a classic work of philosophy and were smitten; others drifted into graduate studies after working or completing undergraduate degrees in a different subject. Several recount personal and professional hardships and seem to bear them lightly; others, in unfavourable comparison, appear overly sensitive about relatively minor matters. (Readers may find wearying the rehearsal of various institutional political conflicts.) Several women philosophers write frankly about the drudgery of looking after small children and their frustration with circumscribed roles. A few of the narratives are quite gripping. How does Alcoff get from full-time work in a shirt factory to professor at the University of Syracuse? Will Mills confront the senior colleague who wrote a pseudonymous article in *Lingua Franca* describing his hiring as an affirmative action candidate? Many of the essays bring vividly to life experiences most readers will only be able to imagine. Paul C. Taylor's depiction of his education at an historically black men's college and Yancy's childhood in the Philadelphia projects are among these.

While the authors collected are in many ways a heterogeneous lot, they share certain similarities. All but one are associated with North American universities; the exception is Murphy, who teaches at a seminary. All completed at least some of their graduate philosophical training at North American institutions. Many stress the importance of philosophical associations and mentors in their development, and write of their former teachers and supervisors with warm gratitude. A few (including the editor) describe themselves as philosophical Pragmatists, and a number write of a journey away from their training in or former concentration on mainstream analytic philosophy, to a growing interest in continental thought or Pragmatism or both. There must be professional philosophers who turned to analytic philosophy after becoming disillusioned with continental thought, but we read nothing about it here.

A surprising number of contributors claim to feel alienated from the mainstream of philosophy, or from their colleagues, or from philosophical institutions. Even some of those who do not make explicit claims nonetheless write from a position of estrangement. Why should this be? Would a collection of autobiographical essays by academic historians yield similar results, or is there something specific to philosophers that brings out such feelings? Perhaps the choice to pursue a life of philosophy is sufficiently strange that those who do so feel alienated and unappreciated, whatever their status. Perhaps for some philosophical authenticity demands a view from the margins, rather than the center. Or perhaps those philosophers who voluntarily write about personal experience happen to be alienated.

The book is at its best when contributors describe their joy in discovering philosophy and their continued pleasure in its practice. Readers can take heart from tales of hardships overcome, job offers and graduate school admissions received, and other personal triumphs. I for one was encouraged by candid acknowledgements of philosophical deficiencies - Mills' feeling as a young professor that he should have spent his nights pouring over *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* and Margolis' confession that it was not until about ten years after completing his PhD that he began to get his philosophical bearings.

This collection will be of interest to those who have an interest in the recent history of philosophy and philosophical institutions. Some of the essays include useful summaries of the author's overall philosophical position and indications of how their various commitments are to be reconciled. Several contributors vividly bring to life the atmosphere in departments when philosophy was still largely the preserve of white males, before courses in feminist philosophy and women's studies departments were commonplace. The book also reflects the growing importance of American philosophy as a field of study and the ongoing professionalization of philosophy. Indeed, the editor writes that he conceived the book partly as a response to the professionalization of the subject. The book would be improved, nonetheless, by the addition of a short list of what each philosopher considers to be his or her most significant or favourite works.

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