

Preface

Although I have had a book of this kind in mind for some time, and especially since the publication of my *Perception, Learning and the Self*, I was somewhat nervous about embarking on it, in the light of the complexity and technicality of some of the issues. I was pushed in its direction to some extent by Kim Pickin when she worked for Basil Blackwell. I am grateful to her for her encouragement, as I am for that of Stephan Chambers, her successor at Basil Blackwell. But I am especially grateful for all the pressure that was put on me by my colleague Martin Davies, who simply assumed that I would indeed write it. He has, additionally, read the typescript and made innumerable helpful comments. I am sure that he does not agree with all that I have said, but his help and encouragement all the same have been invaluable.

Other colleagues have made helpful comments on earlier presentations of some of the material. I have also presented some of the issues in lectures to students at Birkbeck College, who like all previous generations of such students have been marvellous in their response. Since my retirement from the Chair of Philosophy at Birkbeck College these students, and colleagues also, are all, I suppose, 'ex-'. But they will always be with me in one way or another. I am deeply grateful to them and to Birkbeck, wonderful institution that it is.