

sues. The disadvantages can be partially offset by a very useful integration of the book with a website devoted to its authors and themes (www.philosophyandthecity.org). This includes course syllabi, links to cognate material, a site specifically for use by instructors, a public blog, and additional readings. There is no reason why this site could not be expanded to include links as well to those full texts of authors included in the readings that are in the public domain.

In the book's preface it is suggested that it can serve as a way to introduce general social and political philosophy. I can see it being thus employed, but only if supplemented with fuller readings of basic political-philosophical material. Even then it would be difficult to apply the book to current, mainstream liberal political philosophy. None of the philosophers in this tradition addressing cities (admittedly few) is included. Here is another place that the website could be used to expand on the book's scope, as is already begun by posting papers by Loren King on it.

All in all, publication of this text provides an introduction to philosophical approaches to cities which should be of interest to a general readership and could be usefully employed in university courses—in social science, urban studies, and other kinds of courses as well as in courses in departments of philosophy.

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The Idea of Continental Philosophy

Simon Glendenning

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006; 144 pages.

Among Simon Glendenning's recent works is a book-length expansion of his introduction to the *Edinburgh Encyclopaedia of Continental Philosophy* (2006). The title, *The Idea of Continental Philosophy*, is revealing, if not slightly ironic, since it offers a glimpse of his main argument: there is no rational or philosophical difference between Continental and analytic philosophy, not for a lack of disagreement between the philosophers, or a gulf of tradition between the works, but because philosophically speaking, the former simply does not exist. He contends that while analytic thought can be approached as a semi-unified method, grouping

together the work done in Continental philosophy by problem, method, or even geography is problematic, and does not offer any benefits to one's understanding. Glendenning nonetheless makes clear that this strong claim is not to deny that the Continental/analytic distinction continues to hold a good deal of weight, but that there is not a unified tradition capable of including thinkers as diverse, for example, as Adorno, Heidegger, and Deleuze. Continental philosophy is thus "not ... a style or method of philosophy, nor even a set of such styles or methods, but, first of all, the other of analytic philosophy: not a tradition of philosophy that one might profitably contrast with analytic philosophy." (83–4) The first two chapters see Glendenning describe the nature of the breakdown in communication between the two camps and advocate a metaphysical "wide-angled view" in order to focus on the disputes without becoming entrenched in the squabbles. Chapters 3 and 4 outline some of the divergent paths supposedly coherent Continental philosophy has taken over the past 300 years, emphasising its major figures' disparate works, and then detailing some characteristically uncharitable and conflating mischaracterisations by analytic thinkers. The last two chapters offer suggestions as to how parties sympathetic to the Continental camp might consider the gulf and view their own work within the philosophical profession.

"Continental philosophy," Glendenning holds, is an appellation first used by analytic philosophers to promote a semblance of unity and cast certain works as other than *its* established method, giving itself "the illusory assurance it has methodologically secured itself from 'sophistry and illusion.'" (84) Here Glendenning begins to depart from other authors who have approached the problem of an analytic/Continental split, because he indicates that the very casting of this division already participates in the breakdown of communication and furthermore leads to a sort of structural incompatibility between the two sides of the division. Philosophers and students of the analytic mainstream come to learn of particular works (say, Heidegger) as that *other* way of doing philosophy, which one is to avoid if one wants to do philosophy in *this* (read: proper) way, thus creating an environment not only lacking in dialogue, but where training in one tradition potentially comes to mean eschewing the other (even and *especially* when the other does not properly constitute a tradition). Under those conditions, the very possibility of a meaningful dialogue is lacking:

the point is that for many analytic philosophers, engaging with such texts makes a demand: it requires learning to read *other* movements in the philosophical stream otherwise than as one's own *Other*. And so, first and foremost, it requires that one find that the philosophical resources typically available to one provide one an only limited competence, or even a structural *in*-competence with regard to these other philosophical resources. (34)

Glendenning lays the burden of responsibility for the breakdown in communication on the side of analytic philosophy since its way of distinguishing itself from other philosophical currents led to an extreme difficulty, if not outright impossibility, in dealing with those other philosophical currents.

Glendenning would agree that a certain charity is necessary to a proper understanding of most important philosophical works, something that does not imply uncritical assent as much as it does a willingness to be taken by, and to take seriously, the question of the other. But in locating some crucial encounters between the two camps, Glendenning notices that the argumentative care characterised by this kind of charity is largely absent. He finds his evidence in three sources: 1) accounts of talks given at a 1958 conference where Gilbert Ryle takes pains to distinguish his method of philosophizing from the "continental method," taking some rather unphilosophical, caricaturing shots at Husserl's philosophy; 2) R.M. Hare's "series of lectures on British philosophy given at a number of German centers in 1957" (74) which Glendenning characterises as a "fragrant homily to the Oxford tutorial system" (74); and 3) Geoffrey Warnock's report on the developments in twentieth-century British philosophy as a process of expelling "foreign influences" in the service of developing a superior and distinctly British manner of doing philosophy. Glendenning documents the manner in which these three particular instances serve as philosophical mis-encounters that offer a simplified account of their philosophical rivals and thus serve as paradigmatic examples of the unjustified dismissiveness that came to dominate the dominantly analytic philosophical scene's treatment of "Continental" authors.

Glendenning concludes with a discussion of the effects this institutional bifurcation of philosophy has had on the professionalisation of the discipline. Whether or not there is a *philosophical* justification for the division, its consequences are readily apparent in the demographic of philosophy departments throughout the U.K., the courses that are taught therein, the avenues for publication, and the budgets allocated for conferences and research. Drawing the distinction between “enders” and “benders,” that is, between those who are “inclined to work with a certain lack of interest in securing or maintaining the idea of the analytic/Continental divide” on the one hand, and those who demand that “we acknowledge the *de facto*, real world gulf, or at the very least, real world gulf-effects, holding apart many whose work is marked by a serious interest in (among others) the usual suspects and many analytic philosophers,” Glendenning locates his own position as an enthusiastic *ender*, who nevertheless recognises the effects of the aforementioned division and adopts some *bender* dispositions from time to time, admitting that there are strategic and political dimensions to each position. (119–20) However, in light of the fact that he denies an actual philosophical gulf between what he can identify only nominally as “two traditions,” he warns against an overly lively *bender* tendency to fashion a unified body of “Continental philosophy” out of what he sees as essentially the anglophone reception of post-Kantian philosophical scholarship. This type of response overlooks the significant differences among the philosophers and works in question in a manner paradoxically similar to the analytic “invention” of Continental philosophy and perpetuates an ineffective schism in philosophical culture.

Since the issue of argumentative charity is an important one, one might venture to ask whether (or why) analytic philosophy even owes Continental philosophy a proper assessment. Analytic philosophers would moreover disagree that there was a lack of discussion of the ideas presented by Continental figures, by arguing that (for example) Ayer’s *Language, Truth, and Logic* or Schlick’s *A General Theory of Knowledge* provide detailed confrontations of precisely that sort. In terms of Glendenning’s characterisation of analytic philosophy itself, had he considered such philosophical episodes as pragmatism (not just in its Rortyan form), certain philosophers who straddle the “gulf” more or less comfortably in their own scholarship (like Dreyfus or Føllesdal), or the challenges posed to the dominant strain of analytic philosophy at the time by

such figures as Quine, Sellars, or Davidson, analytic philosophy itself might have begun to look less like a unified tradition. These considerations might fall beyond the scope of the account Glendenning intends to give. However, he seems committed to the idea that a dialogue, which should have taken place, failed to as a result of a disingenuous misrepresentation on the part of certain analytic philosophers. Because it is not simply the particular shortcomings of the individual encounters that are at issue for him, but the very tenor of the discussions themselves, it seems noteworthy to recognise that certain partisans of Continental philosophy reciprocate a mischaracterisation and misunderstanding of analytic philosophy as well. This issue is addressed only peripherally in the book.

That said, *The Idea of Continental Philosophy* functions most effectively on several levels: first of all as a handbook for undergraduate students perplexed with these labels and struggling to make sense of what Continental and analytic philosophy are (particularly those students in staunchly analytic departments who find themselves gravitating towards the philosophers Glendenning calls “the usual suspects”), and secondly as a scanning of the current state of the discipline, offering some pragmatic expectations for those philosophers entering the fray of the job market. One of the most interesting merits of the book is that it posits a number of somewhat understated questions. For example: What is the nature of the demand issued by philosophical thinking that makes it efficacious (if it does) to seriously consider different methods and ideas? What is at stake in the discounting of certain ideas, and where and how might a properly philosophical encounter between the multifarious currents of philosophy actually take place? In that manner, Glendenning’s book serves as a prologue to further thinking about questions he will hopefully continue to engage, and thereby promote a philosophical culture that is able to advance beyond its current, tendentious bifurcation.

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