

If I am correct, then these lectures would have formed the basis for what would have been Hegel's crowning achievement. I thus sincerely hope that Hodgson's new translation will convince scholars to reconsider this neglected manuscript.

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Philosophy and the City: Classic to Contemporary Writings

Edited by Sharon M. Meagher

Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007; 309 pages.

Like feminist philosophy, environmental philosophy, and philosophical approaches to racism before it, urban philosophy has found it difficult to gain entrance to the canon of philosophical fields in university curricula and scholarly publications. However, unlike these groundbreaking efforts—erstwhile, and still in some quarters, considered offbeat if not philosophically unrespectable—philosophical treatment of things urban may be found in the works of mainstream philosophers dating from Plato and Aristotle and continuing through Augustine to Francis Bacon, then Walter Benjamin, John Dewey, and most recently interventions by Habermas, Foucault, and Iris Young, among others.

If, moreover, More, Campanella, Fourier, and other classic utopians are considered philosophers and if one counts philosophically informed sociologists, planners, and architectural theorists (for instance, George Simmel, Louis Wirth, Henri Lefebvre, Jane Jacobs, Kevin Lynch, Richard Sennett, Manfredo Tafuri), there is certainly enough material to constitute an already existing philosophical tradition. That it has not been so recognised likely derives in part from the unavoidable interdisciplinarity of any study of the subject. It may also be that just as philosophers have tended to think of themselves as disembodied thinkers, so they have regarded the origins of their wisdom as deriving, if not from nowhere but themselves, then just from the ideas of prior philosophers or perhaps from university-based “schools” of thought, but not from their situation within specific urban environments.

This collection of readings both reflects and aims to promote relatively new interest in cities by contemporary philosophers. It is composed of 40 excerpts from classic and recent books and articles, includ-

ing most of those referred to above. These are divided into readings arranged according to historical periods and essays pertaining to a selection of issues: what is a city?, citizenship, urban identity and diversity, the built environment, and social justice/ethics. Readers of this journal will find about half a dozen philosophers in the Continental traditions, the best known being Benjamin, Heidegger, Habermas, and Foucault, though excerpts from them are not as centrally urban-philosophical as one might wish. The selection from Benjamin's *Paris Arcades Project* is his critique of Haussmann, while arguably his celebration of the flâneur is more philosophically relevant. The reading from Heidegger is on dwelling. Rather than excerpting from Habermas' essay on postmodern architecture or Foucault's interview on urban space and power, the collection selects passages, respectively, on the public sphere and the panopticon. There are also striking omissions. In particular, Jane Jacobs, David Harvey, Richard Sennett, and Mike Davis are not included.

Of course, no collection, or at least none that can be priced for use in undergraduate courses—the primary readership to which the book is directed—can include all pertinent readings or all appropriate authors, and as it is the text covers a lot of territory. In this respect Sharon Meagher has made a decision confronting any editor of a collection on a general theme by including a large number of short excerpts. Entries range from three to twelve pages, with only four more than ten pages. While granting that such a book could be well suited to today's students (who might be described either as more supple at filling in details than earlier generations or, alternatively, as being attention-span challenged), I see disadvantages in this strategy. It means that general contexts are not exhibited or arguments developed. It also affects one pedagogical dimension of the book, namely, the guide questions at the end of each reading, which, given the shortness of the readings, cannot be more much more challenging than tests of having done the reading.

Nonetheless, I think that given the relative paucity of affordable texts in this field (its main competitors are the Blackwell series, which are more expensive and broader than philosophy), Professor Meagher has made an appropriate choice. The book might be approached as something like a very full annotated bibliography, where the annotations are by the entry's own authors. Having read these contributions, one would have a fairly good overview of how philosophers from a variety of traditions and several ages have concerned themselves with urban-related is-

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