

Reference Books

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Editor

The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy. Ed. by Knud Haakonssen. New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2006. 2 vols. acid free \$140 (ISBN 0-521-41854-2).

This addition to the Cambridge history series on philosophy provides a topical survey of the character and development of philosophical knowledge and scholarship during a period of Western philosophy. Editor Knud Haakonssen bases the work on two widely accepted characterizations of the eighteenth century: the integration of philosophical thought with the “Enlightenment” in Western cultures and societies, and the designation of the century as the pinnacle of the development of early modern philosophy. Modern interpreters of eighteenth-century philosophy generally recognize the growing rejection of skepticism, a belief system that denied “the possibility of justified beliefs or scientific explanations” (6), in favor of an epistemological approach that emphasizes that knowledge can be understood through either rationalism or empiricism. Immanuel Kant and Thomas Reid are viewed as key contemporary reformers, but in their time, epistemology was not defined or applied to their ideas. Haakonssen defines the historical development of philosophy in terms of the “epistemological paradigm,” which characterizes “philosophy as essentially concerned with the justification of beliefs and judgments” (7), and it is this view that has dominated the historiography of philosophy since the eighteenth century.

In five sections and thirty-six chapters, Haakonssen emphasizes epistemology or the theory of knowledge, but also offers a broader view of philosophy as well. The largest section and the core of the work is “The Science of Human Nature,” which includes chapters on topics such as methods, causality, reason, rhetoric, aesthetics, and philosophy of language. Other sections cover the concept of eighteenth-century philosophy and the intersection of philosophy with theology, science and mathematics, and morals. The section on moral philosophy explores a broad range of ideas such as norms, politics, social sciences, and history.

The chapters were written by academic scholars, most of whom work in departments of philosophy. Haakonssen is a historian of intellectual history and a few writers come from other fields. The majority of chapters (twenty-five) are written by scholars in the United States, Britain, Australia, and Canada, with the balance coming from the European continent, particularly France and Germany. The writing is directed mainly toward upper-level undergraduates, graduate students, and scholars. Footnotes are plentiful. Near the end of volume 2, there is a ninety-six-page bio-bibliographic section offering mostly brief information on the key ideas of all the main persons discussed in the text, and also references to primary editions of their key writings and selected secondary

sources. The work concludes with an extensive bibliography of all primary and secondary works cited in each chapter.

As a reference source, this work serves as an important tool for comprehensive, scholarly information on ideas, movements, and people related to eighteenth-century philosophy as well as a bibliographic guide to the core literature. There are no other comparable English-language reference works on philosophy with the same chronological focus, but it does require more time and basic knowledge to use effectively compared with the 4-volume *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (Oxford, 2003) which offers brief articles on specific topics in philosophy and other subjects. The Cambridge work is highly recommended for academic and large public libraries.—David Lincove, *Collection Manager for History, Political Science, and Philosophy, Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus*

Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia. Ed. by John T. Koch. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2006. 5 vols. acid free \$485 (ISBN 1-85109-440-7).

With ABC-Clio's impressive foray into the world of Celticism, the long wait is over for patrons and librarians seeking a reputable reference source on all things Celtic. John Koch, a senior research fellow at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Celtic Studies, has assembled more than 1,450 entries penned by 338 Celtic studies scholars (who, though named, are unfortunately not identified by institutional affiliation). This encyclopedia is the first in a series of works planned by the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Celtic Studies project called, “The Celtic Languages and Cultural Identity: A Multidisciplinary Synthesis.” Forthcoming works include an English/Early-Irish database, a “Proto-Celtic Vocabulary,” and a collection of maps for Celtic studies.

The entries vary greatly in length and justifiably so. While the entry on the Middle-Welsh text *Breudwyt Pawl Ebostol* (the dream of St. Paul the Apostle) is but a paragraph long, the entry on nationalism in the Celtic countries contains six subentries and runs a total of eleven pages in length. Many of the broadest entries have significant subentries, all of which add up to the editor's 1,569 entry count. There are actually 1,459 separate entries.

Despite the varying lengths of the entries, one strong point of the set is that each entry contains a further reading section that combines internal cross references as well as external bibliographic citations. Many entries (especially the language- and linguistic-related ones) also include references to primary sources, many of which are in the public domain. It would have been very helpful to have those primary sources assembled in the final volume of this set, as ABC-Clio has done with many other reference works. The decision not to include a sixth volume comprised solely of primary sources so wonderfully referenced throughout the text is unfortunate indeed.

Another strength of the set is its use of graphics. The high-contrast maps included in this set are detailed and well made,