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The Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy (review)

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French Studies: A Quarterly Review, Volume 60, Number 3, July 2006, p. 425
(Review)

Published by Oxford University Press



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implication that heroism consists in not succumbing to despair, and Jurek Becker's unremarkable Jewish anti-heroes who run counter to GDR social and literary myth-making. There are also contributions by Marie-Joséphine Whitaker on Rimbaud's passion for travel, Alan Gabbey on Péguy's reading of Descartes and Philip Taylor on dissidence within French Communism. Five essays on non-French figures — Wagner, the anti-Nazi Adam von Trott, Evelyn Waugh, Goytisolo and Becker — introduce a broader European dimension. As is the way of *mélanges*, one or two contributions are rather tenuously connected to the prescribed themes, but this volume, through its close-focus analyses and Graham Gargett's excellent introduction, makes a valuable contribution to charting the fluctuations of the heroic ideal.

doi:10.1093/fs/knl073

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The Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy. Edited by JOHN PROTEVI.
Edinburgh University Press, 2005. xii + 628 pp. Hb £70.00. Pb £25.00.

The *Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy* is a very welcome complement to the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy*. The *Dictionary* contains quick, clear and cross-referenced orientations on particular terms, philosophers and theorists associated with the Continental tradition. And the entries are of widely differing length, ranging from six or seven pages for Marxism, Derrida and Kant to half a page each for *pharmakon*, rhizome, chiasm, and Romantic irony. The choice of entries is perhaps slightly idiosyncratic: Jean-Luc Nancy gets an entry, but Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe does not. Nor does Lévi-Strauss — subsumed under Structuralism, or Gayatri Spivak or Edward W. Said — both included under Post-colonial theory, whereas Ed Casey, John Sallis and John Caputo, all US academics, merit over a page each. This probably reflects the (unintentional?) American bias of the *Dictionary*, for out of the 100-odd contributors, over seventy-five are from the United States, as is the editor, John Protevi. An unusual feature of the *Dictionary* is its occasional multiple entries for the same term: Absurdity, for example, gets entries from both George Pattison, who concentrates on Kierkegaard, and Will McBride, whose focus is primarily Camus; and Alienation has three entries, which focus respectively on Hegel and Marx, on Heidegger and Sartre, and on Simone de Beauvoir. I enjoyed browsing through this *Dictionary* enormously; it introduced me to several thinkers with whom I was unfamiliar, such as — to reveal my ignorance, perhaps unwisely — Gilbert Simondon ('French philosopher of technology and inspiration for Deleuze'), the Russian Pavel Florensky ('arguably Russia's most important philosopher') and the Chilean Francisco Varela ('best-known as the co-originator of the theory of auto-poiesis with Humberto Maturana'). Such are the real aleatory pleasures of dictionaries. My one major quibble is the total lack of any kind of index. I hope a future edition will plug this very noticeable gap; the book would gain significantly in usefulness and useability if it had one.

doi:10.1093/fs/knl107

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