

INTRODUCTION

Transforming philosophy and the city

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Part I: why philosophy? why cities?

Since the 1960s, the field of urban studies has blossomed in the United States and the United Kingdom, but philosophers participated very little until recently. We are now seeing Western philosophy both return to its urban roots and develop in new directions that ancient Greek philosophers based in Athens never could have imagined. Of all the disciplines, philosophy is one of the most ancient, and it is rooted in ancient cities; indeed, we could argue that philosophy was demanded by the new political form of the city that developed in Athens. Ancient Athenian philosophers were called to reflect on the meaning of the good city, the good life, and good citizenship.

“When urban riots erupted around the world in 1968, scholars turned their attention to the cities. . . . Now many colleges and universities also house urban outreach centers that connect academics and community members . . . [these] programs are emblematic of an academic recommitment to cities, to public scholarship, and to civic engagement” (Meagher 2008: 1). Philosophers were slow to embrace the return to the city, but that has now changed. This volume is the product of philosophy’s recommitment to cities, as scholars rediscover and embrace the classical dedication to public philosophy and to serving the wider community. This introductory chapter provides an overview of both the content of the urban questions that contemporary philosophers of the city are addressing and the new philosophical methodologies and practices that are being developed, in real time, as philosophers reengage with these questions.

If Western philosophy was born in the city, why did the discipline retreat from it for so many years? This question is worthy of its own book-length treatise. But we might briefly say that with the rise of the nation-state and the development of modern science, public problems became the purview of a new field of knowledge called social science. Depending on who is telling the story, either philosophers lost some of their turf to social scientists or they conceded it. It seems likely to be a bit of both. Machiavelli is more often read as the founder of political science rather than as a philosopher because of his insistence on attention to the problems of power and the shift of politics from the city-state to the nation-state. Given that philosophers increasingly focused on thinking about universal concepts (Mendieta 2001: 203), Machiavelli was seen as breaking from philosophy.

With a long tradition that dates back to various forms of Platonic idealism, many philosophers have understood their task as one that makes universal claims divorced from particulars of time and place, and philosophy as such, seemingly “located nowhere, causes us to often to dismiss philosophy that explicitly and consciously locates itself in the city” (Meagher 2007: 8). The changing understandings of the task of the philosopher and what constituted appropriate subject matter for philosophy has made it difficult for most to recognize urban philosophical thinking as philosophy.

There is an entire urban philosophical canon from the 19th and 20th centuries that remains unknown to most philosophers but that was rediscovered by social scientists seeking theoretical frameworks for their research. Philosophers such as Henri Lefebvre play central roles in urban geography, and yet Lefebvre receives little or no attention from philosophers in traditional surveys of Western philosophy. Other philosophers such as Iris Marion Young and Hannah Arendt are well known to political philosophers, but most readers pay scant attention to their works on the city. Definitions of what is and is not philosophy have influenced both philosophers’ relationship to the city, but also the way in which both philosophers and the public read the engaged intellectual. Often these works are classified as social science rather than philosophy.

But philosophy of the city is now becoming a recognizable and fast-growing subfield of philosophy. Critiques of various forms of philosophical idealism and “ivory tower” philosophy have caused many philosophers to rethink the discipline and ground it in everyday life and in specific political forms. The city has reemerged as a key political form, given that recent trends in globalization have caused the urbanization of life for the majority of the world’s population and the creation of megacities with economies and knowledge networks that dwarf most nation-states (Magnussen 2012; Meagher 2013; Mendieta 2007).

In several key subfields of philosophy, there have been turning points that have opened up new directions for philosophy, allowing philosophers to participate in an articulation of urban values and ideals and to engage in philosophical reflection on urban issues and problems (Epting 2016; Meagher 2008; Cunningham 2005). The new developments in philosophy of the city bring traditionally recognized subdisciplines of philosophy to bear while also raising new questions about the discipline and its engagement with public life.

In political philosophy, for example, the (re)turn to the city became most visible in Iris Marion Young’s last chapter of *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990), where Young asks whether the city might not hold the promise for a situated political ideal that recognizes and negotiates difference in positive ways. Interceding in the debate between liberals and communitarians, Young argued that our experiences of the best that city life promised offered a third option. But Young’s chapter has taken on a life that Young could not have anticipated, as it has served as “the” contemporary philosophical essay on cities at a time when political philosophers were being pressed to address cities as a reemerging central political form and social scientists needed new theories to frame their work. We have included a chapter by Elyse Purcell to highlight Young’s importance and influence.

Environmental philosophers have argued in recent years that it was an error of early environmental philosophy to bracket out the city from its purview. According to Epting, “environmental philosophers have been emphasizing this point for years, urging their fellows to pay attention to urban issues” (2016: 101). Philosophers including Gunn (1998: 341), King (2000: 115–131), Light (2001: 7), and Kirkman (2004: 202) initiated the critique that the city is missing from discussions in environmental philosophy, arguing that many environmental philosophers wrongly conceive of urban areas as separate from the ecological world that make these settlements possible. The chapters in this volume by Alexandria K. Poole, Cynthia Willett, Michael Goldsby, and Samantha Noll frame their engagement with the city through an environmental lens. Alexandria

K. Poole discusses the rich history of environmental movements and environmental philosophy in urban areas. Michael Goldsby turns the philosophical lens on climate change mitigation and Samantha Noll explores the value-laden project of rekindling agricultural production and foodways in the city.

But environmental philosophy is not the only subfield of philosophy that has taken an urban turn. As readers will see in this volume, there are philosophers who are making meaningful contributions in many other areas where philosophers historically have failed to attend to cities and urban life, examining urban architecture and planning, transportation, citizenship, housing policy, migration policy, social justice, and democratic ideals.

What is philosophy of the city?

In order to understand what philosophy of the city encompasses and why it is important today, we might first ask what we mean by “city.” As philosophical investigation grew out of the *polis*, this discipline was one of the first fields to grapple with metaphysical questions concerning the nature of the city, what separates a good one from a bad one, and what capabilities separate urban from rural areas. As the study of the city has splintered into different disciplines and the city itself has taken different forms over time and across cultures, we now see that there are vastly different conceptions and definitions of urban areas. For example, cities can be defined by measuring the extent of built up or developed areas, impervious surfaces, number and type of architectural structures, or population density (see Potere et al. 2009: 6532; Bagan & Yamagata 2012: 210; Kirkman in this volume). Urban ecology often separates urban areas from other spaces in qualitative terms or as areas under intensive human control (McIntyre, Knowles-Yáñez, Hope 2008; Marcotullio & Solecki 2013). In contrast, social scientists often prioritize high population density over human influence (McIntyre et al. 2008).

The lack of a common definition about the city has motivated some philosophers to try to develop a unified one and to see that task as one that is central to contemporary philosophy (Uchiyama & Mori 2014), while others have argued that such work is unnecessary. In addition to these conflicts concerning the criterion that defines “the city” or even “the urban,” there are also disparate views on the primary function of cities. Following Aristotle, one can argue that these disputes also involve metaphysics, for the nature of a thing might be understood in light of its function.

Cities are commonly conceived as having a wide range of primary functions for society, such as economic areas, centers of production, political centers, cultural and social hubs, and so on (Meagher 2008; Uchiyama & Mori 2017). These disparate ways of understanding what cities do often illustrate fundamental tensions in cities themselves. For example, according to Uchiyama and Mori, contemporary cities are thought to exist to help communities benefit “from their agglomeration effects such as scale of economy, positive externality, accumulation of labor force, and spillover effects of knowledge” (2017: 345). However, cities often include slum areas along their peripheries, as the poor from rural areas migrate into urban spaces in order to pursue better opportunities (UNPF 2011). This vision of contemporary cities encapsulates the rise of economic disparity that results from the goal of intense capital accumulation. In addition, cities can be understood as main contributors to climate change (Baumgärtner & Quaas 2010) but are also conceived as spaces where long-term environmental sustainability initiatives are gaining traction (Spiekermann, Wegener, & Wegener 2003).

The city has raised important questions in metaphysics at least since ancient Athens, as we raise existential questions about human nature and ourselves as social-political beings as well as questions about the one and the many. As Meagher has argued, though, “the conditions that

made intellectual life in Ancient Athens possible were . . . dependent on the existence of an invisible city of women and slaves that fueled the economic engine of the city” (2007: 8; see also Meagher 2008: 4). Moreover, few philosophers still hold to an understanding of metaphysics as First Philosophy – that is, as the foundation of all things. In recent years, the metaphysical questions are also linked to questions about how we positively recognize diversity, and cities – as the social-political form that we think of as most diverse, reemerge as central to how we think about intersection of gender, race, class, and other identities.

These conflicts concerning what cities are and the functions that cities perform (or should perform) provide an explanation as to why philosophy of the city is once again moving to the forefront of philosophical analysis. Such ontological and ethical questions are part and parcel of this field. Without some understanding of the many forms that a city can take and an analysis of the power dimensions of their functions, we will continue to struggle with conflicts that arise due to competing visions of urban spaces. Indeed, it appears that we are once again back in Ancient Greece, critically reflecting on the structure of settlements and what separates a “good” city from a “bad” one. The contemporary philosopher of the city is working to (a) flesh out accurate conceptions of the city and/or aspects of urban life, (b) interrogate taken-for-granted assumptions concerning its structure and functions, and (c) identify new structures and meanings that could take hold in the future (Epting 2016; Meagher 2008).

These investigations in turn have raised new questions about the nature of citizenship. Although the term “citizen” is rooted in the “city,” citizenship was generally discussed in terms of the rights and responsibilities of members of nation-states during the 19th and 20th centuries. But the increased visibility of stateless persons and new trends in migration have both turned us back to Kant’s concept of cosmopolitanism and toward radical rethinking of citizenship that might be grounded in claims to the right to the city or claims to global citizenship unbound from state membership.

In aesthetics, philosophers have long weighed in on questions of urban design and architecture as well as the roles of nature and culture in cities, but these questions are taking new turns in several directions. A range of philosophers from Henri Lefebvre to Edward Casey have spurred a renewed interest in the role of place and everyday life, opening up new paths for philosophers to think about architecture, public art, public space, and green space in cities.

Taken together, these directions in philosophy of the city offer both philosophers and urban social scientists new ways connect theory and practice so that we might address some of the greatest challenges of our time. The purpose of *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of the City* is to gather those essays together to provide a state of the subfield so that we can open up new directions in urban studies. The multifaceted nature of urban contexts also brings unique challenges to the field – challenges that require creative developments in the discipline. In the next section we highlight some of those developments, particularly in terms of methodology.

Part II: methodology: how urban engagement challenges our understanding of philosophy and its methods

As we noted in Part I of this chapter, Western philosophy was born in the city – in the polis of Athens to be exact. All of us familiar with Socrates as depicted by Plato in his dialogues (and there is other historical evidence to corroborate at least some of this depiction), know Socrates as the philosopher of the agora, or the marketplace. Socratic method, his way of engaging in dialogue with various public participants, is well known. But it has come to be used in the classroom rather than on the streets, and this retreat of philosophy to the academy may be, as we argued above, both a symptom and a cause of historical shifts in our understanding of both

the task of the philosopher and the methods appropriate to that task. In this section, we briefly explore those methodological shifts in philosophy so that we might better appreciate the new methodologies being employed by contemporary philosophers of the city.

Classic Greek philosophers, most notably Socrates, thought that “the unexamined life – a life without philosophy – was not worth living. And the life of philosophy was nurtured within the walls of the city” (Meagher 2008: 3). The field of philosophy then, as envisioned during its birth, recognized a deep connection between urban life and the practice of doing philosophy. This critical reflection could be understood as a dialog between citizens, as they explore key questions together, such as what it means to live a good life, what form a settlement should take, and what duties fellow citizens have to one another and to the polis itself. This exploration was intensely place-based and community focused, as philosophical reflection was used for the edification of the citizens living in the polis. Socrates’s apparent refusal to commit his teachings to writing might be understood as his prioritization of living dialogue, electing to spend his days in community and civic centers, engaging in dialogs with fellow citizens (Plato 2010). It is this sort of engagement that is largely neglected today in the historical wake of philosophical discussion moving from the streets and into the ivory tower.

Conventional Western philosophical method(s)

Philosophical discussions have become so highly specialized as to be esoteric, and the critical reflection on questions that guide the very shape and tenor of daily life has ceased to be a community-based practice. Today, philosophical inquiry predominantly occurs in professional journals, rarely read by those outside philosophical subdisciplines, or in college classrooms, with tuition serving as a “pay-to-play” requirement that many cannot meet.

The type of Socratic dialogue portrayed in Plato’s dialogues is now often read and practiced as what Janice Moulton terms “an adversarial method” (Moulton 1993: 14–15). Here “the philosophical enterprise is seen as an unimpassioned debate between adversaries who try to defend their own views against counterexamples and produce counterexamples to opposing views” (Moulton 1993: 14). This method has become the privileged way that Western philosophers conduct themselves philosophically, while other types of philosophical engagement are understood to be “unphilosophical,” thus pushing those who utilize different methods and methodologies outside the disciplinary boundaries of philosophy as defined by mainstream academic philosophers (Dotson 2011: 201).

When philosophers address contemporary issues, they often do so in what might be understood as a “top-down” approach, in the sense that the ivory tower philosopher chooses a philosophical position or text and then applies it to the given subject. For instance, applied branches of philosophy (such as business ethics and bioethics) have historically adopted a naïve understanding of the relationship between theory and practice in which philosophical theories are applied to questions that arise in the specific area being explored. Heather Douglas argues that it has become increasingly apparent that the “application of traditional theories rarely provides either the philosophical insight or the practical guidance needed” (2010: 322). She concludes that “coming into a complex context . . . with a particular theory [e.g., a Kantian approach] and attempting to simply apply that theory rarely provides much assistance or illumination” (Douglas 2010: 322). The adversarial and applied or top-down approaches to philosophy limit the questions that philosophers view as philosophical, since only some issues lend themselves to these methodologies. Moreover, these methods tend to place the philosopher in the role of critic rather than problem-solver, and they provide little ability to posit alternative frameworks for resolving complex issues.

Current conventional methodologies employed by philosophers have come under fire, as scholars turn their critical eye to the methodologies that guide philosophical investigation. Robert Solomon argues that “our critical scrutiny today should be turned on the word ‘philosophy’ itself . . . to realize that what was once a liberating concept has today become constricted, oppressive, and ethnocentric” (2001: 101). Dotson’s argument builds on the critiques of Moulton and Solomon, arguing that the dominant methodologies both yield little meaningful knowledge and can be harmful to diverse practitioners in the field. As Dotson puts it, “Academic philosophy is structured in such a way that established trends in philosophical thought delimit what questions can be addressed, and this is reinforced by the dominant conception of philosophy as critique; this effectively marginalizes problems and/or concerns of diverse people that do not fit comfortably within an already set disciplinary agenda” (2011: 407).

There are increasing pressures both within and outside the discipline of philosophy for the discipline to transform itself. A new generation of publicly engaged philosophers is being shaped by the concern for (and growing legitimacy of) practical and applied ethics, feminist and critical race theories, and other new subdisciplines. This is a development that has been promoted by the changing demographics of the discipline: As more women of all ethnicities and races, more men of color, and more working-class persons have entered the discipline, they have insisted that philosophy be practiced in ways that address the questions salient to their experiences and their histories. Together with the allies they have cultivated, these thinkers are transforming the discipline in multiple ways to ensure its relevance.

It is becoming increasingly clear that philosophy needs new methodologies beyond the top-down theoretical application, the adversarial method, and other non-collaborative approaches (Dotson 2011; Moulton 1993). This is particularly true for philosophy of the city, as the complexity of the city and its issues demand more from us philosophers. Philosophers of the city are engaged in the development of new methods and methodologies, effectively expanding the ways that philosophers can conduct themselves philosophically beyond the adversarial method. Within this context, philosophy of the city is transformative as it pushes back against the delimitation of what questions can be asked and opens up philosophical analysis to a wider circle of impacted parties. The chapters in this volume suggest a new typology of emerging and establishing philosophical methodologies that have both been shaped by philosophers’ growing interest in cities and in turn opened up the subfield of philosophy of the city to address a greater range of urban questions and issues. In this way, philosophy of the city contributes to the discipline of philosophy itself, as urban areas act as a catalyst forcing the field to develop new methodological approaches.

Intradisciplinarity

The complexity of cities and urban contexts demands that philosophers with interests in the city must be prepared to engage with one or more subfields of philosophy. According to Epting (2016), this type of work constitutes a new type of research in the field, as it requires the development of methodologies that have the elasticity to weigh a myriad of factors. In contrast to interdisciplinary research, or work that draws from at least two disciplines, “intra-disciplinary approaches require insights from two or more sub-fields from a single discipline. Although a philosopher can rely on interdisciplinary research to support an intra-disciplinary argument, he or she employs two or more of philosophy’s subfields to build a case” (Epting 2016: 104). This could include a fusion of any of the main branches of philosophy, such as logic, metaphysics, epistemology, social and political philosophy, ethics, and so on. This requires a different kind of scholarship than many of us have been trained to do. The chapters by Saul Fisher, Peter

Marcuse, Shane Epting, and Fred Evans in this volume provide examples of intradisciplinary methodologies. Fisher provides an illuminating discussion of social and political considerations of architecture. He interweaves political, ethical, and ontological philosophical approaches in their analyses. In a similar vein, Evans draws on aesthetics and social and political philosophy when discussing the multifaceted impacts of public art in the city. Epting's entry in this volume on transportation justice likewise demonstrates how an adequate treatment of the phenomena must include insights from environmental philosophy, the philosophy of technology, and ethics, as well as work from both the "continental" and "analytic" traditions.

Inter- or multidisciplinary

Most philosophers of the city must engage in inter- or multidisciplinary work, and we also see that social scientists are turning increasingly to philosophical concepts to provide a framework for their analyses. In short, we require different types of critical dialogue and exchange between the disciplines if we are to improve our understanding of cities and move toward more just policies and practices.

In Sharon M. Meagher's chapter "Ghost Cities" in this volume, she makes a compelling case for the need for philosophers to understand social scientific evidence if philosophers are to address the important social justice issues arising in both global cities discourse and in actual globalization policies. Ronald R. Sundstrom makes a similar case for our understanding of racial segregation. Social scientific data is an important source to help us understand the urban phenomena that we are addressing. At the same time, philosophers' engagement with social scientific data can also reveal problematic definitions and assumptions in that work. Paul C. Taylor's chapter on Black Lives Matter places philosophical analysis in conversation with evidence grounded in social science. Tyler Zimmer's analysis of the problem of gentrification utilizes empirical research, as he explores the tensions between equality and efficiency, occupancy and removal of tenants, and the push to commodify basic needs, such as housing. And Kevin Scott Jobe's chapter on houselessness interrogates the ways that social scientific definitions, assumptions, and therefore policy are shaped by particular political agendas. He further argues that those definitions also affect our understandings of philosophical concepts such as autonomy and agency. Benjamin Boudou's chapter on sanctuary cities both traces the political philosophical history of the ideas of hospitality and sanctuary against the sanctuary city movement that has developed globally. In doing so, he both offers a critique of some assumptions and practices while at the same time shows how the movement can and should influence our thinking about these philosophical concepts. Paula Cristina Pereira engages in similarly methodology in her discussion of common spaces, as do Amanda Meyer and Charles Taliaferro in their discussion about parks and Kathryn Kramer and John Rennie Short in their chapter on urban walking. Additionally, social scientists are drawing on philosophical concepts to frame their discussions. Urban planner Peter Marcuse discusses the power and promise of designing cities from a concept of "Good Planning."

Philosophers engaged in urban environmental questions must also engage evidence from the natural sciences. Michael Goldsby's chapter "Paradox in the City: Urban Complications Regarding Climate Change and Climate Justice" shows the importance of informed engagement with climate science and its methodology if philosophers hope to offer compelling discussion of what a morally just approach to this challenge will look like. Cynthia Willett takes a deeply interdisciplinary approach to recovering what we have lost in our understanding of animals and animal life in the city.

The urban public philosopher

Many philosophers of the city understand themselves as public philosophers, and public philosophy can take many forms, including (as we noted earlier) those who utilize scientific research and data to address issues of shared public concern. This work may also demand that the philosophers engage in their own field work. Ronald R. Sundstrom's work on gentrification, for example, has involved a great deal of research on the ground; Sundstrom attended community meetings, interviewed activists, and listened to those most affected by housing policies.

Community-based research and other types of urban engagement

Sometimes that field work takes the form of participant observation. In this volume, Chad Kauzler writes about the Occupy movement and draws heavily on journalism and other reports for his analysis, but also participated in Occupy Denver. Sharon M. Meagher's chapter on creative placemaking draws heavily on her own work as a scholar-activist partnering with both other faculty and with local community-based artists to make change in the city of Chester, Pennsylvania. Meagher's chapter on global cities draws heavily on the scholarship of others, but also on her direct experiences in Kigali, Rwanda, and Doha, Qatar.

In networks composed primarily of analytic philosophers, the term "field philosopher" is gaining traction to help us understand this methodological approach. Danielle Lake's chapter provides some very different examples of philosophical "field work," drawing attention to the work of Andrew Light, who served as a member of President Obama's United Nations Climate Change. This sort of "formalized" engagement in policy-making is usefully contrasted with the sort of civic activism embodied by Grace Lee Boggs. But as Lake shows in her chapter, looking to the precedent set by John Dewey and Jane Addams, philosophers can find any number of ways to multiply their impact by stepping outside of the academy.

In contrast to conventional philosophical methodologies that aim to apply theory to practice, community-based or engaged philosophical investigations begin from the contexts where the questions being explored arise (Lindemann, Verkerk, & Urban 2009). The analysis is collaborative, as contextual factors play a key role in shaping epistemologies (Zagzebski 2015) and methodologies (Harding 2015) and how these are applied (Noll 2017). Epting (2016) calls this type of work "trans-disciplinary," or work that begins by engaging with the community itself (in social, political, and cultural contexts) and uses this engagement as the basis for philosophical inquiry. Both philosophical and scientific work utilizing a transdisciplinary methodology conceptualizes theoretical work in the larger framework of "cultural ideas, subjective experiences of the researchers involved in the research process, and of imagination and the artful creation of possible new realities" (Dieleman 2017: 170). With approximately 3.6 of seven billion people on this planet living in urban areas (UN DESA 2017), the city is the natural choice for reviving community-based philosophical investigation in the tradition of the Greeks. As urban residents live in areas whose definition literally includes tensions and paradoxes, they are uniquely situated to develop community based or bottom-up, rather than top-down, approaches to philosophical investigation.

As Meagher and Feder (2010) have argued, philosophical methods that demand that we apply philosophical theories to issues or problems place philosophers in the problematic role of expert. Where the expert claims authority, the public philosopher in contrast "should understand their work as 'public work' (Boyte & Kari 1996) that is co-built in dialogue with various public constituents" (Meagher & Feder 2010: 10). This entails a recognition of the value of community-based knowledge. In this conception, public philosophers do not remain above or

outside the fray but acknowledge their stakes in the discussions (as members of various publics themselves) and their locations in it (Meagher & Feder 2010: 10).

Alexander Kolokotronis and Michael Menser demonstrate the value of understanding how to navigate the political and economic topography of the particular cities with which urban philosophers attempt to engage. This kind of engagement receives especially illuminating discussion in Kolokotronis and Menser's chapter on participatory budgeting (PB). Reflecting on how Menser's work with various communities and organizations (including the nonprofit he co-founded, Participatory Budgeting Project) has shaped his role as "public" philosopher, Kolokotronis and Menser note:

It is of various types of ethical and political import, and epistemic advantage, to tie yourself to some non-academic group within your field of inquiry whether it's aesthetics or democratic theory. By "tie" I don't just mean "connect," but to join, or even better, to be enjoined. In this sense a public philosopher becomes responsive to the needs and aspirations of some constituency or audience, and maybe even interactively accountable to them. In my case with participatory budgeting, this happened with regard to my role in the design and maintenance of various participatory budgeting processes in several cities and my own university. Here it's not just about what my view of participatory democracy wants to see in a process. Rather, the construction of the process is dialogic and deliberative; yes, there are values that guide, but communities sometimes diverge in their understandings of the core PB values of inclusion, empowerment, and equity. And part of the mission of participation is to empower, to create a sense of ownership. Here "public" means sharing power plus creative collaboration.

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Here Kolokotronis and Menser capture the crucial function of the civically oriented philosopher as facilitator: to seriously engage in philosophical activity with members of wider community demands that one collaborate and share rather than dispense. What philosophers "in the field" have learned is that only by working *with* (and refraining from lecturing *to* or *at*) can they actually provide the people they engage with the benefit of their own training, skills, and expertise.

The chapters by Kolokotronis and Menser and Joseph S. Biehl, as well as the "Urban Engagements" interviews with Ian Olov, John R. Torrey, Sarah Donovan, Sharyn Clough, Adam Briggie, and Stephen Bloch-Schulman all provide further examples of how philosophers can make the public – rather than the profession – their priority. Kolokotronis and Menser show what is involved in getting elected officials to empower their constituents by allowing the responsibility of budgeting to be a participatory endeavor. Briggie has used philosophical engagement with his students and his local community to successfully campaign for a ban on the use of hydraulic fracking in the town of Denton, Texas. Olov provides a wonderful example of the "meet people where they are" approach when he sets up an "Ask a Philosopher" booth at crossroads and public gathering spots in New York City, and curious pedestrians are then invited to pick a topic to discuss, or to ask a question and start a discussion of their own. Biehl's Young Philosophers of New York, Clough's Phronesis Lab at Oregon State University, and Donovan's experiential learning projects with students in Port Richmond, as well as the Philosophical Horizons program in Memphis that Torrey worked with, are all unique examples of the growing commitment among professional philosophers to positively impact the lives of students *before* they arrive at college.

The turn to the city has also caused a shift in the orientation of many philosophers as more philosophers are attempting to engage the people with whom they share the city in addition to their colleagues in the academy. In the last section of this volume, we highlight interviews with philosophers who are doing this sort of work, which we might call the public or urban philosopher as facilitator. These philosophers are engaged in a return to the Socratic example of philosophizing in the agora, with philosophers going (literally as well as figuratively) where the audiences are, in the spaces where they live, work, and entertain themselves. This difference in orientation and context changes not only the dynamic of the philosophical interactions themselves but the relative positions of the participants. Socrates referred to himself as a “midwife,” someone who helped give birth to knowledge that was already within his interlocutor but struggling to come to life in a coherent form. Hence today’s urbanized philosophers increasingly present themselves to their audiences not as “professors” or “experts” dispensing their own wisdom but as “facilitators” of conversations and investigations that principally belong to the citizens themselves.

Addressing general, nonacademic audiences sounds simple, and perhaps suggests to some that all that all one needs to do is to dumb down one’s presentation by limiting the amount of technical vocabulary one uses, if not eliminating it all together. Being able to communicate philosophical ideas directly to an audience that is not immersed in “the literature” and unfamiliar with professional philosophers’ terms of art is indeed important, but as those who pursue this work know well, rather than dumbing down the philosophy, general audience engagement challenges the philosophers to exercise skills that enable them to recover the connections between philosophical investigations to the thought-provoking features of our shared lived experience. Those connections are often lost in the sort of interaction that characterizes the academic scholarship and discourse, yet, as Olasov notes, it is usually the conundrums of ordinary life that generate philosophical inquiry in the first place. The Gotham Philosophical Society (GPS), for example, has sought to make those connections vivid through a series of events called “A Lawyer, a Poet, and a Philosopher Walk Into a Bar,” which is exactly that – a collaboration between a lawyer, a poet, and a philosopher who approach a topic that matters to each of us (e.g., truth, love, money, misery) and proceed to explore it from a legal, artistic, and philosophical perspectives. A notable feature of these events is the predominance of the philosophical in the ensuing audience-driven discussion. This is not due to the philosopher’s contribution being more significant, but from the fact that even the artistic and legal presentations prompt reflections of an inherently philosophical character. People will philosophize if they are inspired to do so. Shifting the philosopher’s focus from presenting a tightly argued position in conceptual space to collaborating with one’s fellow citizens results not in diluted versions of academic colloquia and conference proceedings, but in community-building enterprises where people with varying backgrounds and experiences jointly attempt to gain helpful insight into the human condition.

As Biehl mentions in his contribution to this volume, philosophers are also attempting to direct some of their writing to engage citizens and policy makers at a more local level, making contributions to their community’s discussions, debates, and deliberations on such workaday issues as educational, environmental, and electoral (for example) policies and practices. The Gotham Philosophical Society’s *Φ on New York*, an online magazine project, for example, is predicated on the refusal to see these sorts of matters as “outside” or “beneath” the scope of philosophical relevance. On the contrary, these are the issues that are of the greatest consequence for the day-to-day welfare of the city’s inhabitants. The goal of this effort, therefore, is to foster a deeper, more thoughtful, and argumentatively “sound” process through which the city comes to regulate the lives of its citizens and sets its future course.

Projects in the recuperation of the history of Western philosophy in and for the city

The discussion of new methodologies requires us to ask whether and how there is room for more conventional approaches to philosophical research. And the answer is yes! Given the critiques of conventional methodologies, it is important that we expand what “counts” as philosophy, and, as we noted earlier and is evident in this volume, that philosophers of the city are leaders in making these moves. Both the development of intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary philosophical methodologies (Epting 2016) and the various engaged philosophical practices that we summarize above are important contributions to the discipline of philosophy as a whole and also allow for philosophy to make meaningful contributions to urban studies. But those moves also demand the kind of conventional close readings and interpretations of philosophical texts that have traditionally been the stock in trade of philosophers are still needed. Part I of this volume therefore feature chapters that engage in the recuperation of the history of Western philosophy in and for the city. There are also chapters throughout the volume that engage in a history of philosophical thinking about key concepts in urban planning and/or policy as a way of helping us better understand and reflect on contemporary urban policy, practices, and conditions. Abraham Akkerman’s chapter on the philosophical history of the aesthetics of urban planning and design is one such example.

Part III: content: the subject(s) of philosophy of the city

Part I of this volume, “Urban Philosophies,” includes chapters that help us reorient philosophy toward the city through a reinterpretation and recuperation of philosophies in the Western tradition that provide important theoretical frameworks or lenses through which to view the city. Contemporary essays on key historical figures in the first section of the book will both help philosophers trained in varying traditions understand how they can draw on that tradition to inform urban work and orient nonphilosophers to a possible canon of works that provide theoretical lenses. It will further give background in the history of philosophy to provide an intellectual context useful to urban planners, urban geographers, and other social scientists who often lack deep background in the history of philosophy and its traditions but need urban theory to frame their own work. The chapters by Nathan Nicol, Joseph S. Biehl, Ferenc Hörcher, and Danielle Lake take up the legacies of Plato, early modern philosophers such as Machiavelli, and 19th-century philosophers such as Dewey and Addams.

Addams is rarely read as a philosopher, and as we have noted earlier, a surprising number of modern and contemporary philosophers of the city remain unknown to most philosophers. In fact, most of these writers are better known by urban social scientists, as they draw on these thinkers to provide a theoretical framework for their research. But often social scientists only know these thinkers in narrow terms of what they have to say about cities, and they could benefit from an understanding of the fuller philosophical import of their work that the chapters in this section will provide. And philosophers need to understand the richness of their philosophical heritage if they are to continue to develop philosophies of the city. Section 2 of Part I of this volume features chapters on Henri Lefebvre (by Loren King), Walter Benjamin (by Frank Cunningham), and others missing from the philosophical canon to recenter philosophy on the city. While Foucault is often claimed by philosophers, we rarely read him as a philosopher of the city, but Kevin Scott Jobe’s chapter in this volume makes a case to do so. Many other contributors to this volume draw extensively on this revised canon in their chapters (see, e.g., Brian Elliott’s chapter, in which he draws on a wide range of continental philosophers – many

of whom are more often cited by social scientists than by philosophers – to help us think more robustly about the concept of urban communities).

The remaining sections of this volume in Part II, “Philosophical Engagement With Urban Issues,” are organized by varying types of philosophical engagement with urban issues. We created categories to try to highlight the major areas where philosophers are now contributing to urban studies and where there are opportunities for future research. That said, much of the richness of works by philosophers of the city is that it crosses some of the usual lines. As editors of the volume, we had to make often difficult decisions as to where to place a particular chapter, and readers will see that many chapters belong to more than one section. In other words, classification systems provide some help and organization, but they always fall short in capturing the full breadth and depth of our work.

Urban aesthetics

The battle for the aesthetics of cities has been ongoing. Philosophers are capable of both understanding aesthetics in terms of principles of beauty but also linking urban aesthetics to other philosophical dimensions. Was Walter Benjamin correct in claiming that Haussmann’s plans for Paris were not merely aesthetic, but a politically motivated attempt to thwart street protestors? What sorts of assumptions about the good life and about technology are at stake in the battle of visions between Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses for the soul of New York? What roles do parks and public art play in our sense of the good city and the beautiful city? The chapters in this section discuss aesthetic dimensions of cities, drawing out the philosophical theories that underscore many debates around aesthetic issues. Philosophers of architecture have never abandoned their focus on the city, and both Abraham Akkerman and Saul Fisher help us understand some key issues in those discussions. Philosophers have tended less to questions of public art, and Fred Evans’s chapter helps fill that void. Parks play roles in aesthetic, environmental, and political dimensions of cities, and Amanda Meyer and Charles Taliaferro trace the history of parks’ complex roles, making a case for the democratic function of them. Finally, Kathryn Kramer and John Rennie Short discuss the importance and ramifications of walking in the city, and Sharon M. Meagher draws connections between creative placemaking and justice in urban contexts.

Urban politics

This section features chapters by philosophers involved in various ways with urban politics, reflecting on the ways that their urban political activity has been shaped by their philosophical educations and how their philosophical thinking has been transformed by their various urban political engagements. From city hall to participatory budgeting, from planning and policy to community organizing and protest, this section aims to place the city at the heart of political philosophy in a time when the nation-state no longer commands our singular focus. The last chapters in this section deal with policies around homelessness and surveillance and thus connect to political philosophical questions of freedom and security.

Since at least George Simmel’s analysis of cities, we have defined cities as essentially diverse places. Lewis Mumford argued that cities are our repositories of cultures and cultural artifacts. In this sense, we celebrate cities. On the one hand, philosophers have drawn on aesthetics to think about the sensory diversity of cities. Other contemporary philosophers have drawn on philosophical political theory to analyze critically the politics of inclusion and exclusion, unpacking

assumptions in urban policy and practice and allowing us to view the city from multiple perspectives. This work is particularly important, as philosophical branches, such as environmental philosophy, have historically ignored tackling concerns that are important to communities of color, such as the placement of waste facilities in nonwhite neighborhoods. The now famous Commission for Racial Justice (1987) study brought environmental racism into the purview and formed the foundation for the new field of environmental justice, a field that wholeheartedly grapples with the unique environmental problems faced by urban communities. This work stands in sharp contrast to the historically homogenous field of environmental philosophy, critiquing its lack of diverse perspectives, and daring it to do better. In this vein, Esme G. Murdock's chapter on rethinking environmental spaces and racism captures the importance of doing philosophy from multiple standpoints. Her contribution grapples with and highlights key justice questions, such as who is at the table when decision-making happens, and how the construction of the urban-wilderness dualism is steeped in racist, classist, and sexist systems of oppression, as certain urban communities are deemed to be disposable.

Housing issues have gained considerable attention by philosophers because they also raise questions about justice and interlocking systems of oppression. Ronald R. Sundstrom's chapter on racial segregation makes these connections, and Tyler Zimmer and Kevin Scott Jobe both raise important questions about housing policy and the displacement of people. In a similar vein, Brian Elliott discusses the nuances of constructing communities in urban spaces, Alexander Kolokotronis and Michael Menser offer an illuminating treatment of the power of civic engagement, and Chad Kautzer grapples with the ramifications of the Occupy movement. These issues are intimately connected to questions of citizenship.

Citizenship The Western concept of "citizen" was born and grew up in the ancient cities of Athens and Rome but by the 16th century, Hobbes and other philosophers were transforming the concept to fit emerging new political forms that were consolidating cities and rural territories into what became the nation-state. But recent globalization pressures and the rise of megacities, which dwarf many nation-states, give rise to new questions about citizenship. There are also a growing number of stateless persons that challenge the grounding of citizenship rights in the state. Chapters in this section explore the shifting terrain and how philosophers have and can contribute to our rethinking of citizenship. They also explore alternative models of citizenship engagement developed through movements like Black Lives Matter, Occupy, and right to the city. Paul C. Taylor also helps us understand how the work of these movements can and should inform our philosophical thinking.

Several chapters engage questions about cities as public spaces, or as having public spaces, or as a place to create common spaces (see, e.g., the chapters by Paula Cristina Pereira, and Brian A. Weiner). The concept of the right to the city often emerges in these discussions, as cities can be seen as places to exercise or claim rights to citizenship in a broader political sense that is not tied to the nation-state but to the urban condition in a globalized world.

The influences of globalization and of neoliberalism— that is, the emergence of laissez-faire market economic theories and policies that privilege the global circulation of capital— are themes that emerge throughout the volume, but particularly in the sections on politics and citizenship. Benjamin Boudou asks us to think about migration policy in the context of the sanctuary city movement. Sharon M. Meagher's "Ghost Cities" chapter focuses on the megacities of the Global South, asking what sorts of philosophical concepts we can bring to analyze the challenges and opportunities afforded by rapid urbanization around the globe. With a similar goal in mind, Peter Marcuse also uses the city as a touchstone for discussing philosophical questions, such as the connections between planning and what constitutes a "good" city.

Urban environments and the creation/destruction of place

As we discussed earlier in this introduction, many philosophers of the environment have ignored the city, as they equated the environment with wilderness, as that which escaped and remained outside the city. But in the last 15 years, philosophers of the environment began to question the dichotomous thought that separated “city” from “environment,” recognizing that cities also include nonhuman species, plants, water, and multiple types of terrain. The environmental justice movement also has exposed the ways that some cities or parts of cities have become the dumping grounds for others’ wastes and toxins. Pressures of growth place even greater strains on urban infrastructures and natural environs. This section contains chapters that outline the rich contributions that philosophers are now making on these issues. For example, Robert Kirkman discusses metropolitan growth, connecting the city to the ebbs and flows associated with the development of place, while Irene J. Klaver and J. Aaron Frith provide an illuminating account of the sociopolitical-cultural ramifications of green infrastructure. In this vein, Michael Goldsby’s chapter grapples with climate change mitigation in the city. And both Cynthia Willett and Samantha Noll challenge readers to broaden their conceptions of the modern city, so that it can be understood as a home for a wide range of animal species (beyond the human) and as a fertile space for food production.

Philosophical engagements

The last section of the volume includes interviews with philosophers who report on various types of philosophical engagement with cities or urban communities, as we thought it important to provide not only notes for further research but also for other types of philosophical engagement, including teaching and community outreach. We include these as interviews rather than chapters to highlight the fact that the new content and methodologies of philosophy of the city demand that our work take different forms. The content of these interviews suggests that rich variety of place-based work in which philosophers are (and can be) engaged.

Conclusions

Taken together, the chapters in this volume offer both philosophers and urban social scientists new ways to connect theory and practice so that we might address some of the greatest challenges of our time, challenges that are relevant not only to academics but to all of us, as cities affect the lives of all. Cities magnify and intensify human cultural achievements and the diversity of the human social and political project as well as social injustices and environmental crises. The purpose of a *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of the City* is to gather those essays together to provide a state of the subfield so that we can open up new directions in urban studies.

We hope that our readers will continue to build and improve on the excellent contributions to this volume. Most chapters end with suggestions for further research and direction, and the authors do well in citing existing gaps in both specific content areas of philosophy of the city as well as in the subdiscipline overall. There are admittedly gaps in this volume; there are some urban issues that have thus far received scant attention from philosophers. One of the functions of this volume is to lay out the state of current research in philosophy of the city to spur new research and questions; understanding the contributions that philosophers of the city have been and are making is crucial, but so is highlighting the glaring gaps where there remains much work to be done. Much greater attention needs to be paid to the wide-ranging issues of

diversity, inclusion, and injustice in the city. This is particularly true in the Global South, where urbanization is progressing at a more rapid rate than in the Global North.

Both the new philosophical methodologies and the content of the chapters featured in this *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of the City* should provide readers with a new sense of hope for what philosophy might contribute while also enabling us to recognize its limits. It is our hope that this transformative journey is just beginning, as philosophers of the city engage both with other academic disciplines and with urban communities across the globe to improve the quality of urban life (and thus the lives of all beings) and affirm the right to the city for all urban dwellers and a realized vision for beautiful, sustainable, and just cities.

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