

Philosophers in the city : summary

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Summary

Philosophers in the city

The book *Philosophers in the City* was written on the occasion of the centenary of the founding of the Philosophical Seminar at the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University in Brno. It is devoted to the first nine philosophers who held the position of the Head of the Philosophical Seminar, which later became the Department of Philosophy. Their life, work, and activity at the position of the Head are documented by excerpts from their academic and popularizing texts, from materials stored in the Archives of Masaryk University. The selected texts provide insight into their official and personal correspondence, diary entries, memories of their contemporaries, and other documents related to their work and life. I attempted to connect and parallel the selected texts and archives with general philosophical themes and European philosophers of the time as well as contemporary philosophers. One of the aims of these connections, parallels, and emphases of the perennial philosophical problems that were part of the ideas and works of the selected nine philosophers is to point out the natural connection of regional philosophical thinking to European and world philosophy. The presented reminder of the century-old history of the Department of Philosophy could stimulate the question of whether the „philosophical grass“ in the neighboring garden is really always „greener“. It is and should be clear that we have common topics of interest with the first nine men at the head of the department. In another context, we share them with the philosophers of the present and previous generations, just as they shared them with the philosophers of their own and previous generations. Awareness of this natural philosophical continuity is compactly described in the verses of the Brno poet Jan Skácel: „*It is yesterday, it will be today and it was tomorrow...*“ The selected excerpts, archival materials, their comments, and supplements do not always emphasize only the professional curriculum, the venerable books written by these philosophers, their research, and teaching activities. I also pay attention to what can be called *parva philosophica*, that is, trifles, mentions, notes, insignificant traits of philosophers who are slowly becoming unknown and foreign to the students of the department. This includes memories of contacts with colleagues, links to interests, inclinations, pleasures, jokes, and other leisure activities. For some of these philosophers, these activities and interests are often casually blended with philosophy or a philosophical view of events and their surroundings. And small notes and observations may not be far from the so-called canonical or large issues. Respect for our predecessors can also be shown with a touch of humor because humor and anecdote can lead us to forms of intellectually non-trivial exercise of reason. In the text, as in everyday life and memories of it, serious things and trifles, which can be described as whims, are collected. In the same way, I could not avoid mentioning death in the book. As we enter the next hundred years of the existence of the Department of Philosophy, it may be found appropriate to remind us of the hundred years that have passed since the founding of the Philosophical Seminar.

