

**Hirata, Johannes. Happiness, ethics and economics. Routledge, 2011. 185p bibl indexes (Routledge frontiers of political economy, 142) ISBN 9780415584043, \$130.00**

German economist Hirata wrote this book essentially as a doctoral dissertation. Unfortunately, it reads like one. The writing style is tedious, and the arguments laborious, making it tough sledding. However, the notes, bibliography, and indexes provide excellent references for scholars. Happiness research has been one of the hot areas for economists, psychologists, and other academics in recent years, resulting in publication of academic journal articles, institutes, activist movements, and even popular volumes for the general public. In one sense, this could have been a welcome complement to that literature, turning the general subject of subjective well-being back toward its intellectual origins in religion, philosophy, and ethics, including questions of the role and importance of happiness in society. The author reviews the literature on happiness, provides a long discourse on happiness and ethics, and then introduces his own contribution--that of "good development"!

(as distinct from economic development or economic growth) as a societal goal for human betterment. This is a monograph for those who want an intellectual challenge without the trappings of reader-friendly popular frameworks and contexts. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students, faculty, and researchers.