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978-1-107-08153-6 - Heidegger and Politics: The Ontology of Radical Discontent

Alexander S. Duff

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## Heidegger and Politics

In this fresh interpretation of Heidegger, Alexander S. Duff explains Heidegger's perplexing and highly varied political influence. *Heidegger and Politics* argues that Heidegger's political import is forecast by fundamental ambiguities about the status of politics in his thought.

Duff explores how in *Being and Time* as well as earlier and later works, "everyday" human existence is presented both as irretrievably banal but also as our only tenuous path to the deepest questions about human life. Heidegger thus points to two irreconcilable attitudes toward politics: either a total and purifying revolution must usher in an authentic communal existence, or else we must await a future deliverance from the present dispensation of Being. Neither attitude is conducive to moderate politics, and so Heidegger's influence tends toward extremism of one form or another, modified only by explicit departures from his thought.

Alexander S. Duff was educated in the humanities and history at Carleton University and received his Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. He has held fellowships from the Tocqueville Program for Inquiry into Religion and American Public Life at the University of Notre Dame and from the Program for the Study of the Western Heritage at Boston College, and taught at Skidmore College and College of the Holy Cross. He writes widely in the history of political philosophy, and his publications on classical, modern, and contemporary political philosophy have appeared in both scholarly and popular publications.

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## *The Ontology of Radical Discontent*

ALEXANDER S. DUFF

*College of the Holy Cross*



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*For Catherine and Michael Zuckert*

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One ought to state not only the truth but also the cause of the falsehood.

– Aristotle

There are two types of genius: those to whom the task of forming, ripening, and perfecting has fallen, and others who have to become the cause of new modes of life ... like the Germans?

– Nietzsche

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# Abbreviations

References to works of Martin Heidegger are provided parenthetically in the text. Of these, those indicated “GA” indicate a volume of the Gesamtausgabe included in the bibliography. Other abbreviations are included below; in the text, they are followed by the page number, except where indicated.

- BH      *Becoming Heidegger*, ed. T. Kiesel and T. Sheehan, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007.
- BPP     *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. R. Rojcewicz and D. Vallega-Neu, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- BW      *Basic Writings*, ed. D. F. Krell, revised edition, New York: Harper Collins, 1993.
- CPE     *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, trans. R. Rojcewicz and D. Vallega-Neu, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- EG      “On the Essence of Ground,” trans. W. McNeill in P, pp. 97–135.
- FCM     *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, trans. W. McNeill and N. Walker, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- HCT     *History of the Concept of Time*, trans. T. Kiesel, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- IM      *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. G. Fried and R. Polt, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- KJPW    “Comments on Karl Jaspers’ *Psychology of Worldviews*,” trans. J. van Buren, in P, pp. 1–38.
- KPM     *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. R. Taft, fourth edition, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- N4      *Nietzsche. Volume IV. Nihilism*, trans. David Krell, San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1982.

- P      *Pathmarks*, ed. W. McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- PRL    *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. M. Fritsch and J. A. Gosetti-Ferencei, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004. [References in the text are followed by the German pagination from GA 60, a slash, then the English pagination.]
- PS     *Plato's Sophist*, trans. R. Rojcewicz and André Schuwer, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004.
- S      *Supplements*, ed. J. van Buren, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.
- SZ     *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 17<sup>th</sup> edition, 1993. [Translations in the text follow the MacQuarrie and Robinson edition with minor changes.]
- TDP    *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. T. Sadler, London: Athlone Press, 2000. [References in the text are followed by the German pagination from GA 56/57, a slash, then the English pagination.]
- WM    "What is Metaphysics?" in P, pp. 82–96.