



Castoriadis Against Heidegger: Time and Existence

Alexandros Schismenos

The life and politics of Martin Heidegger raise a serious question: How was one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century willing to ally himself with Nazism and what does this mean for philosophy? Because the influence of Heidegger's thought continues to spread, we must confront him at the core of his philosophy, using the concepts of autonomy, temporality and freedom. The most important philosophical challenge to Heideggerian thought has been expressed by Cornelius Castoriadis. This vital new study outlines the Castoriadian philosophy of time in contrast to the Heideggerian and highlights the main points of their opposition. It deals with both philosophers' concepts and arguments around human existence, the individual, society, and temporality, extending to consider transformative contemporary phenomena like space exploration, cyberspace and online communications. The book revives the public debate around philosophy and politics, illuminating the importance of critical philosophical and political thinking.

“This book is a tour de force that excites those who agree or disagree with the philosophy of Heidegger. With clarity and sophistication, Schismenos revives the public debate to reveal the rich possibilities for another world. A must-read for everyone interested in a philosophy that matters.” – Vasilis Kostakis, Professor of P2P Governance at Tallinn University of Technology and Faculty Associate at Harvard University, and co-author of Peer to Peer: The Commons Manifesto (University of Westminster Press, 2019).

“Schismenos’s book provides a fresh and thorough interpretation of one of the greatest puzzles of twentieth century continental philosophy: Heidegger’s involvement with the Nazi regime and the implications this has on his philosophical heritage. Schismenos convincingly argues that the philosophy of Cornelius Castoriadis, by focusing on the intertwined philosophical issues of time and existence while standing on the opposite political ground—that of individual and personal autonomy—stands in direct opposition to the Heideggerian autocratic tradition. And that it can help modern criticism transcend the false distinction between the individual and society towards a new enlightenment of the project of social ecology and direct democracy.” – Nikos Ioannou, co-author of the book Castoriadis and Autonomy in the Twenty-First Century (Bloomsbury, 2021).

Alexandros Schismenos holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Ioannina and is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki. He has authored four books in Greek and several articles regarding social autonomy and political philosophy. He is also the co-author of Castoriadis and Autonomy in the Twenty-First Century (Bloomsbury, 2021) and Common Futures: Social Transformation and Political Ecology (Black Rose Books, 2021).

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