



## Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the Transition to Postmodernity

Gregory Bruce Smith

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Among the most influential and enigmatic thinkers of the modern age, Nietzsche and Heidegger have become pivotal in the struggle to define postmodernism. In this work, Gregory Smith offers the most comprehensive examination to date of the turn to postmodernity in the writings of these philosophers.

Smith argues that, while much of postmodern thought is rooted in Nietzsche and Heidegger, it has ironically attempted, whether unwittingly or by design, to deflect their philosophy back onto a modern path. Other alternative paths emanating from both Nietzschean and Heideggerian thought that might more powerfully speak to postmodern culture have been ignored. Nietzsche and Heidegger, Smith suggests, have made possible a far more revolutionary critique of modernity then even their most ardent postmodern admirers have realized.

Smith contends that the influences on the postmodern in the thought of Nietzsche and Heidegger are founded in a new vision of praxis liberated from theory. Ultimately, these philosophers do transcend the nihilism often found in the guise of postmodernism. Their thought is, moreover, consistent with the possibility of limited constitutional government and the rule of law. Smith's book takes the first step toward recovering these possibilities and posing the fundamental questions of politics and ethics in ways that have heretofore been closed off by late-modern thought.



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