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Hallowed Secularism

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4-18-2013

### April 18, 2013: Boston

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Title: Boston

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4/18/2013 – – I've been waiting to write about Boston to see if we might learn who was responsible for this crime. I admit that I have been hoping that the genesis of the act was domestic rather than foreign. I did not want to see all of Islam blamed for an attack perpetrated by a small group of criminals. We don't yet know what happened. But there are larger issues so I thought it best to go ahead. What does the violence of modern life mean? Each act, of course, has its own cause-and-effect. But what does the whole pattern mean, whether it is a movie theater or Newtown, Connecticut or the Boston Marathon? Martin Heidegger called all of this in 1935 the "darkening of the world, the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the reduction of human beings to a mass, the hatred and mistrust of everything creative and free... ." (Introduction to *Metaphysics*, 40) Heidegger linked all of this to Nietzsche, who wrote about the death of God. This death of God had nothing to do with atheism. God for Nietzsche was a representation of the entire ideal realm. He meant that we had lost, at least in the West, all sense of measure by which to orient ourselves. We no longer have a real answer to the question, What's the use? All the old measures that we trot out, including God and including Reason, are not convincing anymore. Heidegger attributed all this to what he called the forgetfulness of Being. But neither you nor I are ready yet for that. It is enough for now to know that we have lost something, something important, and we lack the means to retrieve it. We don't even know what it is we have lost.