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5-19-2015

### May 19, 2015: Martin Heidegger's Humanism

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#### Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2015). May 19, 2015: Martin Heidegger's Humanism. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/935>

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Title: Martin Heidegger's Humanism

Date: 2015-05-19T05:19:00.001-04:00

5/19/2015—Well, that title is certainly misleading. Heidegger made clear that he was not a part of humanism in the Letter on Humanism. Every humanism is grounded in metaphysics that Heidegger was trying to overcome. But yesterday, in reading Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy, I came across indications of the place of the human being that I could only call humanism. The terms will be strange upon first hearing them. The subtitle of Contributions is Of the Event. The event is that which appropriates the human being. (You could return to the statement in Introduction to Metaphysics—the human being is that being for whom being is an issue). Heidegger writes often of the gods or the god. You could hear divinity. But you could also hear history. Creativity. Holiness. Significance. Heidegger places the Supreme Being of Christian and Jewish thought in the tradition of metaphysics. So he is not speaking of a being when he speaks of God. Here are the two sentences that struck me. “[The fissure of being] can come into question only if the truth of being as event lights up, specifically as that of which the god has need in such a way that the human being belongs intrinsically to the event.” “The appropriating event conveys god to the human being, even while it assigns the human being to god.” In some way, Heidegger sees being as between the human being and the god. The point for me is not just that the human being is claimed—Heidegger would write that expressly in the Letter on Humanism. The point for me is that the god needs the claimed human being. This is not a recapitulation of Christian thought, though it evokes Christian thought. It is an essential task of humans. God—the call of what is essential here and now—comes to us and we are thereby claimed. This is a way to think human life that could be called religious, though Heidegger would point out that such universalisms are metaphysical. This thinking calls forth a credible way of life outside the usual categories of religion and nonaffiliation. There is something important for humans to be.