



World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis, and the Imagination (Meridian - Crossing Aesthetics)

Cornelius Castoriadis

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This collection presents a broad and compelling overview of the most recent work by a world-renowned figure in contemporary thought. Starting from an inquiry that grows out of the specific context of a society that is experiencing uncertainty as to its ways of living and being, its goals, its values, and its knowledge, one that has been incapable, so far, of adequately understanding the crisis it is undergoing, Castoriadis sets as his task the elucidation of this crisis and its conditions.

The book is in four parts: Koinonia, Polis, Psyche, Logos. The opening section begins with a general introduction to the author's views on being, time, creation, and the imaginary institution of society and continues with reflections on the role of the individual psyche in racist thinking and acting and on the retreat from autonomy to generalized conformity in postmodernism. The second part is a critique of those who now belittle and distort the meaning of May '68 and other movements of the sixties as well as the French Revolution. The fate of the "project of autonomy" is considered here in the light of the Greek and the modern "political imaginary," the "pulverization of Marxism-Leninism," and a recent alleged "return of ethics" (Habermas, Rawls, McIntyre, Solzhenitsyn, Havel).

In part three, Castoriadis shows how psychoanalysis, like politics, can contribute to the project of individual and collective autonomy and challenges Lacan, Foucault, Derrida, and others in his report on "The State of the Subject Today." This section also presents his most current lines of psychoanalytic research and thought on the "human nonconscious" in the body and on the problem of the psychoanalysis of psychotic subjects, where an alternative coherence on the level of meaning offers a constant challenge to the task of psychoanalytic interpretation.

Castoriadis's highly original investigations of the unruly place of the imagination in Western philosophy round out the book. He examines how Aristotle's original aporetic discovery and cover-up of the imagination were repeated by Kant, Freud, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty.

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