

Ontology and Revelation: Heidegger's Influence on Bonhoeffer's Theology

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Nik Byle, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Christological Reinterpretation of Heidegger*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books 2021. USD 100.00, ISBN 978-1-7936-4342-1.

Heidegger's relation to theology is a topic of enduring interest for Heidegger scholarship. There are two main reasons for this: first, because of the role of theological and religious thinkers in Heidegger's own formation. The apostle Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard all provide raw material for his early phenomenological and hermeneutical investigations of concrete, factual existence. Second, because of Heidegger's impact on theologians like Rudolf Bultmann, Erich Przywara, Karl Rahner, Ernst Fuchs, Gerhard Ebeling, and Eberhard Jüngel.

Heidegger's influence on these theologians is well known. Less known is Heidegger's influence on the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian best known for influential works of Christian spirituality like *Discipleship* and *Life Together*, as well as his involvement in the anti-Nazi resistance – an involvement that led to his arrest, imprisonment, and eventual execution in April 1945. Yet Bonhoeffer was also an early reader of *Being and Time*. He read the book between February 1928 and February 1929, and by February 1930 had completed his *Habilitationsschrift*, entitled *Act and Being: Transcendental Philosophy and Ontology in Systematic Theology*. In it, Heidegger played a starring role.

Lay readers of Bonhoeffer have not typically been interested in these philosophical aspects of Bonhoeffer's theology, but among Bonhoeffer scholars the last two decades have seen a growing interest in Bonhoeffer's engagement with philosophy – not only with Heidegger, but also Hegel and other key thinkers in Continental philosophy. Nik Byle's new book, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Christological Reinterpretation of Heidegger*, is an excellent addition to this expanding field.

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One of the most helpful aspects of Byle's book is the way it unpacks and lays out the dense argumentation in *Act and Being*. Bonhoeffer's project is to attempt a theological coordination of, well, *act* and *being*, which refers to a cluster of inter-related problems. As Byle notes, "act" and "being" refer not so much to "things, but different ways or orientations of thought" (17). Temporally, act is "discontinuous,