



Roger Scruton: The Philosopher on Dover Beach

By Mark Dooley

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Roger Scruton is one of the outstanding British philosophers of the post-war years. Why then is he at best ignored and at worst reviled? Part of the reason is that he is an unapologetic conservative in the tradition of Edmund Burke. That conservative instinct was sharpened during the Paris riots of 1968. From that point on Scruton set himself the task of stridently opposing what he has since termed 'the culture of repudiation'. In so doing he targeted liberals in the tradition of Russell and Mill, existentialists like Sartre and post modernists in the fashion of Foucault.

Here is a brilliant description of Scruton's life and work and a careful analysis of his central ideas. Scruton defends an Hegelian and Burkean view of human nature, one founded on allegiance to the State as the guarantor of tangible freedom. He thus opposes any and all variations of the social contract theory, liberal or existential individualism or philosophical theories of the 'authentic' self in isolation from its kind. In recent years his conservative notion of the nation state has been used to reflect upon and criticise the European Union, the United Nations and the idea that the Middle East can be reformed along Western democratic lines.

Scruton, argues the author of this book, is the one British intellectual who has courageously rowed against the tide of liberal conviction and has arrived at political conclusions the truth of which are becoming more and more obvious. This book argues conclusively that Roger Scruton is a prophet for our times.

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Editorial Review

Review

'In this short, lucid study of Scruton's thought ... [Mark Dooley] mounts a powerful defence of an important thinker. Dooley covers all aspects of Scruton's thought, from sex and art to religion, politics and the defence of the nation.' - Alex Moffatt, *Irish Mail on Sunday*

'Dooley's book aims to show that Scruton's ideas are proving more and more true to our current times. This is an important and challenging re-appraisal of an important philosopher.' - Stav Sherez, *Catholic Herald*

'Sets out eloquently Roger [Scruton's] positions on politics and art - and explains why there was no one I ever commissioned to write whose articles provoked more rage'- Sir Peter Stothard, Editor, *Times Literary Supplement*

'Beautifully written, clear, concise, restrained, *Roger Scruton: The Philosopher on Dover Beach* is a masterpiece of concise exposition, a model of clarification and, above all, a pleasure to read. For anyone who wants a comprehensive overview of Scruton's work, Dooley's book is indispensable. There is no other work of this kind on the market. Short of reading all of Scruton's writings yourself, there can be no better way to gain a clear understanding of this most significant of contemporary philosophers.' - *Yearbook of the Irish Philosophical Society*

'Dooley makes a strong case for taking [Scruton] seriously and puts to rest the absurd and, thankfully, now less fashionable view that he is the 'unthinking man's thinking man" - *The Journal of Philosophy*

About the Author

Mark Dooley has held lectureships at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, and at University College Dublin where he was John Henry Newman Scholar of Theology. From 2003-2006, he wrote a controversial column on foreign affairs for the *Sunday Independent*. Since 2006, he has written for the *Irish Daily Mail*. Dooley is also a regular broadcaster on Irish radio and television, and has served as a political speech writer. He is author of *The Politics of Exodus: Kierkegaard's Ethics of Responsibility* (2001), *The Philosophy of Derrida* (2007), and *Roger Scruton: The Philosopher on Dover Beach* (2009). He is editor of *Questioning Ethics* (1999), *Questioning God* (2001), *A Passion for the Impossible* (2003), and *The Roger Scruton Reader* (2009).

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