

·THE SEDUCTION OF UNREASON·

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# THE SEDUCTION • OF UNREASON •

THE INTELLECTUAL ROMANCE WITH FASCISM

• FROM NIETZSCHE TO POSTMODERNISM •

*Second Edition*

*With a new preface by the author*

• RICHARD WOLIN •

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*For EMMA, SETH, and ETHAN*

*May you stay forever young*



Thinking begins only when we have come to know that Reason, glorified for centuries, is the most stiff-necked adversary of thought.

—MARTIN HEIDEGGER, “The Word of Nietzsche: ‘God is Dead’”

All knowledge rests upon injustice; there is no right, not even in the act of knowing, to truth or a foundation for truth; and the instinct for knowledge is *malicious* (something murderous, opposed to the happiness of mankind).

—MICHEL FOUCAULT, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, and History”

Reason must in all its undertaking subject itself to criticism; should it limit freedom of criticism by any prohibitions, it must harm itself, drawing upon itself a damaging suspicion. Nothing is so important through its usefulness, nothing so sacred, that it may be exempted from the searching examination, which knows no respect for persons. Reason depends on this freedom for its very existence. For reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens, of whom each one must be permitted to express, without let or hindrance, his objections or even his veto.

—IMMANUEL KANT, *The Critique of Pure Reason*

