



# Merleau-Ponty in Contemporary Context: Philosophy and Politics in the Twenty-First Century

*Douglas Low*

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## **Merleau-Ponty in Contemporary Context: Philosophy and Politics in the Twenty-First Century**

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This volume presents the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a great philosopher and social theorist of mid-twentieth century, as a viable alternative to both modernism and postmodernism. Douglas Low argues that Merleau-Ponty's philosophy offers explanations and solves problems that other philosophies grapple with, but do not resolve, given their respective theoretical presuppositions and assumptions.

Low brings the work of Merleau-Ponty into critical contact with important thinkers, including Sartre, Heidegger, Derrida, and Marx. He highlights Merleau-Ponty's connection to the early Hegel, especially with regard to the criticism of modernism's "representational consciousness" and its subsequent skepticism with regard to our being in the world. Merleau-Ponty made a concerted effort to solve the problems that come about due to a wide variety of Western dualisms: body and mind, perception and conception, self and other, etc. He frequently does so by demonstrating the connection between these disparate terms, the connection of perception with affect and interest, fact with value, and a broadened view of science with moral and philosophical judgment.

Merleau-Ponty's unique contribution is his focus on the lived-through perceiving body and its relationship to abstract thought and language. In his detailed analysis of the work of Merleau-Ponty, Low brings attention to a twentieth-century master capable of altering the landscape of modern and social philosophy in the twenty-first century.

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