

Heidegger's *Black Notebooks* and the Question of Anti-Semitism

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Heidegger's silence following the discovery of the horrors of Nazism was well known. In recent times, there is an ongoing effort to uncover the ultimate reasons that led him to sympathize with the National Socialist movement. However, Heidegger did not remain silent. A significant number of documents – some of them recently published – clearly capture his personal and political opinions. At the same time, he hastens to add excuses and downplay the level of his involvement. Fortunately, the recent publication of his philosophical journal in the spring of 2014 – known within the framework of Heideggerian studies as the *Black Notebooks* (*Schwarze Hefte*) – now allows new light to be shed on his level of personal commitment to National Socialism and a reevaluation of the political dimension of his thought.¹

The publication of the first few volumes of the so-called *Black Notebooks* has undoubtedly re-kindled the controversy. The controversy started up even before the publication of these notebooks. The circulation of some of the book's extracts generated a bitter discussion in various German, French, and Italian journals among defenders and critics of Heidegger's thought and image.² It is indisputable that the *Black Notebooks* contain some controversial and ambivalent statements about the topic of Jews and Judaism – a fact that has re-awakened the prickly subject of anti-Semitism and triggered a re-opening of the so-called Heidegger Case.

Nevertheless, faced with the abundance of documentary material and evidence available today, one must be sensible and cautious when

reconsidering the problem of Heidegger, his politics, and anti-Semitism. Besides asking “Was Heidegger a Nazi?” and “Was Heidegger an anti-Semite?” it seems more suitable to inquire about the type of National Socialism that he was aiming to establish during his time as rector of the University of Freiburg. Furthermore, his political discourse of the thirties cannot be read on the fringes of the German socio-historical context, characterized by the fall of the Weimar Republic and the National Socialist Party’s rise to power. For Heidegger, German identity is founded upon groundedness in one’s homeland. Proceeding from this basic idea, the present work addresses the following four issues.

First, what the *Black Notebooks* are is explained. Secondly, a brief description of the so-called Heidegger Case is provided, as well as a review of the current state of the investigation regarding Heidegger’s connection to National Socialism. Thirdly, an analysis is offered of the role and spiritual significance that Heidegger gives to groundedness (*Bodenständigkeit*), to homeland (*Heimat*) and to the people (*Volk*) as unifying elements of German identity. This analysis is carried out starting with the influence exerted on him by his reading of Yorck, Spengler and other representatives of the conservative movement of right-wing Germans who were opposed to the Weimar Republic. Lastly, the prickly subject of Heidegger’s anti-Semitism is settled.

I. WHAT ARE THE *BLACK NOTEBOOKS*?

Around the year 1930, a time in which the well-known turning (*Kehre*) started, Heidegger undertook the drafting of texts that aimed to clarify central elements of his most esoteric thought, especially the philosophical and conceptual experiments regarding the thought of the enowning-event (*Ereignis-Denken*), which begins to flourish in *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936–38). His brother Fritz Heidegger was already alluding to these notebooks in a 1950 letter to Hugo Friedrich: “Heidegger is completely himself in the actual manuscripts (not in the courses and lectures); these manuscripts themselves are here almost intact, only a few have been transcribed. That fundamental attitude that should be the beginning and end of all philosophizing appears here; for a while

I have been calling it humility. Here, in these manuscripts are hidden away the gems and delights of Heideggerian thought. I hope that they remain hidden for a long time.”⁵

Heidegger himself made a decree – incidentally very Nietzschean – that these manuscripts should be kept closed for at least one hundred years, just as is deduced from the testimony of his son Hermann Heidegger: “When I die, what you must do is seal everything that I leave behind, tie it up and file it away for one hundred years. The times are still not ready to understand me.”⁴ The hesitation that Heidegger showed concerning the publication of his *Collected Works* is already known. Even in 1972 he wrote to his publisher Vittorio Klostermann: “Regrettably, I cannot grant your wish to print a complete edition of my works.”⁵ Nevertheless, the editor succeeded in convincing Hermann Heidegger to establish a common objective, and finally, in 1973, Heidegger agreed to the proposal of an edition of his works.

The *Black Notebooks*, through Heidegger’s own wish, should have been published once the 102 volumes that compose the *Collected Works* (*Gesamtausgabe*) had been printed. However, said wish was not carried out to the letter. Given the great interest generated by these notebooks, three of the new volumes were published this past spring of 2014 by the German publishing house Vittorio Klostermann.

All the same, what do the *Black Notebooks* consist of? For decades, these texts have composed one of the myths surrounding the image of Heidegger, one of the best-kept secrets stored in the Heidegger Archives in Marbach. In the opinion of the few who have had access to them, they are the essence of his philosophy. The co-editor of the *Gesamtausgabe* and last assistant to Martin Heidegger, Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, expresses the importance of these *Black Notebooks* in the following terms:

A separate issue are volumes 94 to 102 of the fourth division. These volumes contain the so-called *Black Notebooks and Workbooks*, as Heidegger called them. They begin in the year 1931, that is to say, just at the beginning of his thought on the history of being, and

they end the year of his death. The *Black Notebooks* accompany his entire journey from 1931 to 1976. In this sense, they form a lengthy and, temporarily, contextual manuscript, despite being notes that started anew each week, each month, each year. [...] What is here is a dense collection of thought. [...] It is not only a different stylistic form; he mentions many things which, as he wrote them here, he would not write in any of the other essays, not even in the large ones. Because of this, these nine volumes are of great importance.⁶

In short, the *Black Notebooks* (GA 94-96) comprise thirty-four black-covered booklets, in which Heidegger composed a series of notes between 1931 and 1976. The first fourteen booklets – which have now been published – are entitled *Reflections* (*Überlegungen*) and span the years between 1931 and 1941. The other twenty booklets are classified as follows: nine of them are dedicated to *Observations* (*Anmerkungen*, the first volume of which was published in 2015), two of them to *Four Notebooks* (*Vier Hefte*), another two to *Vigils* (*Vigilae*), one to *Nocturne* (*Notturmo*), two more to *Hints* (*Winke*), and four to *Provisionals* (*Vorläufiges*). In the last few years two other notebooks have appeared – *Megiston* and *Fundamental Words* (*Grundworte*). As of now, it is not foreseen that the last two notebooks will be published within the framework of the *Gesamtausgabe*.

Why is it that so many expectations have arisen with regard to these texts? Until recently, it was thought that the *Black Notebooks* comprised a kind of philosophical journal, a log of thoughts that would provide the key to reading Heidegger's works. However, Heidegger has a surprise in store once again. As he himself asserts, it is not about aphorisms or any kind of wisdom-giving literature, but rather “simple little advance parties that generally try to conquer the road of a still indescribable reflection toward an initial questioning, which, unlike metaphysical thought, is called onto-historical” (GA 95: 274). The different representations that are found in the history of metaphysics are irrelevant. What remains crucial here is how one asks about being, not what is said about

it. In his text *Mindfulness* (1936–38), Heidegger refers to his notebooks, especially to *Reflections* II, IV, and V, with a reminder that in them are preserved “the basic mental states of questioning and the paths to the most extreme horizons of all attempts at thinking” (GA 66: 426). The act of emphasizing “the basic mental states of questioning” reinforces the idea that these reflections concern “attempts at thinking.” In this sense, the author of the notebooks decided to make an observation which likely dates to the beginning of the seventies, in which it is stated that the *Black Notebooks* “are not notes for a planned system, but instead, are really attempts at a simple naming” (GA 94: 1). It does not cease to surprise that in all these cases the *Black Notebooks* are considered mere attempts, approaches towards an earlier thinking, tries at saying the unspeakable, efforts towards thinking the unthinkable. If what remains “crucial” is “how one asks,” that is, how the meaning of being is put into words, then a new style of writing is found in the *Black Notebooks*. Along with his lectures, books, conferences, treatises, and discourses, there is a peculiar style that approaches what could be called a “thought journal” or “thinking diary” (*Denktagebuch*).

In general, there are philosophical reflections mixed with annotations about events of the time. Thus, in the more than 1,200 pages of GA 94–96 there are indicators of the course that his philosophy took after *Being and Time* and clarifications regarding his second fundamental work, *Contributions to Philosophy*. There are also opinions about his time as rector in Freiburg, and multiple reflections about the dangerous signs of the growing mechanization of everyday life and the fulfillment of technology as an expression of will to power, whose “ultimate act” will be carried out when “the earth itself explodes in the air” and “contemporary humans disappear” (GA 96: 238).⁷ However, along with these interesting observations about the trajectory of his thought and his assessment of the progression of the history of metaphysics, there are some intriguing strong opinions about National Socialism and, starting from 1938, his severe commentary about Judaism.

As Peter Trawny, the German editor of his notebooks, well observes, there is no evidence that Heidegger had read *The Protocols of the Elders*

of Zion, which spread the theory of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy.⁸ Nevertheless, part of Hitler's discourse spread the stereotypes that were proposed therein, which Heidegger assimilated and associated with his philosophical questioning in various sections of his work. That is to say, he associates calculability – the way of thinking of the contemporary time period – with the Jewish world-view, which he identifies with the spirit of calculation. In this way, the criticism of modernity is united with, and extended to, that of Judaism. Thus, in *Reflections VIII*, he writes: “One of the stealthiest forms of gigantism and perhaps the most ancient is the cleverness of calculation, pushiness, and intermixing whereby Jewry's worldlessness is established” (GA 95: 97). Also, in *Reflections XII*, he maintains: “Contemporary Jewry's increase in power finds its basis in the fact that Western metaphysics – above all, in its modern incarnation – offers fertile ground for the dissemination of an empty rationality and calculability” (GA 96: 46). Assertions such as these have reawakened the topic of anti-Semitism and revived the famous Heidegger Case. These first three recently-published volumes offer enough evidence to discard the image of Heidegger as an apolitical rural recluse shut up in his cabin, who ignored the socio-political reality of his time.

II. THE HEIDEGGER CASE: NEW DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AND THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The appearance of Heidegger's work has revealed serious doubts regarding the political viability of his thought. These doubts date to the political scandal – the so-called Heidegger Case – which led to the publication of the pioneering works of the late 1980s by Derrida, Farías, Lyotard, and Ott about Heidegger's entanglement in National Socialism.⁹ These first works concerning the political dimension of Heidegger's work were followed in the early 1990s by those of Nolte, Pöggeler, Rockmore, Sluga, Young, and Wolin, among others.¹⁰ In light of this scandal, it was realized that Heidegger can no longer be read in the same way, and that his connection with National Socialism was undeniable.

On the other hand, there is the official history as told by Heidegger himself at different moments in his life: from his reflective essay “The Rectorship 1933–34: Facts and Thoughts” and his letter dated November 4, 1945 addressed to the Denazification Committee of the University of Freiburg, to his well-known interview with *Der Spiegel* magazine in 1966.¹¹ To this is added the recent publication of his political discourses, academic proceedings, and radio-broadcast interviews of the thirties in volume 16 of the *Collected Works*, the well-known Rectoral Address, the controversial text of 1933–34 about *Nature, History, State*, the reflections from 1936 to 1938, and the commentary about the Jewish people found in *Contributions to Philosophy*.¹² Additionally, there are the opinions expressed by Heidegger’s contemporaries, such as Karl Löwith, Hermann Mörchen, Hans Jonas, Karl Jaspers, and Heinrich Petzet.¹³

After a few years of silence, the Heidegger Case was reopened with the books of Farías and Faye, which revealed new documents and political writings that aim to prove Heidegger’s Nazism.¹⁴ The volume organized by Tauereck appeared as well, which establishes a commonality of interests between Heidegger and National Socialism.¹⁵ However, this kind of extremely politicized interpretation shows some documentation errors and a high degree of bias, as has been evidenced in the latest research of Denker, Zaborowski, Grosser, and Xolocotzi.¹⁶

Despite the wide consensus within the field of Heideggerian studies regarding Heidegger’s political affiliation, the debate remains open, especially following the publication of new documents and political discourse contained in the Heidegger Archives and, of course, the recent publication of the *Black Notebooks*. These notebooks contain crucial biographical and political information about the turbulence of the Nazi era. Among other things, it remains clear that Heidegger rejects the National Socialist ideology of racial and biological oppression. The *Black Notebooks* demonstrate that Heidegger attempts to philosophically consider some of the questions posed by National Socialism, particularly the question of what it is that defines the German people (*Volk*). Barely anything is said of specific political matters. His interest lies more in

the spiritual and symbolic significance of the National Socialist revolution than in its particular effects.

The studies of Farías, Sheehan, Ott, and others have clearly proved the connection between Heidegger and National Socialism. However, the discussion of Heidegger's political stance frequently rests on an ahistoric conception of Nazism, which tends to be understood more as a moral failure than as a complex political, ideological, and social movement that ended in a Holocaust which is unparalleled in modern European history.¹⁷ National Socialism is not anything monolithic, but rather a movement which, especially in its initial stages, sought a political and social revolution that was dramatically transformed into a regime of human devastation.

Hence the necessity of situating Heidegger's texts within the context of the fall of the Weimar Republic and the National Socialist Party's rise to power. Noteworthy studies of Weimar include Gay's classic cultural approach, Fergusson's in-depth research into the economic consequences following the Treaty of Versailles, Weitz's sociological analysis, Jelinek's legal study of the Weimar Constitution, Möller's sociological approach, and Jay's historical explanation.¹⁸ To these it is worth adding Benz's studies of National Socialist ideology and the historical analyses of the specific academic context of the German university of the thirties compiled by Leaman and Martin.¹⁹

In conclusion, on the one hand, what Heidegger said during the era of the National Socialist regime – his reflections – and did – his actions – must be analyzed; and, on the other hand, it must be understood how those actions would be interpreted in relation to his philosophy and his historical context. In other words, the “official history” as told by Heidegger himself as well as the “Heidegger Case” must be completed, and, in part, corrected based on archival, documentary, historical and philosophical research. Here it is interesting to focus attention on reading Heidegger's reflections about Judaism as deeply rooted in the social and historical context of a conservative Germany, a Germany that was very critical of the Weimar Republic.

III. WHAT IS GERMANY? GROUNDEDNESS, HOMELAND, AND PEOPLE

III.A POLITICS OF THE LAND

Heidegger has a particular perspective on the history of being, in which a privileged relationship is established between the Greeks and the Germans – to be specific, between the Greek thinkers and the German poets. From his viewpoint, German identity is shaped linguistically, historically, and culturally around the notion of “homeland” or “native land” (*Heimat* or *Heimatland*). German spirit is not defined by the territorial model of the nation state, but rather by the groundedness that Germans establish through ties to their community and their history. As is known, Heidegger persistently rejected the biologism of Nazi ideology and its racist rhetoric. He seemed to be more interested in philosophically considering some of the main problems with National Socialism, particularly the question of what it means to be a people (*Volk*).²⁰ Here, a people is not thought of in racial or biological terms. A people identifies with the spirit of a nation. The state – as Heidegger points out – is a people’s way of being.²¹

Heidegger is convinced that philosophy in its original sense can only be carried out in dialogue with politics – albeit with a very specific notion of politics. In his case, it is not so much politics in an institutional, legal, and socio-economic sense as it is land politics, geopolitics, archi-politics.²² This land politics represents the historical and ontological space in which Dasein struggles to find its place. Its own sense of being is rooted in the community, in tradition, in history. Here, the land has an ontological significance.²³ It becomes the space that allows for the unfolding of basic human possibilities, this is to say, it comprises the field, the there (*Da*) in which and against which Dasein is self-fulfilled as a given political entity. As human beings inhabit the land and dwell in it, they create spaces whose borders do not necessarily coincide with territorial and/or geographical boundaries. The land constitutes what the Greeks call *chthōn*: the place where humans dwell and create a homeland (*Heimatland*).²⁴

What is the appropriate moment to carry out this kind of politics? The turbulent years of the Weimar Republic present the awaited opportunity – not only for Heidegger but for a large part of the German academic world.²⁵ The economic instability, social uprising, and political unrest of the Weimar era seem to offer the auspicious occasion (*kairos*) to free philosophy from the cosmopolitanism, liberalism, and, therefore, groundlessness (*Bodenlosigkeit*) that are characteristic of urban Weimar culture. In order to combat that groundlessness, Heidegger attempts to regain access to the deep roots of Germany and to the Western philosophical tradition. This explains the close relationship that is established between the German poets (Hölderlin, George, Trakl, Rilke) and the Greek thinkers (Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle). Already in his lectures of the summer semester of 1924, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Heidegger reminds his students of the necessity of restoring the groundwork that keeps Greek knowledge alive (GA 18: 36–37). What Heidegger refers to is nothing more than remaining on one’s own soil, permanence (*Ständigkeit*) on one’s land (*Boden*). This return to German origins of homeland is a common claim of the conservative wing of the so-called “people’s movement” (*Volkstum*). Authors such as Paul Yorck von Wartenburg and Oswald Spengler are two representatives of this movement who, among others, had a strong influence on Heidegger.

III.B YORCK AND GROUNDEDNESS IN ONE’S HOMELAND

The same years in which Heidegger dedicated great effort to interpreting Aristotle’s texts on practical and political philosophy (1924–25) are also marked by his detailed reading of the correspondence between Paul Yorck von Wartenburg and Wilhelm Dilthey, which was published in 1923. In the letters Yorck sent to Dilthey, which crucially influence the meaning of historicity in *Being and Time*, Heidegger finds an important source of inspiration for his concept of “homeland” (*Heimatland*). In many of these letters, Yorck returns time and again to the subject of Germany’s groundlessness (*Bodenlosigkeit*) and supports a life that is rooted in one’s own soil and in historical tradition. Remaining in one’s homeland constitutes a primordial element of stability (*Ständigkeit*) – as

much for the individual as for the community. Those who abandon their own soil in favor of the flux of capital and urban life have lost their ties to their own historical identity. Here, Yorck points to Jews as an example of this kind of life that is governed by money and a desire for profit: “Jews – that entire tribe lacks all feeling toward physical and psychological ground.”²⁶

The interest Yorck shows in place of birth and in a life settled in one’s homeland generated great influence on Heidegger’s thought. By reconfiguring German identity in terms of groundedness and autochthony rather than by strictly economical and territorial criteria, Yorck emphasizes a fundamental dimension of German existence: its establishment in a land whose true significance is more historical than topographical. The understanding Yorck has of homeland and of local landscape as forces that form German historical destiny provide Heidegger with a model that allows him to consider the connection between groundedness (*Bodenständigkeit*) and destiny (*Geschick*). In paragraphs 75–77 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger revisits Yorck’s analysis and offers a particular understanding of the destiny of human existence: Dasein, as determined by care (*Sorge*), never exists in solitude, disconnected from the heritage of its tradition. His reading of Yorck allows him to reconceptualize the constitutive roles of tradition and of groundedness in one’s homeland as two basic elements that determine individual and collective existence. This existence – of individuals as much as of communities – is something dynamic, and is subject to a constant process of revision and reinterpretation.

Yorck highlights the necessity of understanding Dasein not as an isolated, monadic, and bourgeois subject, but rather as an entity whose being is comprised by its generation. This means that the destiny of every individual (*Schicksal*) is closely interwoven with the collective destiny of the people (*Volksgeschick*) to which he/she belongs. Collective destiny, *Ge-schick*, is not something granted in advance. Instead, it is a collective search (*Ge-*) for the historical possibilities that tradition sends (*schickt*) to a community, possibilities which should always be fulfilled and adopted in conformity to their historical roots.

In Heidegger's opinion, groundedness is linked to historicity. *Dasein* – understood collectively as people – only becomes what it is (that is, German) in the struggle and the effort to recover its roots in history, language, and homeland. However, during the twenties and the era of the Weimar Republic, Heidegger never explicitly addresses the meaning of what it is to be German. This will not happen until the euphoric outbreak of National Socialism in 1933, the time when Heidegger shows growing interest in the topic of popular groundedness (*völkische Bodenständigkeit*) in open dialogue with the politics of the conservative revolution.²⁷ The emergence of National Socialism in 1933 offered Heidegger what Machiavelli called *l'occasione*: the political opportunity, the kairological occasion, the opportune moment for the German people and the role of leadership of their Führer. Beyond the writings, manifestos, and words of Heidegger, beyond his political intentions, one must understand his political stance within the framework of the academic conservatism of the time period, one of whose objectives consists of reestablishing the historical roots of the German people. This spirit of revitalization is strongly felt in the famous Rectoral Address of May 1933, "The Self-Assertion of the German University."

III.C THE GERMAN QUESTION

When it is asserted that Heidegger develops concepts such as "homeland," "community," and "people" from reading Yorck and Spengler, it is not suggested that the usage of such vocabulary justifies his involvement with Nazism, although neither can it be denied that it levels and eases the road toward a positive interpretation of the National Socialist movement. It can be claimed that the usage of such terms within the intellectual context of the time period is not merely accidental. This unexpected ideological background is easily mobilized when asserting Germanness (*Deutschtum*), reclaiming blood ties, protecting rootedness in the same soil, and appealing to sacrifice, patriotism, and nationalism.

In the final stages of the twenties one finds the testimonies of Max Müller and Hans Jonas, which confirm Heidegger's inclination toward the German nation (*deutsche Volkstum*) and his sympathies toward the

ideology of blood and soil (*Blut und Boden*). Max Müller describes the Freiburg Heidegger of 1928–29 as follows: “Heidegger developed a style with his students that was completely different from that of other professors. We went on many outings. Of course, connection to the people [*Volk*], nature, and the student movement was a recurring topic of conversation. The word ‘national’ [*völkisch*] was a favorite of his, even if he never associated it with any political party.”²⁸ Also, Hans Jonas offers the following account: “It is true that one could always detect in Heidegger a certain point of view influenced by the idea of ‘blood and soil.’ His origin from the Black Forest was of great importance to him. This was not only due to the fact that he loved skiing and the mountains, but also that it had something to do with his ideological standpoint: one should remain close to nature. Some of his observations showed a sort of primitive nationalism.”²⁹

Heidegger was truly convinced that a profound and lasting change in German reality was necessary when he wrote a letter to Elisabeth Blochmann in the spring of 1933 in which one detects revolutionary language that marks the defining moment of his entrance into the realm of politics: “For me, the present situation demands action in service of a great commitment and participation in the construction of a world founded in the people. We can find this, as well as the calling of the German people, in the history of the Western world, but only if we ourselves are exposed to and take ownership of it in a new way. The time for a first awakening has arrived.”³⁰

Heidegger’s assessment of German society of that time concludes with an appeal to change, a change that should lead to university reform. This is one of the messages expressed in his Rectoral Address. Incidentally, similar proclamations are found among rectors of other German universities of the same time period; for example, those of Hans Heyse at the University of Königsberg and those of Ernst Krieck at the University of Frankfurt. Heyse, Krieck, and Bäumlner, among many others, were convinced that German society’s road to transformation was through university reform and a return to Greek culture. A reform seasoned with an intense patriotic, military, national and heroic rhetoric; a reform that invokes strength and severity. In this context,

Heidegger sees himself as a transitional philosopher in a transitional time that heroically faces the dangers that stalk the university and, therefore, Germany during an era dominated by nihilism.

The footsteps of Ernst Jünger and Friedrich Nietzsche can be strongly seen here as well. Both helped Heidegger understand the profound metaphysical implications of their time. Beginning with his reading of Nietzsche and Jünger, initiated in the early thirties, Heidegger starts to realize that mechanization and nihilism are the forces that fuel the destiny of the West. The political and metaphysical causes of nihilism are the will to power and the groundlessness of the modern world. Heidegger wishes to shake the drowsy consciences of his contemporaries through a message of revelation (*Offenbarung*), a revelation that consists of a leap (*Sprung*) toward the origin (*Ursprung*).

In the midst of Heidegger's growing interest in Jünger, George, and Hölderlin one finds the basic question: "What is Germany?" Germany is able to determine its destiny in three ways: a) in the style of Jünger, who speaks of a "worker's Germany" within the framework of a new social and military tinted nationalism; b) in the style of National Socialism, which envisions a Germany subject to the *Führerprinzip* and race theory; c) in the style of Stefan George, who idealizes Hölderlin's notion of a Germany understood as a fatherland and homeland. The German fatherland (*deutsches Vaterland*) is the silent and secret origin that is still waiting to be discovered at the right moment. Again one finds the development of the myth of homeland (*Heimatland*) that answers to a clear kairological structure of time.

In fact, the *Black Notebooks* begin with an observation concerning the essence of the German people: "To be German: to cast the innermost burden of the history of the West before oneself and take it on one's shoulders" (GA 95: 2). One of the central questions that gives structure to many of Heidegger's reflections contained in the *Black Notebooks* is "Who are we?" Here, one takes a step away from *Jeweiligkeit*, the well-known being-in-every-case-mine of Dasein as analyzed in *Being and Time*, toward the second Heidegger's *Jeunsrigkeit*, the being-in-every-case-ours, that is to say, one takes a step away

from individual destiny toward the collective destiny of the German nation. Beyond the legitimate moral and political opinions that can be formulated against Heidegger's entanglement with National Socialism, it seems to be the framework from which one can philosophically interpret Heidegger's passages about Judaism, which, as is known, are integrated with his criticisms of modernity and with his repeated attacks on Americanism and Bolshevism.

Reconsidering the relationship that Höderlin establishes between the Germans and the Greeks, Heidegger finds a source of inspiration for his ideal of a German homeland. Germans – as he writes to Schwoerer recommending one of his students – should reassert their legacy or suffer the fate of a “growing Judaization” (*Verjudung*).⁵¹ The letter to Schwoerer concludes by differentiating Germans and Jews in terms of homeland. Germans are deeply rooted in their homeland (*Heimatland*) and in their native soil (*Vaterland*), while Jews are a people characterized by diaspora, migration, and exodus, that is, by groundlessness (*Bodenlosigkeit*). The Jews' urban and ungrounded way of life can come to represent a danger for the people's community (*Volksgemeinschaft*). From Heidegger's perspective, in which autochthony is based on groundedness in one's homeland, Jews are an ungrounded people. As Derrida observes, the only form of groundedness known to Jews is that of words and writing.⁵² Hence it should not be surprising that in 1933 Heidegger warned Jaspers of the “Jews' dangerous international network” and in *Contributions to Philosophy* he declares that “Bolshevism is Jewish” (GA 65: 54).⁵³ Nevertheless, one must be cautious when deciphering the meaning of Heidegger's statements. Heidegger is not a typical racist anti-Semite. He rejects biological racism on numerous occasions.⁵⁴

IV. ANTI-SEMITISM OR ANTI-JUDAISM?

Every time that Heidegger's connection with National Socialism is spoken of there is a tendency to pose the question of whether Heidegger was anti-Semitic or whether there are detectable anti-Semitic elements

in his philosophical works. The answer to this kind of question is not at all easy given the political implications and moral ramifications that it entails. Of course, it cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.” Before answering the question of whether Heidegger and his work are anti-Semitic it must be clear what is understood as anti-Semitism and, therefore, what is understood as anti-Judaism.³⁵ The differences between both phenomena must be clear in order to not fall prisoner to hasty judgments.

Thus, for example, one speaks of anti-Judaism having a religious and cultural basis and anti-Semitism having a biological and racial basis. There must be a distinction between, on the one hand, the tradition of hostility against Jews as members of a religious community, which dates to the first century, and, on the other hand, a political social movement of rejection of and discrimination against the “Jewish race.” Clearly, it is not a matter of downplaying Heidegger’s culpability. In discussing National Socialist anti-Semitism, it is difficult to find the right words to describe the events that occurred, particularly when attempting to explain the Holocaust. Neither is it easy to clearly determine the boundary between “anti-Semitism” and “anti-Judaism.” One cannot be understood without the other. The boundary between the two phenomena fluctuates.

Could perhaps two types of enmity against Jews be clearly distinguished? Would that not mean excusing anti-Judaism in comparison to anti-Semitism and its search for a “final solution” to the Jewish question? With all the difficulties involved in differentiating between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism and in being aware of the care that must be shown in using such differentiation, one cannot lose sight of the fact that there were and are important differences between: a) an ideological prejudice against Jews conditioned by cultural and religious motives, and b) the pseudo-scientifically justified goal of exterminating the whole “Jewish race.” As Zaborowski observes, even if one foregoes distinguishing between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism and chooses to use the general concept of “anti-Semitism,” it would be necessary to distinguish between different types of anti-Semitism – at least with

regard to Jews' social position and the use of violence against them.³⁶ When discussing Heidegger's relationship with Jews, one must keep in mind a set of distinctions and nuances about what "anti-Semitism" means. One cannot limit oneself to only a few sources.³⁷ Heidegger's thought process and life must also be considered from their specific historical context.

In practice, a clear difference must be established between anti-Semitism, understood as racial and biological animosity against Jews, and anti-Judaism, understood as reflecting a long-held European tradition against the Jewish people and religion. According to the documentary evidence available, it is difficult to speak of a systematic anti-Semitism in Heidegger's philosophy.³⁸ What can be detected in Heidegger are strong traces of a spiritual and cultural anti-Judaism, particularly present in the university and academic spheres. There is no doubt that Heidegger's relationship with Judaism is highly problematic and ambiguous, but his stance cannot be described as unilaterally anti-Semitic, if anti-Semitism is understood as the racial persecution and systematic annihilation of the Jews.

Therefore, how can the question of whether or not Heidegger was anti-Semitic be answered? Towards the end of the twenties the rumor was already circulating that Heidegger was anti-Semitic. Toni Cassirer, the wife of Ernst Cassirer, acknowledges in her autobiography that "[Heidegger's] tendency toward anti-Semitism was not unknown to us." Also, at the beginning of the thirties – as Bultmann points out – the rumor was spread that Heidegger had joined the National Socialist Party.⁴⁰ Even his old friend and former colleague, Karl Jaspers, in his report written for the University of Freiburg in 1945, showed reservations concerning Heidegger's attitude toward Jews.⁴¹ Additionally, in his letters from 1916 to his wife, Elfride Petri, published in 2005, Heidegger already spoke of the "jewification [*Verjudung*] of our culture and universities."⁴² Heidegger again speaks similarly of "jewification" in a 1929 letter addressed to Victor Schworer, the vice-president of the *Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft*.⁴³ These letters to his wife and Schworer are two instances that seem to clearly show a certain racist anti-Semitism.

Once again, there arises the same question that was posed at the beginning: what type of anti-Semitism does Heidegger support? In light of the available documentation, it seems difficult to speak of a racist or biological anti-Semitism in Heidegger. Also, in the *Black Notebooks* and in other writings there are passages in which Heidegger appears extremely critical of this type of anti-Semitism. It is true that Heidegger establishes a difference between Jews and non-Jews, but this difference is not based on biological criteria. His commentary about Jews is made from the perspective of spirit and not race. Thus, for example, in his book about Nietzsche he leaves it clear that “biology as such never decides *what* is living” (GA 6.1: 468/N3: 42). The true debatable question concerning Heidegger’s relationship with Jews cannot be settled in this way. Instead, one must consider how his philosophical approach to Hebrew tradition comprises a deciding moment in the way he interprets the whole history of philosophy. Heidegger is not interested – at least not philosophically speaking – in legitimizing the extermination of the Jews, but rather in reaching a critical understanding of their condition. His assessment of the present is strongly influenced by his interpretation of Nietzschean nihilism: the present is a time that is controlled by the metaphysical principle of will to power. The introduction of a “racial breeding,” which Heidegger speaks of in his texts about Nietzsche in the thirties (GA 6.2: 278/N3: 231), has nothing to do with what Faye calls “a selection of race like that which was in those times bloodily set in motion with National Socialism.”⁴⁴ It is not an ontological legitimization of National Socialist racism. The “breeding of human beings” (*Züchtung des Menschen*) is the culmination of the metaphysics of subjectivity; it is the maximum expression of modern technology in its attempt to exploit natural and human resources – a product of the mechanization (*Machinalisierung*) that governs the present. Heidegger believes that Nietzsche is the first to recognize the metaphysical character of the machine, which transforms human beings into a type (*Typ*); into a simple form (*Gestalt*) on which a shape can be imprinted; into material for experimentation (*Versuchsmaterial*) (GA 50: 55-56/N3: 229-30).

In this regard, the passage from the Bremen Lectures tends to be quoted in support of the theory that Heideggerian thought is essentially anti-Semitic. This is the argument of Wolin and Faye, among others. In the 1949 lecture entitled “Positionality” (*Das Ge-Stell*), it says: “Agriculture is now a mechanized food industry, in essence the same as the production of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockading and starving of countries, the same as the manufacture of hydrogen bombs” (GA 79: 27/27).⁴⁵ How can the “production of corpses” be placed together with the “mechanized food industry”? Besides Heideggerian insensitivity and the moral discussion about the Holocaust, Heidegger wanted to philosophically consider the deeper motives of the “production of corpses in the gas chambers.” From the perspective of Heidegger’s criticism of quickly-spreading planetary technology, the production of corpses is the expression and the consequence of the spiritual desertification that is inherent to the will to power. This will reduces anything, even any person or group, to a mere object of use and exploitation beyond any human, social, political, religious, or moral considerations. One might tremble before Heidegger’s insensitivity and “supposed” ignorance, but such does not do his thought justice. On the one hand, Faye’s and Farías’ interpretations and, to a lesser extent, Taureck’s, take passages out of context and, on the other hand, they do not seem to establish the necessary differentiation between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism.

In Heidegger’s case, it is a type of anti-Semitism that could be qualified as “religious,” “cultural,” or “spiritual.” In a letter to Hannah Arendt, in which he comments on the rumors about his anti-Semitism, it reads: “As to the rest, in matters related to the university I am as much an anti-Semite as I was ten years ago in Marburg. This anti-Semitism even found the support of Jacobstahl and Friedländer. This has nothing to do with personal relationships (for example, Husserl, Misch, Cassirer and others).”⁴⁶ When Heidegger speaks of “Judaization” (*Verjudung*), he does so from a given cultural context. Once again, one must tread carefully and avoid excusing Heidegger as a product of the spirit of his time. However, on the other hand, neither can one fall into making

generalized accusations. It seems that for every piece of evidence for anti-Semitism there is another piece of evidence against it.⁴⁷ Also, there is the argument that the existing documents can be interpreted in different ways. Without a doubt, this cultural or spiritual anti-Semitism was reinforced by National Socialism's pseudo-scientific anti-Semitism. Once again: it is not a question of downplaying Heidegger's anti-Semitism, but neither is it proper to deduce a direct relationship with the Shoah as exhibited by the radicalized racist ideology of Nazism.

The issue of Heidegger's culpability and relationship with Judaism is certainly problematic and, according to the latest statements contained in the *Black Notebooks*, very prickly. It is a relationship that has nothing to do with political matters, but rather seems to be classified within his interpretation of the metaphysical destiny of a Western world dominated by science and technology.⁴⁸ Heidegger's estrangement from the urban spirit of the Jews is not the result of a biological racism, but rather the consequence of his analysis of the metaphysics of subjectivity and nihilism. From this perspective, Jews represent empty rationality and the calculating spirit that is characteristic of the modern era. As he points out in the *Black Notebooks*: "The question about the role of Judaism is not racist, but rather a metaphysical question about [a] type of humanity" (GA 96: 243). One might not agree with Heidegger's criticism of modern technology, one might even wonder if Heidegger's understanding of modernity is not overly one-sided and simplified. However, if one analyzes Heidegger's confrontation with modernity, starting with the available texts, then the assertion that Heidegger justifies and condones the extermination of the Jews ends up being highly questionable. Does Heidegger exhibit anti-Judaism? Without a doubt. Anti-Semitism? Yes, as long as it is not directly associated with the racist interpretation of the Jewish people and National Socialism's policy of extermination. Should a great thinker like Heidegger be shown leniency? Probably not, but neither can his philosophical legacy be ignored. In any case, the *Black Notebooks* invite one to reflect upon philosophy's responsibility toward politics.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 “There will come a day, perhaps, when we will know every single aspect of Heidegger’s life and every single detail of his work. Perhaps, then, we will be able to establish a freer relationship to his philosophical heritage, not exclusively guided by finding traces of National Socialism in his thought.” Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political: Dystopias* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 3.
- 2 See, for example, Eric Aeschimann’s opinion in *Le Nouvel Observateur* regarding the polemic between François Fédier, Hadrien France-Lanorad and Peter Trawny (December 7, 2013). It is also worth mentioning the words of Donatella di Cesare, Vice-President of the Heidegger Gesellschaft and member of the Jewish Community in Rome, published in the Italian journal *La Repubblica* (December 18, 2013), the comments of Jürg Altweg on the collapse of French philosophy published in *Frankfurter Allge-meine Zeitung* (December 13, 2013), and the reply of the German editor of the *Black Notebooks* – Peter Trawny – published in the German journal *Die Zeit-Online* (December 27, 2013). For a rejoinder by the co-editor of Heidegger’s *Collected Works* – Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann – see the cultural supplement of the Italian journal *Avvenire* (July 17, 2014). Other German scholars – like Rüdiger Safranski, Günther Figal and Klaus Held – have discussed this issue on various radio and TV shows. Likewise, the international press has rekindled the controversy by publishing phrases and quotes where Heidegger openly expresses his attitude toward National Socialism and Judaism.
- 3 This letter can be found in the archives of the University of Freiburg; see Angel Xolocotzi, *Facetas heideggerianas* (Mexico: Los Libros de Homero, 2009), 66.

- 4 Interview with Hermann Heidegger; see Xolocotzi, *Facetas heideggerianas*, 66.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Angel Xolocotzi, “En torno a Heidegger: Diálogo con Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann,” *Revista de Filosofía* 108 (2003): 41f.
- 7 From Heidegger’s point of view, this is not a misfortune but rather the occasion, the *kairos*, for “purifying *being* [*Reinigung des Seins*] of its greatest distortions caused by the hegemony of entities [*des Seienden*]” (GA 96: 238). However, he clearly rejects the principles of racial purification applied by National Socialism. At the same time, he interprets world Judaism (*Weltjudentum*) as the highest onto-historical manifestation of the spirit of calculability and machination (GA 96: 46). Therefore, one should not read Heidegger’s words in a political or racial sense. Rather, he is developing his particular philosophical interpretation of the history of being. To put it differently, Judaism – together with Bolshevism, Americanism and National Socialism – is an onto-historic phenomenon.
- 8 See Peter Trawny, *Heidegger und der Mythos der jüdischen Weltverschwörung*, 3rd expanded ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2015), 45ff, 138.
- 9 See Jacques Derrida, *De l’esprit: Heidegger et la question* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1987); Victor Farías, *Heidegger et le nazisme* (Paris: Éditions Verdier, 1987); François Lyotard, *Heidegger et “les juifs”* (Paris: Débats, 1988); Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: Unterwegs zu seiner Biographie* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1989).
- 10 See Ernst Nolte, *Heidegger. Politik und Geschichte im Leben und Denken* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1992); Otto Pöggeler, *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers*, 3rd edition (Pfullingen: Neske 1990); Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger’s Nazism and Philosophy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Hans Sluga, *Heidegger’s Crisis: Philosophy and Politics in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Richard Wolin, *The*

- Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993); Julian Young, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- 11 See “Das Rektorat 1933/34 – Tatsachen und Gedanken (1945),” “Antrag auf die Wiedereinstellung in die Lehrtätigkeit – Reintegrierung (November 4, 1945),” and “*Spiegel*-Gespräch mit Martin Heidegger (September 26, 1966)” in GA 16: 372–94, 397–404, and 652–83, respectively.
- 12 See GA 16; “Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität (Mai 27, 1933)” (GA 16: 107–17); GA 65; and “Über Wesen und Begriffe von Natur, Geschichte und Staat. Übung aus dem Wintersemester 1933/34” in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, Heidegger Jahrbuch 4: Dokumente*, ed. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (München: Karl Alber, 2009), 53–88; *Nature, History, State: 1933–1934*, ed. and trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).
- 13 See, respectively, Karl Löwith, *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986); Hermann Mörchen, *Adorno und Heidegger. Untersuchung einer philosophischen Kommunikationsverweigerung* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981); Hans Jonas, *Erinnerungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003); Heinrich Petzet, *Erinnerungen an Martin Heidegger* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1977).
- 14 See Victor Fariás, *Heidegger y el nazismo* (extended edition) (Palma de Mallorca: Objeto Perdido, 2009); Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy*, trans. Michael B. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
- 15 B. Taureck (ed.), *Politische Unschuld? In Sachen Martin Heidegger* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2008).
- 16 The most flagrant example of this kind of biased misinterpretation is Julio Quesada, who ignores many of the texts published in GA 16; see Julio Quesada, *Heidegger de camino al holocausto* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2008). For latest research see Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (eds.), *Heidegger und der*

- Nationalsozialismus, Heidegger-Jahrbuch 5: Interpretationen* (München: Karl Alber, 2009); Florian Grosser, *Revolution denken. Heidegger und das Politische 1919 bis 1969* (München: Beck, 2011); Angel Xolocotzi, *Heidegger y el nacionalsocialismo: Una crónica* (México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 2013); Holger Zaborowski, “Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?” *Martin Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2010).
- 17 See Charles Bambach, *Heidegger’s Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003).
- 18 See Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (London and New York: Norton & Company, 1968); Adam Ferguson, *When Money Dies: The Nightmare of the Weimar Collapse* (London: William Kimber, 1975); Eric Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Cambridge: Princeton University Press, 2007); Walter Jelinek, Ottman Buhler, and C. Bornati, *La constitución de Weimar* (Madrid: Tecnos, 2010); Horst Möller, *La República de Weimar. Una democracia inacabada* (Madrid: Antonio Machado Libros, 2010); Martin Jay and Anton Kaes (eds.), *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
- 19 See Wolfgang Benz, Hans Buchheim, and Hans Mommsen (eds.), *Der Nationalsozialismus. Studien zur Ideologie und Herrschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1993); George Leaman, *Heidegger im Kontext. Gesamtüberblick zum NS-Engagement der Universitätsphilosophen* (Berlin/Hamburg: Argument, 1993); Bernd Martin, Eckhard John, Marc Mück, and Hugo Ott (eds.), *Die Freiburger Universität in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Freiburg: Ploetz, 1991).
- 20 Obviously, politics also plays an important role in Heidegger’s thought during his years as rector. For him, in 1933–34, the National Socialist state embodies a continuation and fulfillment of the Prussian state. In Heidegger’s opinion, Bismarck made the mistake of not including the working class in the state (*Nature, History, State*, 52). Hence his interest in and fascination with

National Socialism: “national” expresses the people’s element (*völkisch*); “socialism” refers to the integration of the worker. In this context, Hitler is the *Führer*; the person who represents and carries out the will of the people (*Völkswillen*). In 1933–34, the *Führer* and the *Führerprinzip* have a recurring presence in Heidegger’s philosophy of the state. However, already in 1934–35 one begins to detect signs of estrangement from and disappointment with the National Socialist regime and a growing interest in Hölderlin’s poetry and Nietzsche’s philosophy. For a detailed analysis of the stages of Heidegger’s thought during the National Socialist regime see Grosser, *Revolution denken*, 66–98.

21 *Nature, History, State*, 38. Concerning this, see Zaborowski’s interesting observations about Heidegger’s attempt to formulate an ontology of politics, a meta-politics starting from a spiritual perception of the people that has nothing to do with biological and racist criteria (“*Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?*” 414–20). Here, without a doubt, one notices the influence of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, to which Heidegger dedicated several work sessions in the semester of 1934–35 (see GA 86: 59–185).

22 See Bambach, *Heidegger’s Roots*, 14.

23 For example, the concept of “earth” as used in “The Origin of the Work of Art” does not refer to an idealized nature that is present before the appearance of culture. Instead, earth is a dimension of an individual’s existence that is manifested in one’s struggle with culture and the world. Earth is not a stable foundation, but rather a space for carrying out creative possibilities of existence; see GA 5: 35–36/26–27.

24 This can be seen in the interpretations of Hölderlin’s hymns that Heidegger offers in the lecture of 1934/35; see GA 39: 167ff/151ff.

25 For a detailed analysis of the entanglements of Freiburg University with National Socialism –and particularly Heidegger’s role as rector – see Bernd Martin, “Universität im Umbruch: Das Rektorat Heidegger 1933/34,” in *Die Freiburger Universität in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*, 9–23.

- 26 Paul Yorck von Wartenburg, “Katharsis,” in *Die Philosophie des Grafen Paul Yorck von Wartenburg*, ed. Karlfried Gründer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 174-175.
- 27 Ferdinand Tönnies is one of the main representatives of this people’s (*völkisch*) movement. According to him, the West is defined by two types of social organization: society (*Gesellschaft*) and community (*Gemeinschaft*). The first is an artificial association based on the idea of an interest-motivated free contract between individuals, while the second is characterized by family and blood ties, by sharing a common place and land, by having a same people’s spirit. Societies are governed by calculation, greed, power, ambition, vanity, profit, lack of spirit, and the exploitation of nature and of individuals. In contrast, communities are guided by passion, sensuality, courage, piety, imagination, respect for nature, and remaining in one’s homeland. In the words of Tönnies, “in the course of history, the people’s culture [*Kultur des Volkstum*] has become a state civilization [*Zivilisation des Staats-tum*].” See Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), 251. In Spengler, one can find a deeper development of Tönnies’ theses concerning culture’s decadence and the dangers of civilization at its peak. Heidegger came into contact with the motifs of “community,” “people,” and “culture” expressed by Tönnies through his reading of Spengler’s book *The Decline of the West*, a reading to which he dedicated several classes during the first Freiburg courses at the beginning of the twenties.
- 28 Max Müller, *Martin Heidegger. Ein Philosoph und die Politik* (Freiburger Universitätsblätter, 1986), 18.
- 29 Jonas, “Heidegger’s Resoluteness,” 200.
- 30 Martin Heidegger and Elisabeth Blochmann, *Briefwechsel 1918–1969* (Marbach: Deutsche Schillergesellschaft, 1990), 60.
- 31 See Ulrich Sieg, “Die Verjudung des deutschen Geistes. Ein unbekannter Brief Heideggers,” *Die Zeit* 52 (December 22, 1989).

- 32 See Jacques Derrida, “Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book,” in *Writing and Difference* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 77–91.
- 33 Jaspers, *Philosophische Autobiographie*, 101. Regarding *Contributions*, that does not mean annihilating the Jews. Heidegger is against the idea of a racial domination (see GA 65: 397).
- 34 See Richard Polt, “Jenseits von Kampf und Macht. Heideggers heimlicher Widerstand,” in *Heidegger Jahrbuch* 5: 156, 159, 169, and 171.
- 35 For a history of anti-Semitism see Wolfgang Benz, *Was ist Antisemitismus?* (München: Beck, 2004), 9–26; Wolfgang Benz and Werner Bergmann (eds.), *Vorurteil und Völkermord. Entwicklungslinien des Antisemitismus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1997); Julius Schoeps and Joachim Schlör (eds.), *Antisemitismus. Vorurteile und Mythen* (München/Zürich: Piper, 1996); and Detlev Claussen, *Vom Judenthass zum Antisemitismus. Materialien einer verleugneten Geschichte* (Darmstadt: Buchgesellschaft, 1987). It is also interesting to consult the history of the concept of “anti-Semitism” offered in Cornelia Schmitz-Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000), 34–39.
- 36 See Zaborowski, “Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?,” 603–604. More recently, Donatella di Cesare has meticulously analyzed the cultural and religious context as well as the theological and philosophical origins of Heidegger’s anti-Semitism. See Cesare, *Heidegger e gli ebrei. I “Quaderni neri”* (Roma: Bollati Boringhieri, 2014), 12–96. For my part, I have tackled this issue in “Heidegger e i Quaderni neri. La rinascita della controversia nazionalsocialista,” in *Metafisica e antisemitismo. I Quaderni neri di Heidegger tra filosofia e politica*, ed. Adriano Fabris (Pisa: Edizione ETS, 2014), 60–66.
- 37 In Heidegger’s work, particularly in the multiple volumes that compose the *Gesamtausgabe*, there is no perception of a systematic anti-Semitism that allows for the discussion of a philosophical anti-Semitism or, as Faye states, an introduction of Nazism

into philosophy. It is another matter to evaluate Heidegger's statements about Judaism from the perspective of his philosophical program. This work, of course, can be carried out at the same time that one continues to examine Heidegger's personal and political attitude and his sympathies toward certain aspects of National Socialist ideology. In this context, see the work of Roubach dealing with Heidegger's reception in Israel: M. Roubach, "Die Rezeption Heideggers in Israel" in *Heidegger Jahrbuch* 5, 419-32.

- 38 In this sense, one leans more toward the more moderate stances of Grosser, Martin, Safranski, Sluga, Thomä, Xolocotzi and Zaborowski than toward the accusations of Faye and Farías. In this regard, one might cite the letter that Herbert Marcuse writes to Heidegger in August of 1947, in which Marcuse accuses him more of a total lack of sensitivity than of an evil and perverse anti-Semitism; Herbert Marcuse, "Brief an Martin Heidegger vom 28. August 1947," in *Heidegger und das "Dritte Reich." Ein Kompendium*, ed. Bernd Martin (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 156.
- 39 Tony Cassirer, *Mein Leben mit Ernst Cassirer* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003), 187.
- 40 See Heidegger and Bultmann, *Briefwechsel* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2009), 187f, 191f. Heidegger himself confirms the existence of such rumors in a letter written to Hannah Arendt in the winter of 1932/33: Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt, *Briefwechsel 1925 bis 1975* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1999), 68.
- 41 See Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, *Briefwechsel 1920-1963* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1990), 270.
- 42 Martin Heidegger, *Letters to his Wife*, trans. R.D.V. Glasgow (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), 28. However, twelve years later he writes to his wife: "Indeed, the best are - Jews" (*ibid.*, 115). It remains difficult to support the theory that Heidegger was a spiritual anti-Semite in the twenties. This situation changes at the beginning

of the thirties with the growing importance shown to the issues of the German people and nation.

- 43 See Sieg, “Die Verjudung des deutschen Geistes.”
- 44 Emmanuel Faye, “Heidegger, der Nationalsozialismus und die Zerstörung der Philosophie,” in *Politische Unschuld? In Sachen Martin Heideggers*, ed. Bernhard Tauereck (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2008), 53.
- 45 For a critical interpretation of this passage, see Dieter Thomä, *Die Zeit des Selbst und die Zeit danach. Zur Kritik der Textgeschichte Martin Heideggers* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 626ff.
- 46 Heidegger and Arendt, *Briefwechsel*, 69.
- 47 For example, one finds proof of Heidegger’s ambivalent relationship with the Jews in a letter to his wife from the year 1932. In it he expresses his disappointment with Baeumler’s philosophical abilities, though he highly praises his worth as a historian (*Letters to His Wife*, 133). This ambivalence is also accounted for in a 1945 letter from Jaspers addressed to the Denazification Committee (Heidegger and Jaspers, *Briefwechsel*, 271): “In the twenties Heidegger was not an anti-Semite. His words about the Jew Fraenkel prove that, at least in 1933, he showed certain anti-Semitic connections. This does not exclude, I believe, that in other cases anti-Semitism was contrary to his conscience and his liking.”
- 48 As Donatella di Cesare maintains, Heidegger’s critique at many times adopts a messianic tone (cf. interview published 18 December in *La Repubblica*, p. 40). This messianic, spiritual, and religious tone is clearly evident in the idea of the last god found in *Contributions to Philosophy*. In this work it is stated that only those of “the future” are the true voice of the people, and that the rebirth of the people will most likely occur by means of a religious awakening. The people must find their god, and the future ones should initiate the search; see GA 65: 65, 319, and 398.