A LETTER TO EMMANUEL FAYE

Gregory Fried

Dear Professor Faye,

Let me begin by thanking you for taking the initiative to send me your book, *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy.* You contacted me because I had contributed to the online debate in the commentary to Carlin Romano's review of your book in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.[1]

I owe you an apology. When I commented upon that review, your book was not yet available in English except to reviewers, and so I was reacting not so much to your work as to what I took to be the intellectual glibness and laziness of the review, which struck me as inappropriate to both the scope and the seriousness of the philosophical, ethical, and political questions at stake.[2] After having read your book with care, I must now acknowledge that some of what I wrote then I would no longer write today. In my first post to the discussion, I claimed, "To a very large extent, [the furor surrounding your book and Romano's review] is simply a repeat of the scandal that erupted 22 years ago when the work of Victor Farías and Hugo Ott was published. There is nothing really new here, except perhaps an increase of the 'data' of Heidegger's loathsomeness as a human being."[3] I also wrote:

> We have known that [Heidegger was a dedicated National Socialist] for a long time now. But the devil is in the details. It has long been well known that Heidegger was *opposed* to biological racism and *opposed* to global imperialism. He was what we might now call a mulitculturalist, but between nations, not within them. He thought Nazism would allow national cultures and historical traditions to maintain themselves in their own bounds. But note, in my view this still leaves room for what might be called a metaphysical or ontological racism (see the work of Berel Lang or Robert Bernasconi for a responsible treatment of this point), and I believe Heidegger was guilty of that. But it was by no means orthodox Nazism.[4]

After reading your book, I would no longer say all of this. Indeed, this is one of your most important contributions: to set out in great detail the intricacies of the developments and the battles between strands of Nazism about precisely what should and would count for orthodoxy. I wrote:

> [Romano's] article wants to paint Heidegger as a hack, who dressed up his Nazism in philosophical clothing. That is a crude dodge that avoids what is seriously at issue for real thought. Heidegger was never an orthodox Nazi and the orthodox soon came to suspect him of deviationism. It is absurd to claim that Heidegger somehow was an architect of Nazi ideology, in the way, say, that Lenin or Marx were of Communism, or that Locke or Jefferson were of liberalism. . . . Yes, Heidegger lent his respected name to the movement, but little to its content or direction.[5]

Having read your book, I now believe much of this to be false: he was orthodox (to the extent that there was an orthodox Nazism), and he did have a significant impact. The verdict is clear: never again can anyone say that Heidegger, who played a passionate role in the debates over the core meaning and direction of the movement, who subscribed to a form of non-biologistic racism that was in fact by no means alien to National Socialism, who lent his voice and his weight as a thinker, as an administrator, and as an educator to the consolidation (*Gleichschaltung*) of Hitler's dictatorship, was not fully in the ambit of orthodox Nazism, because Nazism contained many strands, especially in the first years after the revolution, and Heidegger fit within the scope of this diversity. While some of the elements of this picture have been know since Farías and Ott, this issue is too important to be digested piecemeal, with a biographical detail leaking out here, a new text there, as they do over the years. While you

also contribute some decisive new information, I find that it is the *totality* of what you assemble that is impossible to ignore: it conveys the portrait of a man entirely dedicated to the cause of Nazism, and not just in a fit of temporary madness or enthusiasm, but as an enduring mission. (Just how long that devotion remained in full force may be open to continued debate; you argue that it never diminished, but only went underground after the war.) So, even if there is some well-known material here, your argument cannot and should not be ignored, both because you have added to the factual base, and, more importantly, because we need to confront anew our understanding of Heidegger's political engagement as a whole, and your study demands this confrontation of any honest reader.

There is more, and I will outline what I take to be your contribution below. In brief, though, your thesis has several interwoven strands. The first is that Heidegger was much more of an engaged, aggressive, and *effective* Nazi than we have understood before, and that his commitment to the cause started even earlier than previously realized and endured until the end of his life. Furthermore, you see that activism very much alive not just in his political speeches of 1933–34 but in the lectures and seminars extending through the Second World War and indeed beyond it. In addition, you argue that Heidegger's thought is so profoundly motivated and contaminated by his Nazism that we cannot view it as anything more than propaganda for that movement, and indeed that his whole ambition, in setting up the publication of his collected works, the *Gesamtausgabe*, is to preserve his path of thinking as a path that leads into Nazism. For this reason, you conclude that we can—indeed, that we must—no longer call Heidegger a philosopher, because his work constitutes the domination of thought by politics, and because nothing that preaches the inhumanity and unreason embodied by National Socialism deserves the name of philosophy. To crown your argument, you advocate something that is quite alien to an American reader such as myself, at least, namely, the removal of Heidegger from the philosophy section of the libraries and from the philosophy curriculum of the schools, due to the extreme danger that you discern in his work.[6]

I must confess that when I began reading your book, I was prejudiced against it by the disdainful thoughtlessness of the Romano review and by your own ironically illiberal thesis that we should, in effect, ban Heidegger. Nevertheless, while I do still disagree with you seriously on a number of points, I must now also acknowledge that I found your book devastating. I am unable to respond to it in the form of a traditional academic review, in part because you appealed to me personally to give your work a fair hearing, in part because the portrait you paint of the man and his times is truly appalling. The shock comes not from the realization that Heidegger was a Nazi; you are familiar with my book, *Heidegger's Polemos*,[7] published ten years ago, so you know that I have long argued that Heidegger's philosophy and politics are intimately entwined. The effect is more one of an existential horror at the scale of Heidegger's ambition, a scale I had not entirely grasped before in the full context of the cultural world of Nazi Germany. That may have been due to naiveté on my part, or perhaps to an inability to imagine the worst that human nature can bring us to, but if so, I must share that naiveté and lack of imagination with many other scholars, and, alas, with the multitudes of the victims of many forms of twentieth century politics unhinged from human decency: we just do not expect such things, even though history teaches us that we should.

And so I also agree with you that there is a looming if hidden danger here, one we must respond to, and not simply as scholars, although we must not discard the tools and methods of scholarship. The questions seem to me at once both too personal and too important for mere academicism. That is why I am writing to you in this way, in the form of an open letter. I have engaged in a confrontation with Heidegger and the meaning of his politics, with greater and lesser intensity, for nearly 25 years. Your book, for me, was like the turn of a kaleidoscope: familiar elements, combined with new pieces, suddenly take on a new and startling form. After a quarter-century, it is time to take stock of what it is that I am seeing. In

the Introduction to your book, you write: "Only on the condition that we recognize that reality [namely, as you say in the sentence before, 'the introduction into philosophy of the very content of Nazism and Hitlerism'] can we become fully cognizant of the dangers to humanity and to thought involved in any attempt to further the acceptance of legitimation of those works [of Martin Heidegger]."[8] Those who have not read your book might be forgiven for thinking that this double challenge to our humanity and to philosophy itself is overstated or even absurd, but in truth that challenge is now unavoidable.

"My 'I Am'"

In one of his letters to Karl Löwith from the early 1920s, Heidegger writes, "I work concretely and factically out of my 'I am'—out of my intellectual and, in general, my factical origin—milieu—life-context—out of that which is accessible to me from these as the living experience within which I live."[9]

Ignoring the ironically Cartesian echoes of his declaration, let's start by taking Heidegger seriously on this point: that philosophy begins with the questions that confront us out of our own individual lived experience. Surely this is no less than what Socrates describes in the hours before his death when he looks back over the story of his own life of philosophy in Plato's *Phaedo*. It would be strange indeed if philosophy were a mere hobby of the mind, intent on problems as a purely abstract exercise, divorced from what is fully human. I think that it is important to clarify the context from which our respective engagements with Heidegger emerge.

Une pensée vichyssoise

To even the most casual reader, it must be abundantly clear that your book marks a phase in a debate that reaches back many decades in France, as far back as the years immediately following World War Two. Tom Rockmore's Preface to the translation helps the English-speaking reader to understand just how polemical those debates have been at times. They have involved your own father, Jean-Pierre Faye, who did battle with François Fédier, the ever-vigilant defender of Heidegger, in the cycle of debate that erupted in the 1960s (the tide of scandal seems to ebb and flow every twenty years or so).

I think it is worth underlining just how foreign the French context is to an American reader, because understanding that context goes a long way to explaining the extremity of your proposal to ban Heidegger from the philosophy shelves. Americans may forget, but a Frenchman never, that Nazi Germany invaded and defeated France and then installed a collaborationist government, based in Vichy, as a puppet ally of the Third Reich. Several times in your book you return to Germany's invasion and Heidegger's support for it at the level of the history of Being. Vichy France assisted the Nazis in carrying out the collection, deportation, and murder of tens of thousands of French Jews.[10] Yes, there was a *Résistance*, but the Jews of France were not saved from the vicious fury of the *Endlösung*. Furthermore, France's coming to grips with its own history of collaboration has hardly been a smooth process.

This is, in part, why the story of the reception of Heidegger in France is so galling. As you and Rockmore explain in detail, very shortly after the end of the war Heidegger targeted France as the arena for his rehabilitation for a variety of reasons, not least because France was the occupying Allied power in Freiburg, and it was the French who would decide his fate as an academic: his ability to teach and even his private library were at risk. His first foray was with Sartre, whom he invited to his hut in Todtnauberg. When Sartre refused, Heidegger turned to Jean Beaufret, then a nearly unknown scholar, whom he also invited to Todnauberg. It was Beaufret to whom he wrote the "Letter on Humanism" in 1947, which eviscerated Sartre and sealed Heidegger's luminary reputation in France. Beaufret then became the leading figure in a generation of orthodox Heidegger scholars; both he and his students fended off attacks on the master in the subsequent cycles of accusations concerning Heidegger's Nazism. For them, Heidegger's self-exculpation after the war—that he had made a very stupid mistake typical of an unworldly academic, that he was never a true Nazi and certainly

never an antisemite[11] or racist, and that he had only wanted to defend the independence of the university—quickly became "the official story" and all the explanation ever needed.[12]

Although known to me in outline, the story that you and Rockmore relate is still shocking: Beaufret himself was not just an anti-Semite, but also a Holocaust revisionist who lent moral support to his student and fellow Holocaust-denier, Robert Faurisson. You know all the details, so I won't catalogue them.[13] The point of all this is that your reaction against Heidegger seems in part a patriotic indignation at his success in penetrating the French intellectual scene so completely: his most damning texts are not translated into French,[14] and so the orthodox Heideggerians can stand guard over the interpretation of his work; the orthodox refuse to concede any ground, even in the face of overwhelming evidence that Heidegger was an ardent Nazi; the orthodox dominate the teaching of philosophy in France, at least in the Continental tradition, as it is called here in the United States, and so they pass on what you claim is a veiled Nazi ideology.

In short, for you, Heideggerianism in France is a humiliating and repugnant continuation of the Nazi occupation. Heidegger has succeeded completely in his strategy. It is the Vichy of the spirit, *une pensée vichyssoise*, if I may coin a sarcastic phrase. If this portrait of philosophy in France is correct, it is a deplorable situation. More disturbing still, while France had trouble enough with the military expulsion of the Germans during the war, and further problems fully de-Nazifying after the war on the political plane, it seems that for you, the de-Nazification of French philosophical life has hardly even begun, because the need for it has not ever been properly recognized. Such is the power and the victory of Heidegger suggested by your account.

No wonder then that you press for a de-Nazification of the libraries and the curriculum by cordoning off the word "philosophy" from the name "Heidegger." I will return to your strategy later in this letter, but I hope I have done justice to a "life-context" that animates what, for an American, seems like a very strange thing to advocate as a response to Nazism: the banning of books and intrusion upon the educational curriculum.

As you no doubt know, the reception of Heidegger in the United States has a different history than in France, and therefore many readers here will be puzzled by the radical conclusions you reach.[15] There is not the same dynamic of defeat and complicity with an occupying power that lends the French debates their special edge of mortal combat. Certainly there are orthodox Heideggerians in the US, but their orthodoxy is not the dominant school of American philosophy (far from it!), and their orthodoxy does not commit them in the same way to the shame, if sufficiently proven, of Heidegger's Nazism. This is not to say that there is no potential for bitter dispute! But in general, the question simply does not enflame the same set of broad historical wounds, nor does it have any serious resonance with the broader public, and so the debates are cooler and more academic in the petty sense.

Some American Heidegger scholars, I expect, will be deeply troubled by your book, not because they are orthodox defenders of Heidegger, whatever the costs, but because your book forcefully argues that taking Heidegger seriously *at all*, *as a philosopher*, is to contribute to his cunning program of converting philosophy to an organ of Nazism itself. You claim, in effect, that Heidegger intends his naïve readers to become *unwitting carriers* of a Nazi ideology inherent to his thought. I think American Heidegger scholars, who are generally liberal, as are most American academics, will be concerned that one consequence of this may be to brand anyone as an "objective" collaborator with Nazism who does not dismiss Heidegger's work out hand, whatever his or her subjective intentions. As I wrote in my response to the Romano review, this will smell of the Inquisition to many, even those most critical of Heidegger. Nevertheless, I take your challenge seriously, because it does raise questions anyone interested in Heidegger, as well as the broader implications, should confront.

My Path to Heidegger

Just as you, like Polemarchus in Plato's *Republic*, have inherited the argument from your father, so have I in a sense from my family.

My mother's father was a diplomat in the British foreign service. When I was a child, he and my grandmother let me read from letters kept in a great metal trunk, letters they had written home to their parents from their service postings. Those letters detailed their increasing alarm at the rise of Adolf Hitler and then their resolve that he must be resisted. My mother was born in the United States while her parents were attached to the British embassy in Washington. They were social democrats of the British Labor variety, and my grandmother especially impressed on me the disaster that Nazi Germany had inflicted upon Europe.

My father was born in Prague, a few years before the invasion of 1939. His parents were secular Jews, steeped in German language and culture, as were so many of the Jews of Czechoslovakia. My grandfather was an engineer who worked for Skoda, and then as general manager for Vitkovice, another important steel and iron manufacturer in the republic. By the grace of good luck and nerve, they made their escape in 1939 with only their two young sons. With the help of French business colleagues, they found their way to London, and from there, to New York City in 1941. All the family who remained were killed in the Shoah. It was only in 1990, when I traveled to the Jewish Community Center in Prague soon after the Velvet Revolution, that I found the small file cards detailing their deportations to the death camps.

I tell you this not to establish my credentials or my authority, or to prove that I must be immune to Heidegger's worst tendencies, but rather to review for myself the context of my own engagement with Heidegger and to give you a snapshot of how at least one American student of Heidegger came to read him and take him seriously.

In college, I was immediately drawn to philosophy. I began my studies in the fall of 1979, the time of the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (so the world turns—we find ourselves back in the same places, with different actors). I was gripped by the sense of planetary crisis and the need for new thinking and new action. I ended up writing a thesis on Mahatma Gandhi under John Rawls and Robert Nozick, and when I went on to the University of Chicago for my Ph.D., my aim was to find an analogue in Western philosophy for the thought of Gandhi and to develop this trajectory in the context of the Western tradition.

My original plan was to work on Kant's ethics and his philosophy of history, but there was one thing I learned from Gandhi that ended up sending me on a quarter-century detour. It was this: Gandhi insisted that in any dispute over anything truly important, it is necessary, for the sake of both the truth and one's own integrity, to seek out the most powerful argument in the opponent's favor, to come to grips with it, and, if it has any merit, to let that move you, and if it does not, at least to make your understanding of that argument a pathway to understanding with the opponent. After all, we expect the opponent to be moved by us, if we possess the greater share of truth (in Sanskrit, *sat*, Being, an Indo-European cognate of the Greek *esti*, the German *ist*, the French *est*, the English *is*). The Gandhian idea is to engage in an openly resolute confrontation, to risk all for the truth, even one's own necessarily finite understanding of it.[16]

In that spirit, I sought out the Western philosopher who could make the most radical attack on Kant's conception of the person as an end in itself and his conception of history as the progressive unfolding of a rational order (to put it all rather crudely). At first, I thought that challenge would be Nietzsche. But in my first year of graduate study, I met Richard Polt, who would become my friend and collaborator on two Heidegger translation projects. He persuaded me to try Heidegger, and I had heard that Heidegger was in some way involved with the Nazis, but the "official story" was then still dominant of both sides of the Atlantic. A professor in college had given me a copy of *Being and Time* and told me to grit my teeth and just read it through, but I had been unable to make it past the first few pages. Now

Richard and I read the first of Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures, *The Will to Power as Art* (using a translation based on Heidegger's strategically edited 1961 edition),[17] in an informal class with Leszek Kołakowski—a man hardly to be mistaken for a Heideggerian, orthodox or otherwise! He would later become the director of my dissertation.

Very quickly I came to see that in Heidegger I had found an even more profound critique than in Nietzsche of the Enlightenment and its roots in Western thought. Heidegger indicated from the very start of his lectures that this would be an *Auseinandersetzung*, a confrontation, not only with Nietzsche but with the entirety of the Western tradition reaching back to Plato, brought to its highest pitch of nihilism in and through Nietzsche. A fragment published in 1985 in the Appendix to the *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *The Will to Power as Art* seemed to confirm my hunch:

> *Auseinandersetzung* is something completely different [from critique]: to choose the opponent and to bring oneself and him into position against one another, and indeed in a struggle [*Kampf*] over what is most essential. This "bringing-into-position of the opponent" demands the unfolding of the most essential questions; these must be developed from what is innermost in his work to what is outermost. But these positions of struggle must themselves be historical—those of Nietzsche and those of ours, and this in turn in the direction of the great trajectories of the essential history of philosophy.[18]

In my innocence, I interpreted this as a Heideggerian correlate to the Gandhian invocation to seek out what is most challenging and most powerful in the opponent. What I did not realize then was that this was but one *face* of the *polemos*, a face reserved for an opponent Heidegger could respect.

During the subsequent winter break, Richard and I read the *Introduction to Metaphysics* together, out loud, line by line in English, with Richard consulting the German as we went (I had not yet learned the language). From that collaboration, two projects were conceived. Richard and I realized that the existing English translation, by Ralph Manheim,[19] was seriously inadequate, and the seed of a project to produce a new one was planted, something we brought to fruition more than a decade later with our translation published in 2000.[20] I also discovered that Heidegger's notion of *Auseinandersetzung* was much more than a declaration of confrontation with a single author or even with a whole tradition: it was his word for the *polemos* of Heraclitus and another name for the life of Being itself, both in how individual human beings must confront their existence and in how peoples must confront their histories. I sensed that at the bottom of Heidegger's conception of "the inner truth and greatness" of National Socialism must lie the *polemos*.[21]

So began the research that would become my doctoral thesis and then my book, *Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics*. That was in late 1986, early 1987, just before the eruption of "the Heidegger affair" ignited by Victor Farías's *Heidegger and Nazism*. I began intensive studies of German and then went to study in Germany for a year, mainly in Bochum at the Ruhr University, because I had heard that Otto Pöggeler, the head of the Hegel Archive there, was one of the few German Heidegger scholars willing to address his politics. By a strange providence it was, in 1989 and 1990, the centennial of Heidegger's birth, the year of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet empire, and the Velvet Revolution in my father's native land.

Heidegger's *Polemos*

You know my book, and so I will not argue in detail for what I attempt to show there through textual analysis of Heidegger's works from the 1920s to the end of World War Two, but I will summarize it so that I can compare my understanding with your analysis of Heidegger's politics. My aim was to come to terms with that politics mainly on the basis of Heidegger's thought as expressed in his texts (including speeches and letters), turning to biography only when needed to make sense of a text's context. The book's title—*Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics*—is meant to evoke a number of things.

First, it points to what I claim is the centrality of the notion of *polemos* to Heidegger's thinking, and that he elevates it to the status of the highest

ontological principle, based on his reading of Heraclitus' fragment 53: "*Polemos* is the father of all things, and the king of all, and it reveals some as gods, others as human beings; it makes some slaves, others free."[22] For Heidegger, *polemos* describes the unfolding of Being itself, as well as the human relationship to Being, for they are inseparable. It is significant that, in this word of a "pre-Socratic" thinker, Heidegger finds an understanding of Being that precedes the distortion and decline whose origins Heidegger locates in Plato. Indeed, as an opponent of Platonic idealism, Heidegger is seeking an alternative to the Platonic *idea* or *eidos* as that which grants the manifest intelligibility of things as what they distinctly *are* (as this, rather than that, etc.); for Heidegger, it is *polemos* that takes the place of *idea* as what bestows upon beings their meaning—a meaning that is entirely wedded to the struggles and flux of *being-here* as enmeshed in historical existence, rather than in a timeless, unchanging realm of ideas that lies beyond us.

Second, while Heidegger turns explicitly to fragment 53 and *polemos* in the rectoral period of the 1930s, I also try to show that the origins of this thinking can be found very early in his work: in his treatment of the temporality of Dasein as an *Auseinandersetzung* (confrontation) with the world of meaning into which it finds itself thrown. This language of *Auseinandersetzung* can already be discerned in his treatment of the life-context, as he calls it in the early 1920s. My reading of *Being and Time* endeavors to show that Dasein's authentic temporality is precisely such an *Auseinandersetzung* with its own thrown-projecting existence. Furthermore, I focus on that same passage in *Being and Time* that you do, in section 74, where Heidegger says, "In communication [*Mitteilung*] and in struggle [*Kampf*] the power of destiny first becomes free" (*SZ*, 384): it is not just individual Dasein, for Heidegger, but the whole spirit of a people that must engage in the *polemos* with its own history (both inherited past and rising future) in order to live up to its communal destiny. Of course, it is not the people itself that conducts this confrontation, but the triad of its great poets, statesmen, and thinkers—in this case, Hölderlin, Hitler, and Heidegger himself.

Thirdly, my title, *Heidegger's Polemos*, means to recall the title of the most infamous book of that time: Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. We both have noted Heidegger's correspondence with Carl Schmitt in 1933, where Heidegger writes, "Your quote from Heraclitus['s Frag. 53] particularly pleased me in that you did not forget the *basileus* [the king, the absolute ruler], which gives the fragment its full meaning, if one interprets it completely. I have had such an interpretation with respect to the concept of truth set down for years. . . . But now I myself stand in the midst of the *polemos* [that is, in his role as Rector] and all literary projects must give way."[23] There are two things here to emphasize. One is something that you bring out in much greater detail than I did in my book, namely, the intense interest at the time among Nazi thinkers and fellow-travelers (so, Jünger, Schmitt, Baeumler, Heidegger) with the theme of *Kampf* (battle, combat, struggle), and more particularly with Heraclitus's *polemos*-fragment itself.[24] And so the fascination with both *Kampf* and the *basileus* is a clear indication of Heidegger's fascination with the work of Hitler, the cult of combat following the *Fronterlebnis* of World War One, and the role of the *Führer*.[25] But the second point goes even further, and it is one as old as the observation of Otto Pöggeler (in 1985), following the earlier historical work of Ott, that Heidegger sought *den Führer führen*, that is, to lead the *Führer* by becoming the spiritual leader of the National Socialist revolution.[26] Heidegger's *polemos* matches, in its ambition, the titanic grandiosity of Hiter's *Kampf*.

Fourth and last, the title points to the *content* of that ambition: what Heidegger sought to accomplish in thought and thereby in both deed and influence as an educator, as an administrator, and above all as *the* (aspiring!) spiritual leader of the Nazi revolution. Very briefly, I argue that for Heidegger, the *polemos* must not take place only in the authentic temporality of individual Dasein, nor simply in the historicity of a whole people. It must also take place in the whole history of the West, because that history has played itself out as

a history of nihilism beginning with the ancients and culminating with Nietzsche. *Heidegger's* struggle is to ignite that *polemos*, to lead the Germans to *den anderen Anfang*, the other inception, in a revolutionary confrontation with the first inception (*der erste Anfang*) among the Greeks. For Heidegger, this revolution means a rejection of the universalism, the egalitarianism, and the idealism that he sees as rooted in the thinking inaugurated by Plato, adopted into the Judeo-Christian tradition, and culminating in the secular liberalism of the Enlightenment and the radical socialism of Marx. For Heidegger, this means resolutely belonging to a *particular* place, a *particular* time, and a *particular* people with its *particular* destiny. It means embracing the radical finitude of being human and a radical boundedness to human community. It means *polemos* as *Aus-einander-setzung*: the setting oneself out and apart from other peoples in confrontation, the self-assertion (*Selbstbehauptung*) of a people as distinct, separate, and incommensurable with other peoples. It means the end of humanist universalism, human rights, and respect for persons as created in the image of God (or secularized correlates, such as Kant's respect for persons as ends in themselves). Furthermore, for Heidegger, this means that it must be the German destiny to carry out this *polemos* for the sake of every people worthy of that name (so, not the "negroes" or the Jews):[27] to recover the radical rootedness of historical belonging and to reject the universal homogenization and leveling that he designated with the name of *liberalism*. So, in the end, Karl Löwith's report from 1936 is dispositive: "Heidegger agreed with me without reservation [that his Nazism was grounded in his philosophy], and added that his concept of 'historicity' was the basis of his political 'engagement.'" What my book tries to do is to show in detail *how* his radical, indeed his *extreme* historicism informed his politics. I had then and have now no doubt about what Löwith added: "[Heidegger] was convinced now [that is, in 1936, after his resignation as rector, and after his supposed underground rejection of and then resistance to Nazism] as before [that is, in 1933–34] that National Socialism was the right course for Germany; one had only to 'hold out' for long enough."[28]

I cannot close this section without agreeing with what you suggested to me: that the long section on the *polemos*-fragment, published in 2001 (so, after my book) in *GA 36/37* as part of Heidegger's Winter Semester course of 1933–34 (so, while he was in the deepest grip of his political engagement as rector), confirms my interpretation of the decisive role of the *polemos* in Heidegger's political thinking. As you know, I have translated this volume with Richard Polt.[29] You call attention to one of the most terrifying sections of that text, and it is worth repeating in full:

> One word stands great and simple at the beginning of the saying: πόλεμος, war. This does not mean the outward occurrence of war and the celebration of what is "military," but rather what is decisive: standing against the enemy. We have translated this word with "struggle" to hold on to what is essential; but on the other hand, it is important to think over that it does not mean ἀγών, a competition in which two friendly opponents measure their strengths, but rather the struggle of πόλεμος, war. This means that the struggle is in earnest; the opponent is not a partner but an enemy. Struggle as standing against the enemy, or more plainly: standing firm in confrontation.
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> An enemy is each and every person who poses an essential threat to the Dasein of the people and its individual members. The enemy does not have to be external, and the external enemy is not even always the more dangerous one. And it can seem as if there were no enemy. Then it is a fundamental requirement to find the enemy, to expose the enemy to the light, or even first to make the enemy, so that this standing against the enemy may happen and so that Dasein may not lose its edge.
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> The enemy can have attached itself to the innermost roots of the Dasein of a people and can set itself against this people's own essence and act against it. The struggle is all the fiercer and harder and tougher, for the least of it consists in coming to blows with one another; it is often far more difficult and wearisome to catch sight of the enemy as such, to bring the enemy into the open, to harbor no

> illusions about the enemy, to keep oneself ready for attack, to cultivate and intensify a constant readiness and to prepare the attack looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation.[30]

Heidegger emphasizes that *polemos* is not the *equivalent* of war (*Krieg*), but he makes equally clear that it *drives* the most elemental, existential struggle (*Kampf*), and so, clearly, it must at times *manifest* itself in war as conventionally understood. As you underline in your book, Heidegger is deeply indebted to Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction here: the adversary is not a mere opponent (*Gegner*) but a true enemy (*Feind*) who poses an existential threat to the Being of the people. Gone, then, my gentler understanding of *polemos* as chivalric encounter between truth-seeking adversaries. Most disturbing of all is Heidegger's contention here that the truest enemy may be one that is invisible, that has "attached itself to the innermost roots of the Dasein of a people" and "set itself against this people's own essence." In 1933–34, can there be any doubt whatsoever about the identity of such an enemy, whom Heidegger is both too sly and too fastidious to name openly? As you correctly conclude, for any German speaker using such language, as well as for any German audience hearing it, so soon after the Nazi rise to power, that enemy would unmistakably be the Jew, whose insinuation into the roots of the *Volk* requires a tireless and vigilant struggle to counteract, "looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation [*der völligen Vernichtung*]." With such words in a university lecture course, how can we doubt Heidegger's indirect but still intimate *philosophical* responsibility for the mentality that gave rise to the Final Solution?

I find that I cannot leave this extraordinary passage behind without further comment. Because I am the co-translator of the lectures assembled in *Being and Truth*, I have had the opportunity to present and discuss this "total annihilation" passage at a number of academic venues for specialists in Heidegger over the past year. I have been struck by how many respondents have said something like the following: But Heidegger does not *name* the Jews here. What allows you to make that leap? Surely there are other candidates for the hidden enemy. Perhaps the enemy he means is not even human, but a mode of thinking, such as subjectivist metaphysics. Perhaps he means to make the very meaning of "the enemy" into a problem for his students. For such reasons, perhaps we should avoid moralizing about this passage.

Such questions have given me some pause, not least because many of those asking them are hardly apologists for fascism. For the most part, they are scholars and teachers who instinctively recoil at the horrendous implications of this passage and who tend to find inspiration in what they take to be the later Heidegger's critique of the will and voluntarism, of hubristic modernity, and of totalizing thinking of any kind. Perhaps because I find that this resistance to what I take to be the plain meaning of the text is often made in good faith, it is worth saying more against such interpretations now.

First of all, Heidegger is clearly referring to a human, rather than a conceptual enemy here: he mentions actual opponents who are a true enemy of the people and with whom one might come to blows, not ideas or traditions, such as Platonic metaphysics or Cartesian subjectivism (ideas that must also have actual human beings as their bearers, in any case). Furthermore, whatever his own intentions, it is inconceivable that a grown man in his forties, lecturing to an audience of students in an introductory philosophy course, would not realize what this kind of language would evoke for his young audience in the Germany of 1933, exposed as they already were to Hitler's antisemitic rhetoric and to the Nazi state's antisemitic actions: that speaking of a hidden enemy, burrowing into the roots of the people, would immediately conjure up the image of the Jew, especially the assimilated Jew of the university, industrial commerce, and high culture.

On top of this, we know more now about Heidegger's own attitude towards this hidden enemy. You are aware that in a 1929 letter of recommendation about a former student, Heidegger wrote, "What I could say only indirectly in my report [on Eduard Baumgarten], I can say more clearly here: it has to do with nothing less than the reflection, which cannot be put off, that we stand

before a choice, either again to provide for our *German* spiritual life genuine forces and educators that are rooted in the soil [*bodenständige*], or finally to surrender this spiritual life to the growing Jewification [*Verjudung*] in the broader and narrower sense."[31] Hitler himself, in *Mein Kampf* (1925), had regretted "how far the inner *Verjudung* of our people has already progressed."[32] Some have wanted to argue that Heidegger's 1929 letter is an anomaly. Now we know, as you have pointed out, that Heidegger's fear of the Jewification of Germany goes at least as far back as a letter of October 18, 1916 to his wife, Elfride, where he writes: "The Jewification of our culture and universities is certainly frightful, and I trust that the German race will still be able to summon enough inner strength to come out on top."[33] So, it seems decisively clear that when Heidegger spoke of an inner enemy of the German people, culture, and spirit, he meant the Jews.

If that weren't enough, there is the following exchange with his wife in 1932. On June 9, he writes to Elfride: "Baeumler ordered the 'Jüdische Rundshau' for me, and it is very well laid out and of high quality. I will send you the issues."[34] If one did not know that Alfred Baeumler was a close ally of Heidegger's at the time and a major ideological supporter of the Nazis, one might think that Heidegger was admirably trying to broaden his own and his wife's views by reading a leading German-language Zionist newspaper. But then on June 20, he responds to his wife: "What you write about the Jewish paper and Tick was already my way of thinking, too. On this issue, one cannot be too mistrustful."[35] Can there be any doubt that from 1916 to the dawn of the Nazi rise to power in the early 1930s, Heidegger's mistrust of the Jews as an alien presence among the Germans was constant, and that when he spoke of an enemy worming its way into the people's roots, he meant the Jews?[36]

Your Contribution

"National Socialism was the right course for Germany; one had only to 'hold out' for long enough," Löwith reports Heidegger saying in 1936. Thanks to your book, we now have a better sense of how long that might be. As you document again and again, Heidegger measured his own spiritual influence over the Third Reich by decades, well past the death of Hitler, and then perhaps even by centuries.[37] I will return to the implications of this later. For now, I would like to summarize those elements of your research that I found most significant in adding to my own understanding of Heidegger's politics. It will not be an exhaustive or even an adequate account. To be clear, and to risk repetition, I think that contribution is threefold: (1) you unearth important new historical details; (2) you integrate those details into a portrait of what has already been known about Heidegger's politics, but which has not been synthesized anew in the past 20 years; (3) you confront us with unavoidable questions about the significance of this emerging portrait of Heidegger and the political implications of his thought.

I will confess that when I first started reading your book, its prosecutorial tone and its inquisitional policy recommendation (to ban books from zones of the library and to relegate them to an "index" of proscribed works!) put me off considerably. It seemed to me at first that you were drawing too many conclusions on the basis of guilt by association, or versions of the genetic fallacy—namely, that the intellectual origins or precursors of an idea wholly determine the meaning of all developments of that idea. However, as I made my way through the work, both the historical context for Heidegger's thought, as well as the facts that you document and the texts you muster, succeeded in consolidating a portrait that I now find largely convincing, even though your methodology left me in serious doubt about some of your specific interpretations of his texts and his historical role (more on this below). Yes, you rely in many places on the work of others, such as Farías and Ott, but that is inevitable in a project with the scope of yours. No doubt some will continue to say that there is nothing new here. But there is, both in individual details and in the picture taken as a whole, and we must come to terms again with what that whole means.

The first "official story" of Heidegger's political adventure, decisively disproved by Farías and

Ott in the late 1980s, was that he made a stupid mistake that he regretted and then opposed. But I think a *second* official story has since emerged, a more subtle one to which I myself have subscribed in part. It goes something like this: yes, Heidegger was indeed a real Nazi, and he believed in *his own version* of what the "inner truth and greatness" of that movement must mean, but that involved a repudiation of what we ordinarily think of as orthodox Nazism, namely, biological racism and global imperial ambitions, because the former is supposedly enmeshed in the metaphysics of modern science and the latter is but another form of aggressive and uprooted modern universalism. That is why he would come to criticize actual National Socialism, while remaining true to his own vision of the "inner truth and greatness" of the movement.

Your book puts this second line of defense in serious doubt. So, in no particular order, here are the elements that stand out for me.

1) *Racism*. In reading your book, I was at first taken aback by how you insist on translating a variety of words in Heidegger's texts of the 1930s as "race"; so, not just *Rasse*, but also words such as *Stamm*, *Geschlecht*, and *Artung*, etc., as well as their various compound usages. At first I thought this was distorting the terminology to fit your theory in a way that was inflammatory and prejudicial. But the weight of the evidence, in the context of the racial theories and linguistic practices of the time that you detail, has convinced me that this is usually a legitimate rendering, *in this specific historical context*. It is clear that Heidegger is participating in a discourse with figures such as Rothacker, Baeumler, Schmitt, and Jünger, to name some of the most prominent ones that you discuss, a discourse in which all these terms are being used more or less interchangeably to refer to race in the sense of a group identity based on heritage, whether that heritage be biological (*Blut*, the blood-ties of kinship and tribal belonging) or historical and spiritual (*Boden*, the exclusive attachment to a particular tradition), or a combination of the two. Heidegger, with his characteristic prudence (if we may call it that) does indeed generally avoid the explicit language of the most obscenely racist and antisemitic writers, such as Julius Streicher, but the multiple passages you reference where he does use the word *Rasse* makes it clear that those related words, as he employs them, form part of a conceptual whole.[38]

Furthermore, you explain something that had never been fully clear to me before. Yes, Heidegger does reject biological racism, yet not because he deplores race-thinking but rather because he rejects superficial biolog*ism*—and especially in what he takes to be its "liberal," Darwinian, version—as a profoundly *reductive* way of understanding what it means to *be* human. For Heidegger, as we know, *to be* human means *to be* historical. To be historical is primarily a matter of the spirit, and so a people's essence as a "race" is, for Heidegger, above all a historical-spiritual matter. As you make quite clear, this *spiritual* version of racism was very much a live strand in the Nazi movement, supported by Hitler himself in decisive speeches and embodied most fully in the ideology of the SS.[39] Furthermore, Heidegger is not opposed to the biological *per se*, so long as it is not understood in a Darwinian manner; hence his approving references to *Blut* and his affinity for the biology of form in Jakob von Uexküll and racial identity in Ludwig Clauß.[40]

2) *Antisemitism*. Here, the situation is similar to that with racism. Heidegger's defenders cite his many Jewish students, but we know well the distinction that many antisemites have made between particular individuals and the "problem" of an entire people insinuating itself into the life of the *Volk*, so there is no contradiction on this point, apart from the ugliness of the personal laid waste by supposedly world-historical imperatives. Heidegger certainly had no trouble casting aside those Jews to whom he owed the greatest debts, whether personal or professional. In this, Heidegger embodied an attitude that Heinrich Himmler described in one of the most horrific documents of the era, his Poznan speech of October 4, 1943, delivered to the SS in the midst of carrying out the *Ausrottung*, the eradication, of the Jews; there Himmler says, "And then along they all come, all the 80 million upright Germans, and each one has his decent Jew. They say: all the others are swine, but here is a first-class

Jew."[41] Himmler's point is simply this: that the seeming virtues of any particular Jew, or indeed the personal affection one might feel for any particular Jew, must not stand in the way of the hard historical mission: total war against them, unto extermination, as an element alien to the *Volk*. In spirit, I now believe, Heidegger embodied precisely this attitude: he was perfectly willing to embrace (quite literally in some cases) specific individuals on a purely personal level, but he would do nothing if the wheel of fate came to crush the Jews in general in the name of the destiny of the German *Volk*; indeed, he would gladly put his shoulder to that wheel.

I have noted the letters in which Heidegger lamented the *Verjudung*, the Jewification, of the German spirit, as an expression of an ontological antisemitism, and which you cite as some of the clearest expressions of Heidegger's unguarded views.[42] Heidegger protects himself, in part, by avoiding the most abusive language then current and by taking refuge in ontological abstraction. But the mask slips from time to time. We know about the *Verjudung* letters. But more telling than a word or phrase dropped here and there (and there are enough of these) is his participation in the *Gleichschaltung*, soon after the Nazis' rise to power in 1933, whereby—quite to the contrary of his later claims—he actively supported the efforts to purify the university by excluding its Jewish faculty and students and by giving at least tacit consent to the burning of "Jewish" books.[43] This is all in keeping with a determination to reverse the *Verjudung* of the German spirit, by way of an *Entjudung*, and to fulfill the *Aus-einandersetzung*, the self-assertion by separation, of the German people. And we know about the *Vernichtung* passage from Heidegger's lecture course of 1933–34. The evidence now seems unassailable.

3) *Heidegger's Activism.* You detail in a very compelling way Heidegger's *engaged, aggressive*, and *continual* activism in the cause of National Socialism after 1933, and more to the point, after 1934, when Heidegger resigned as rector and, according to the official story, began his veiled critique of the regime. Again, that has been known to a certain extent since Ott and Farías, and even since Schneeberger published Heidegger's Nazi speeches in the early 1960s, but the extent of Heidegger's militancy has never really sunk in, most especially regarding the period after his resignation from the rectorship. By officially and ceremoniously joining the Party on May 1, 1933—May Day, the workers' day—together with Carl Schmitt, Erich Rothacker and other intellectual luminaries, Heidegger first of all lent credibility and respectability to the Nazi cause. As Rector of Freiburg University, far from striving to protect the "independence" of the academy, he was an avid supporter and, as his university's rector, *implementer* of Hitler's *Gleichschaltung*, the first sallies of an aggressive totalitarianism that sought to bring all aspects of German political, educational, and cultural life into line with the Party program and the *Führer*-principle.[44] The detail you provide about his political activism and his educational activism is decisive.[45] One cannot treat his speeches of the time as "compromises" made with the regime in order to maintain the "self-assertion" of the university. For example, his passionate speeches in favor of the plebiscite of 12 November 1933 to approve Hitler's domestic and foreign policies (including renouncing the League of Nations), broadcast by radio to many thousands of listeners, were surely indicative of his ardor, and perhaps instrumental in swaying many voters and even more students to the cause.

This is only part of it, for as you show, his many speeches were directed at converting the people, especially the young, to Nazism. He participated eagerly in the indoctrination work of the paramilitary work camps and cultivated deep links with the Nazi youth and student movements.[46] Furthermore, I find convincing your argument that his resignation came as a result of resistance at the university to his militant radicalism, especially in his efforts to put his equally militant protégé, Erik Wolf, in control of the law faculty, with the help of Carl Schmitt.[47] Also, you make clear that his efforts after his resignation, far from providing evidence of a retreat from his embrace of the Party, prove that he turned his activism in a more "spiritual" direction: to educational reform for the cultivation of

the new nobility and to the reconstitution of the Nietzsche archives as a vehicle for entrenching his own notion of Nazism as the dominant one.[48] His militancy, his ambition, and his revolutionary radicalism were profound.

4) *Heidegger's Hitlerism*. Heidegger's political (not just intellectual) collaboration with Carl Schmitt,[49] his cultivation of his own devoted student Erik Wolf as a Nazi legal theorist and educator to take over the law faculty at Freiburg, and the many letters and other texts you bring together, show how deeply committed Heidegger was to the Hitlerian cast of National Socialism: the understanding of law as grounded not in reason but in the person of the ruler, the rejection of parliamentarianism as the organ of legitimate sovereignty, the disdain for the rule of law in favor of the dictate of the Führer, and the quasi-erotic reverence for the person of the Führer as the bearer of the will and the destiny of the people—all this provides a fuller insight into what Heidegger meant by welcoming the advent of the *basileus* in 1933 in his letter to Schmitt.[50]

As I wrote earlier, I had known parts of this before, as well as the outlines of the portrait as whole, as would have any serious scholar of Heidegger's life and work. But it is the *distinctness* of the whole and the compelling nature of many of the new details you assemble that is so powerful. Most striking are the lectures and seminars from the rectoral period that you have unearthed, such as the seminar on Hegel and the state—ones that remain unpublished by the *Gesamtausgabe*—that cement the portrait of Heidegger as a vehement Hitler supporter, antisemite and racist.[51] The unavoidable conclusion is that Heidegger's Nazism was more profound, more enduring, and more thoroughly wedded to his own understanding of the deepest currents of his philosophy than we had realized before.

Some Reservations

Your book is primarily a work of history and biography. By this, I do not mean to belittle its accomplishments, for they are significant. To repeat: you uncover important new facts; you integrate these with what was known before to present a new portrait of Heidegger's political engagement as a whole; and you challenge us with the question of what that whole means for his work and for philosophy in general. A central thesis of your book is that Heidegger's thought should not be dignified with the name of philosophy, which you put in scare quotes when attached to his own name. I will say more below about your refusal of the name "philosophy" in connection with Heidegger, but my point here is that this means that while you trace the *intellectual development* of his ideas as they relate to Nazism and the historical context, you seldom engage Heidegger philosophically, except perhaps in a negative sense, such as when you defend Descartes against Heidegger's attacks.

I will admit that this approach put me off at first, even though I understood that your thesis is that Heidegger indeed should not be treated as a philosopher. This has to do, I think, with my own impulse to read an author generously, which goes back to that Gandhian principle I mentioned before. But if my fault has been to read Heidegger more generously than he deserves, then I would suggest that yours is to read him with such an intense hermeneutic of suspicion (if I may bend Ricoeur's phrase to my use) that everything ends up getting drawn into the vortex of crypto-Nazi maneuverings. I don't think you need to go this far to make your most essential points about the depths of his allegiance to Nazism or about the need to reevaluate Heidegger's impact. I think this tendency constitutes a serious flaw in the book, because it leads you to overreach in some cases, and these missteps undermine the credibility of other portions of the book that otherwise deserve to be taken seriously.

So, for example, you analyze volume 90 of the *Gesamtausgabe*, which collects Heidegger's notes on Ernst Jünger, in order to develop your claim that Heidegger supports racial selection. I will quote a substantial passage from your book:

> [Heidegger] relates "racial thought" (*Rassengedanke*) to the "soil of subjectivity" [GA 90, 38] and assures us that "man is no less subject, but on the contrary more essentially so, when he conceives of himself as a nation, a people, a race, a

somehow self-dependent humanity" [*GA 90*, 38]. In the enumeration contained in that sentence, race is presented as a perfectly legitimate way to conceive of man. But in what follows in that statement Heidegger takes the same line of thought to even more hateful lengths. He continues: "But there is a world of difference between belonging to a race [*Rassenhaben*] and establishing a race particularly and intentionally, as a 'principle,' the result and goal of being-human; especially when racial selection is specifically conducted *not only as one* condition for being-human, but when that being-race and domination qua that race are held up as the highest goal" [GA 90, 39].[52]

At the risk of being taken as an apologist for Heidegger, I have to say that in this case, I found your interpretation of the text implausible. In his notes on Jünger, Heidegger is attempting to come to grips with how Jünger defines the spirit of the age, namely, the age of advanced nihilism. Heidegger claims that Jünger sees even more clearly than Nietzsche the *implications* of the domination of the will to power *in the form* of technology engaged in the battle for material and the total mobilization of man and machine. Jünger, Heidegger says, is the age's preeminent *observer* and *describer* of the most intense form of nihilism, and so of the final dark apotheosis of Western metaphysics. But Heidegger denies to Jünger the title of genuine *thinker*: "Because Jünger does *not* see what can only be 'thought,' he therefore considers this fulfillment of metaphysics in the essence of the will to power to be the onset of a new era, whereas it is only the start of the rapid antiquation of everything that is the newest of the new in the tedium of the null, in which gestates the abandonment of beings by Being."[53]

Returning to the passages you cite, it seems to me quite clear that rather than celebrating that "man is no less a subject" when taken as a "race," he is *criticizing* (as he almost always does) subjectivism as manifested in these forms, particularly because they advocate a notion of being-human as a "self-dependent humanity"—clearly a fault, for Heidegger, because such humanism forgets our indebtedness to Being by raising us up to a self-creating, self-affirming subject. *To be clear*: this leaves open the possibility Heidegger might still (here, in the late 1930s) hold to a non-subjectivist view of race or of the *Volk* as the ultimate touchstone of political meaning. But in *this* passage, it is misleading to translate *Boden* as "soil" in the phrase "*Boden der Subjektivität*": here, *Boden* means simply "basis," as it certainly *can* in ordinary German. In this same passage, Heidegger defines subjectivism in a very critical manner (as usual): "The essence of *subjectivity* has been laid out; it means: man is the ground and the goal, not just of himself, rather he *is* himself only in that he is and to the extent that he is the ground and goal of beings as a whole—and asserts himself as such" (GA 90, 38).[54]

So, it seems to me entirely and clearly in keeping with his critique of metaphysical subjectivism and of Jünger in this volume, that Heidegger, in the passage you then cite, *condemns* "establishing a race particularly and intentionally, as a 'principle,' the result and goal of being-human." Furthermore, when he writes that this is true "especially when racial selection is specifically conducted *not only as one* condition for being-human, but when that being-race and domination qua that race are held up as the highest goal," I find the rendering of *Rassenzüchtung* as "racial selection" problematic. Yes, in some circumstances, this might involve selection (in the horrific sense used in the Final Solution), but here at least it seems clear to me that Heidegger is speaking more broadly of *racial breeding and cultivation* (in Nietzsche's sense of *Züchtung*) as part of the modernist problem, because it elevates human beings as the source of their own Being. This is confirmed by the sentence directly following the passage you cite, which clearly condemns what Heidegger has been describing: "Therefore, the much-advocated priority of community-interest over self-interest is merely a semblance and stands fully in the service of the most extreme and most explicit *self-interest*, one which—thought in relation to 'man' as animal—can be thought metaphysically."[55]

All this is not to deny what you point out about the Jünger volume: that Heidegger in 1939-40 sees the coming war with "the democratic 'empires' (England, America)" as the battle for the power over the next century:

> For supposing the possession of power in the sense of the imperial dictatorship of absolute armament for armament's sake [this is Heidegger's characterization, as filtered through Jünger, of Germany under Nazism] harbors at the same time within itself the essential possibility of the total devastation of the world, the question arises as to whether the highest possession of power with a view to supreme power becomes capable of going beyond power itself as essence of reality, and, if not of founding a new truth of being, at least of preparing it in its foundations. That the strength of the essence, hidden and not yet purified, of the Germans, should extend this far, such is *our* belief.[56]

You are right, then, I think, to argue that Heidegger supports (at least in 1939–40) a global war for domination.[57] His view here is complex: on the one hand, he thinks Jünger has seen Nazism for what it is, a dictatorship of armament for armament's sake, but Heidegger considers this as still part of the extreme stage of metaphysical nihilism, a reverse image of the "democratic" empires of the West; nevertheless, and on the other hand, Heidegger holds out the hope—at the risk of "the total devastation of the world"!—that a German victory will seed the ground for a new understanding of power that will transcend power for power's sake and thereby found "a new truth of *Sein*," one that will be non-metaphysical and non-subjectivist, one that may take a century to achieve.[58] You are also right about this being a clear indication of his enduring dedication to Nazism after his resignation as rector, *despite* his own reservations about the metaphysical impurities of the movement, as well as a proof that he sees the leadership of his own thinking of the question of Being as essential to that ultimate and as yet hidden victory.

So, while your intense hermeneutic of suspicion is to an extent justified, considering Heidegger's mendaciousness, it sometimes leads you to make the texts say even more than what is there; you don't need to do that to make clear the depths of Heidegger's commitments. Your zeal to convict Heidegger of the most serious offenses leads you to other, similar difficulties. Your hypothesis that Heidegger may have served as a ghost-writer for Hitler's speeches struck me as no more than a hunch, and for a claim as historically significant as this, more substantial proof is needed. And, without going into interpretive detail, I found your interpretation of the Bremen lectures unconvincing for similar reasons.

To cite another example may seem tangential, since it is not obviously about your reading of Heidegger, I was also not convinced by at least some of your defense of Descartes. You refer to the famous passage in the *Discourse on Method* where Descartes advocates that we become "the masters and owners of nature," and you want to deny that this implies a Baconian program of human domination over all that is, as Heidegger would have it. On your reading, Descartes here is primarily concerned with preserving health, a goal that "does not convey any will to exploit nature unreservedly, but on the contrary a deep attention to life, with a view to preserving man's unity."[59]

The passage in question begins with Descartes proclaiming his goal of uncovering principles that will allow us "to procure, as much as is in our power, the common good of all men." He goes on:

> For these notions made me see that it is possible to arrive at knowledge that would be very useful in life and that, in place of that speculative philosophy taught in the schools, it is possible to find a practical philosophy, by means of which, knowing the force and the actions of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, and all the other bodies that surround us, just as distinctly as we know the various skills of our craftsmen, we might be able, in the same way, to use them for all the purposes for which they are appropriate, and thus render ourselves, as it were, masters and possessors of nature. This is desirable not only for the invention of an infinity of devices that would enable one to enjoy trouble-free the fruits of the earth and the goods found there, but also principally for the maintenance of health, which unquestionably is the first good and the foundation of all other goods in this life . . .[60]

The concern for health is there, clearly, but also unmistakable is Descartes' soaring ambition for the modern project in which improvement to medicine is just a subsidiary. We see, in embryo, the "infinity of devices" of modern technology,

as well as the capture of the fundamental elements and energies of nature itself: "the force and actions of fire, water, air . . ." What is this but a pre-figuration of Einstein's discovery of $e = mc^2$ as the key to unlocking the power of the sun, and indeed the fundamental energies and components of the universe, which we have used both to power and to annihilate entire cities?

I raise this point about Descartes because it seems to me that whatever else one might say about the accuracy of Heidegger's interpretation of him, Heidegger's discussions of subjectivity and the Faustian aspirations of modernity are not utterly without merit. To the extent that you are right that something *like* the Cartesian subject must be defended to preserve the individual and the individual moral conscience from being submerged in the collective identity and demands of a historical people, I also think that we can only make that defense by taking seriously the great dangers of what Jan Patočka called the titanism of the modern project.[61] By insisting that nothing Heidegger says can possibly have philosophical merit, that it is all manipulation and opportunism for the sake of a deeply rooted Nazism, you miss an opportunity to rethink the foundations of modernity in a way that might both preserve its best tendencies and ward off its worst. Surely no student of our past century can deny that its barbarisms demand precisely such a reconstruction of the tradition. You fear that giving Heidegger any credit in such a reevaluation of our situation will promote what is nothing more than a Nazi ideology. But the simple fact is that Heidegger has so deeply influenced sixty years of philosophy that we would have to discard many other genuinely serious thinkers in order to root him out entirely. Far better to take him on directly as a philosopher, despite and indeed because of his politics.

Lessons

What might all this have to teach us about fascism? For Nazism is but a species of that larger genus of tyranny.

First, I would say that it helps us to see that fascism is a *modern* phenomenon, because it is a reaction against a universalism that could only become *actual* as a global possibility in the modern era, even if this universalism was implicit in the ancient world in the thought of a Plato, for example, and prepared for the modern world by the evangelical soteriology and eschatology of Christianity (that is, in the catholicity, strictly speaking, of a mission to persons inhabiting a cosmos whose ultimate meaning as a Whole lies beyond this world). We might detect proto-fascist elements in the pre-modern world, such as in the cult of the emperor in Rome, but for the most part, these are anachronisms, because in the ancient world, there was no *viable* universalist politics or culture against which a political movement might have reacted. Christianity, in its infancy, was a prophetic and otherworldly universalism, not a political one, and it was soon co-opted by the Roman Empire. Christianity's universalism became truly political when its egalitarianism became secularized in the Enlightenment. The passage from the *Beiträge* that you cite is dispositive here, where Heidegger declares that, "inasmuch as the dominance of reason as an equalizing of everyone is but the consequence of Christianity and as the latter is fundamentally of Jewish origin (cf. Nietzsche's thought on the slave revolt with respect to morality), Bolshevism is in fact Jewish; but then Christianity is also fundamentally Bolshevist!"[62] Heidegger lays the blame of liberal modernity squarely at the feet of democratic universalism, which, no matter how secular its contemporary forms, has its roots in Platonism, Judaism, and Christianity.

Second, because it rejects universalism, fascism reverts to an *atavistic* and *exclusive* belonging to a group. The touchstone of that belonging may be almost anything, such as a shared history, or a language, or a religion, or a putative racial identity. The key to the atavism is that the belonging must connect to something that is irrational, or at least non-rational, otherwise it risks lapsing into the universalism it opposes and finds no grounds for *exclusive* belonging. That is because, if the basis for belonging to the group is some esoteric insight, some exclusive characteristic, or some exceptional accomplishment, rather than simple free choice informed by reason, then the belonging must be something one discovers, or that one simply *is*, rather than something one can

choose on the basis of rational reflection. That is why race, defined either biologically or spiritually (but especially biologically), has been such an attractive cathexis for fascist belonging. Setting aside the problem of racial purity, race is supposedly a clear boundary-marker: one either *is* or is *not* a member of the race. You cannot choose or think your way into such a belonging. Of course, the actual boundary of race, and of racial purity, is always a serious conceptual problem for race-based fascists, as you show in your discussion of the fights between the Nordic and the pan-Germanic notions of racial purity under Nazism.[63] We see this problem also in the "one drop rule" in American racial ideology, whereby a person has traditionally been defined as "Black" no matter how far back the African "blood" might originate, and no matter how "White" that person looks or seems.[64] In Heidegger's case, we know, the matter is complicated, but there seems little question now that he held a radically exclusivist view of what it must mean *to be* German, and that being German must entail a vigilant *Aus-einander-setzung* with both foreign and domestic enemies.

Third, because fascism denies universalism, it also subverts the rule of law and tends to rely on the cult of a supreme leader. By its nature, law appeals to rational principles that transcend the particulars of time and circumstance, and those principles quickly make their claim to universal application. But once one denies that a community's true principles of belonging and identity are rational or universal, the *bond of community* itself, not universal right, becomes the touchstone for judgment and justice. Furthermore, because the needs of the community demand interpretation by means that are more prophetic than rational, the law loses its pride of place as the final arbiter in favor of the leader who makes decisions in the exceptional case. Very soon, the leader who adopts the power to decide beyond established law in exceptional cases becomes the arbiter of what constitutes an exceptional case in the first place. The leader then *is* the law, for the exception becomes the rule. This was certainly the view of Schmitt—and of Heidegger, who proclaimed in public speeches that "the Führer and he alone *is* the present and future German reality and its law."[65]

Fourth, because it renounces the rule of law, fascism also tends to glorify violence and to despise "liberal" formalism in the procedures and institutions of government. Along with the rule of law itself, fascism holds parliamentarianism, checks and balances, and the like all in contempt as expressions of a notion of political life incapable of decisive action and truly organic unity. Emergencies and revolutionary acts of founding require great acts of violence and decision, and fascism treats the petty give-and-take of rule-bound processes as inadequate to the urgency of the moment. Great leaders seize that moment, cutting the Gordian knot of indecisiveness with acts of institutional or physical violence, or both. Furthermore, this violent spirit extends to breaking down the barriers between civil society and the state, so that the state's claims to supervise and order all aspects of a people's life become ever more totalitarian. We see this in Heidegger's utter disdain for liberalism, his welcoming of the Nazi seizure of power and the brutality of the *Gleichschaltung*, his veneration of warriors such as Ernst Jünger, and his fascination with the violence and terribleness (*to deinon*) of Being itself.

Fifth, the renunciation of law and the detached rationalism it implies leads to fascism's contempt for truth. Fascists follow Nietzsche's advice to prefer art to truth, but the art they create is a statecraft wedded to the atavistic principle of belonging. The truth itself suffers violence for the sake of a higher—or, more properly speaking—a *rooted* Truth, understood as the needs of the collective as revealed exclusively to those who lay claim to leading the people and interpreting their mission in the world. Hence fascism's penchant for propaganda and lies, as well as its hostility to free inquiry, and, at the most extreme, its mania for book-burning, censorship, and outright distortion or fabrication of history. Heidegger's extraordinary mendacity as an individual might seem a separate matter here, except that we know (in greater detail now, in part thanks to you), that he fabricated a story after the war to minimize his Nazi involvement and that he also interfered systematically with his own texts published after the

war, to sanitize and to spin them so that the most extreme expressions of his Nazism would remain hidden, at least for a time.[66] Perhaps one might even go so far as to say that his understanding of truth as *a-lêtheia*, as *Unverborgenheit*, unconcealment, may undermine the very notion of truthfulness as a kind of honesty about the facts, because what truth as unconcealment *reveals* is a world of meaning that takes precedence over any truth-claims in the traditional sense.

Sixth, fascism finds its momentum in mass movements. This is a paradox, and it has to do with fascism's distinctively *modern* nature as an *anti-modern* phenomenon. In resisting modern universalism, fascism takes up the tools and the conditions of modernity itself: it relies on technology to reach a mass audience that has been uprooted and left insecure by modernity, made restless and full of nostalgia for it knows not what. Fascism therefore does not have at its disposal what the ancient world took for granted: a people's immediate sense of belonging. Instead, fascism finds and exploits a much more ambiguous, and for that reason, a much more dangerously fertile situation: one where a mere *mass* of alienated humanity may be molded by invoking their yearning for a lost sense of belonging as a genuine *people* with an exclusive identity and mission. Hence all the dark eroticism for the leader, the state, and the people, with the individual subsumed into a greater whole. Hence Heidegger's willingness to put his arcane language of the destiny of Being at the disposal of the Reich, giving speeches to students, workers, and, most tellingly, to the people in general when he spoke on the radio in ardent favor of Hitler's decisive November 12, 1933 plebiscite to confirm his domesticate and foreign policies, which by that time included withdrawal from the League of Nations, the *Gleichschaltung*, and measures against Jews and other undesirables in the professions and universities.

Finally, another paradox: while fascism rejects ethical and political universalism as championed most clearly by the Enlightenment (at its best), fascism in turn tends to locate its own narrative in a mission with universal significance. This has to do with the scale of the clash with universalism, for it requires a sense of destiny that transcends the merely parochial replanting of roots: it demands an epic combat against the forces that have putatively uprooted the people and which threaten to continue to do so, perhaps on a global scale. Hence Nazism's obsession with the Jews as a dramatic but sinister international conspiracy. Hence Heidegger's grandiose vision that the Germans alone are the metaphysical people, entrusted with a great mission to carry out, for the sake of Being itself, a confrontation with the history of the West as inaugurated with the Greeks. The old slogan of the empire was "GOTT MIT UNS" (God With Us)—it was inscribed on every soldier's belt buckle, even under the Nazis. For Heidegger, we might say this became "SEIN MIT UNS"—because after the death of God, Being is no longer transcendent, it is purely immanent, and providence has become a purely particular destiny for a particular people.

If fascism exists as a combination, greater or lesser to some degree, of these elements (and I do not pretend that my list is exhaustive), then to be on our guard against it, we must learn to see it where it might be lurking in developments or in forms that might otherwise elude us.

Le Revenant

This is a horror story. Every twenty years or so, Heidegger returns from the dead to torment us with the specter of his Nazi involvement and the lurid spectacle of scholars squabbling over the significance of his words and deeds for his philosophy. In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida coined the term "hauntology" (an audible pun on *ontology*) to describe an absence that intrudes upon the present so unavoidably, and yet so ambiguously and indeterminately, that our smug certainties are shaken and we fall open to old questions made new again. In 1993, for Derrida, the specter haunting Europe was Marx, precisely because of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Empire, and the manifest death of Marxism; but the poltergeist making the noise now is Heidegger. As you and others (Ted Kisiel deserving special mention)[67] have demonstrated, this legacy is in large part the fault of the *Gesamtausgabe*, the project of publishing

Heidegger's collected work, and of the executors of his literary estate, primarily his family, who refuse to open up the Heidegger archives to research by qualified independent scholars. Because of this, it is inevitable that new details about his past slowly leak out, accumulate, and then burst forth in cycles of revelation, recrimination, and defensiveness. You are right in saying that given past experience, as well as the insularity, secrecy, and inadequacy of the *Gesamtausgabe* project,[68] we can be quite sure that there is still much more to be revealed—troves of letters, seminar transcripts, notes and the like—that will be highly inflammatory when they do appear, assuming that they have not been or will not be destroyed.[69] Heidegger's revenant will never be put to rest until the crypt is laid open for thorough and complete examination.[70] This is a great scandal for contemporary philosophy, and a disgrace to scholarship, because whatever else we might think of him, Heidegger is indeed a world-historical figure, with a following and an influence that is planetary in its reach. As you declare in many places, in a case such as this, where the most serious questions of thought and history are at stake, there is a "*droit à l'histoire*": the world has a right to the historical truth in its entirety.

But this ghastly situation is not simply the fault of an overly protective literary estate. You have convinced me that it is also the result of a calculated strategy on Heidegger's part. We have known for some time now that, after the war and in an attempt to prevent his complete ostracism (or worse) from the intellectual scene, Heidegger misrepresented the degree of his political support and activism for National Socialism as well as the extent to which he bound his own thinking to the aspirations of the movement. Your research contributes to our understanding of the lengths to which he *systematically lied* about his reasons for joining the Party (he did so as someone dedicated to Hitler and *Volk*-thinking), his reasons for taking on the rectorship (he saw this as his way to achieve prominence as a, if not *the* spiritual leader of the revolution), his support of the *Gleichschaltung* and anti-Jewish measures in the university, and his activities in support of the revolution well after his resignation as rector in 1934. As you know, given the lecture courses published in 2001 as *GA 36/37*, we understand now that Heidegger lied about the place of the *polemos* in his political thought, when he claimed, in "The Rectorate: Facts and Thoughts," that "The word *polemos* with which the fragment begins does not mean 'war' ['*Krieg*'] . . . "[71] Heidegger tried to portray his thought of the *polemos* as purely "ontological," and in no way political, but the lectures of *GA 36/37* now decisively give the lie to that defense: for Heidegger, the *polemos* is indeed an ontological name for the way Being unfolds for a people, but it does so as the necessity of *Aus-einander-setzung*, as the *Kampf*, the struggle*, through which* a people asserts itself by distinguishing itself from and separating itself out from other peoples—and by expelling from within whatever is alien to the people.

Given Heidegger's spectacular cunning and mendacity directly after the war, given his tactic, worthy of an Odysseus, of seducing a generation of French scholars to his cause in order to ward off the destruction of his career and to propagate his thought, given his second seduction of Hannah Arendt to serve as his defender and promoter in the United States, I now find quite plausible your further conclusion: that Heidegger's strategy in publishing his writings (such as the heavily sanitized Nietzsche lectures of 1961, as I also note in an appendix to my book) and setting up the principles of the so-called collected works, the *Gesamtausgabe*, has been to protect his reputation as fully as possible while fending off the release of compromising material for as long as possible so that his international stature could grow to the point that it would be unassailable.[72] And now we face the prospect of his most Nazi-inspired works finally being published, only to integrate themselves into the discourse of respectable philosophy. If so, his victory will be complete.

It is worse than absurd, it is obscene to suggest that Heidegger ever regretted his decision for National Socialism and that his "silence" concerning the Shoah somehow constitutes the only thing a thoughtful person could say about an

"event" so incalculable. No. Given what we now know about the depth of his commitment, we must see that Heidegger's adamant and defensive refusal to explain or to apologize for his Nazi involvement, both political and intellectual, when given ample opportunity after the war by Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas, and Paul Celan (among others), his mendacious editing of his own published texts, his refusal to explain what cannot be sanitized, does not point to simple personal cowardice on his part: it points to his continued, if carefully guarded, dedication to "the inner truth and greatness of the movement." Scholars may quibble over the extent to which he criticized *aspects* of the movement's politics and policies, but that criticism was not against his vision of what Nazism represented as a historical event and what it should be; such criticisms were part of his struggle to lead the movement's development. There is no *Kehre*, no turning away, from what he understood to be his lasting contribution, and now that contribution is wending its way, in an ever more virulent form, to the libraries of the world. The revenant is here to stay.

The significance of Heidegger's *seductiveness* struck me forcefully in reading your book. There is something pathological, even sociopathic, in his deceitful and manipulative conduct, in the way he drew in and used women like Arendt and followers like Wolf and Beaufret, who fell victim to his spirit and let it take possession of them. As you and others have noted, that seductiveness is present in the work itself: in its oracular style, its towering abstraction, its extraordinarily ambitious scope. I have known students who have been drawn to Heidegger simply because of his reputation as *the* most difficult and challenging thinker. And surely others are drawn to him by the specter of evil itself, like Slavoj *Žižek*, who flirts with the shadow and commends Heidegger for taking "the right step (albeit in the wrong direction) in 1933."[73] The thrill of proximity to evil lures them, like moths to a flame of darkness.

For myself, the most horrifying aspect of this horror story is that by following Gandhi's advice, by granting Heidegger the rights of a philosopher to be taken seriously, to be read generously, even in the midst of a thorough-going critique, I may somehow have played a part in his plan to make his thought respectable. In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger writes "Dasein is the constant urgency of defeat and of the renewed resurgence of the act of violence against Being, in such a way that the almighty reign of Being violates Dasein (in the literal sense), makes Dasein into the site of its appearing, envelops and pervades Dasein in its reign, and thereby holds it within Being."[74] The word for "violates" is *vergewaltigt*, which, "in the literal sense," means *rapes.* How much more explicit does Heidegger need to be? Do those of us who study Heidegger, who teach him, who write about him, however critically, become *carriers*, however unwillingly and unconsciously, of the seed of a fascism that lies at the core of his question of Being?

But in the end, this is not a question about scholars, whatever their good or bad intentions. The revenant we must watch for most scrupulously is fascism itself, not Heidegger, although I grant you that his work might indeed lend that return some intellectual cover, as it did in 1933. The true horror would be if fascism, either openly or wearing one of its many masks, were to overtake us again. This is why I believe that studying Heidegger, taking his questions seriously even in disagreeing with him, is one way to think about the dangers confronting us now. According to the typology I suggested above, for example, the so-called communist regime of North Korea would more appropriately be identified as fascist, because of its cult of the leader, its complete suppression of civil society and the rule of law, and its fetishization of racial purity, among many other clear parallels.[75] Closer to home, it is deeply worrying to me that under the Bush administration, the government of the United States engaged whole-heartedly in torture—a tool of dictatorships, not of free republics—and that to provide legal cover for such acts, members of the Bush administration advanced a theory of executive power which effectively claims that the president, in his role as commander in chief in times of war, is above the law entirely.[76] That jurisprudential interpretation of the president as a war-

time elected dictator has not been challenged by the Obama administration, even if the Obama administration has moved away from some of the most unlawful practices of the former administration; the precedent remains dangerously in place, ready for an ambitious and unscrupulous leader to seize and wield, emboldened by an everlasting "War on Terror" or populist rage against illegal immigrants in a time of economic collapse.

A Bridge Too Far

You sum up the Heideggerian horror story with a question: "If [Heidegger's] writings continue to proliferate without our being able to stop this intrusion of Nazism into human education, how can we not expect them to lead to yet another translation into facts and acts, from which this time humanity might not be able to recover?"[77] Your response to the predicament is clear: "We must acknowledge that an author who has espoused the foundations of Nazism cannot be considered a philosopher."[78] You want to see Heidegger restricted to the sections of the library devoted to Nazism; you want him removed from the philosophy curriculum of the schools and universities.

Having read your book, and taking into account the French situation, I can better understand your position. Nevertheless, and despite the dangers, I cannot follow you this far. There are two reasons for this.

The first reason is pragmatic. If there is *any* philosophical merit to Heidegger's work (and surely it is unbelievable that there be none whatsoever), then this strategy of putting him on the index and walling him up safely in an academic dungeon is bound to backfire. Wayward students who fall upon his work and who find it convincing will be forced to conclude, "Well, if this is somehow right, and also somehow Nazi, then I suppose I must be a Nazi, too!" You are laying the groundwork for a martyred hero and for a cult that will fester underground with him in his dungeon. It means that efforts to combat such developments will have to be inquisitorial: placing questionable works on an index of proscribed writings and sniffing out apostates and destroying their careers. Perhaps because I am an American, whose nation never had to cope with a process of de-Nazification or the rooting out of collaborators, this all seems deeply ill-advised, for it partakes in the methods of exactly the enemy you oppose. Far better, then, to expose the danger to the light, to confront it head on, and to allow it to dissipate in open debate—as you yourself do, and for that I commend you.

The second reason is far more troubling, for it goes to the heart of philosophy itself: I believe that a philosophy may be evil and still be philosophy. Would that it were so simple as to say, "The results of this thinking are evil, and so there must be something wrong with the thinking itself." Would that we could dismiss philosophers out of hand for their sinister deeds and their sinister thoughts—it would save us a great deal of trouble. But the permanent and unavoidable danger of philosophy is that it is absolute freedom; its spirit and its element are the ability to question anything, to explore anything. The promise of philosophy is the flip side to its danger. Socrates died *for* and *because of* that danger, as well as the promise. To deny this freedom is to side with Athens and piety against Socrates and philosophy.

Very well, then—maybe Athens had a point, one might say. But taking that side has its costs, too. You identify philosophy with humanism, with reason, with progress, and with the institutions of the Enlightenment. Nevertheless, your allegiance to these things is one of *faith*, not of philosophy; you posit them unequivocally, without argument. Make no mistake: I share your humanist and your Enlightenment piety; but I also recognize that (to paraphrase Heidegger) a faith unquestioned is no faith at all.[79] Furthermore, after the horror of the twentieth century, we cannot act as if that faith has not been shaken to its roots. We must confront head-on the sources of the challenge, and any effort to contain the threat behind a philosophical *cordon sanitaire* will only end up amplifying its mystique and its potency. Piety *alone* cannot defend itself except by a violence, either intellectual or actual, that will ultimately undermine its own legitimacy, for such

measures are a sign of fear and weakness, not of strength.

This brings me to one of the themes of my responses to Carlin Romano's review of your book. The question raised there was: if I agree (as I do) that Heidegger's political commitments arose from his thinking itself, and not from some arbitrary accident (his wife's influence, his naiveté, his misplaced ambition, etc.), how can I defend that thinking at all, since by my own admission it led Heidegger into Nazism?

This question goes to the very heart of philosophy itself. Let me expand here on some of my comments to the Romano review.

I am not the first to point out that philosophy is the one discipline whose very name is also a subject of its inquiry. There is no consensus about what constitutes "philosophy," as there is about chemistry or mathematics.

As for me, I would suggest that philosophy has three essential moments. The first is Aristotle's observation in the *Metaphysics* that philosophy begins in wonder, *thaumazein* (I.982b). This wonder precedes even questioning: it is the primary, raw experience of something as deserving, indeed demanding our attention because it is wonderful and puzzling and enticing. Is it not fundamental to the spirit of philosophy to wonder at the sheer givenness of the world or of the self, even before we articulate that wonder in the form of a question, such as "Why is there something rather than nothing?"—or "Why am I someone rather than no one?"[80] The formulation of a question, the second stage of philosophy, is only possible on the basis of this first one, for otherwise, the "Why?" is unhinged and purely academic or frivolous. The formulation of a genuine philosophical question is no mere preliminary act or formality: it requires an intense focus on precisely what is at issue in our wonder, and because we wonder at what we often find ourselves most unable to articulate in our ordinary language and concepts, the formulation of a good philosophical question is also the work of philosophy. In this sense, Heidegger was right to say that philosophy begins in the embeddedness of the self in the life-world, just as Socrates began his work in the *agora*. We begin to philosophize through what *seizes* us, what challenges the *meaning* of our world.

The third moment in philosophy, naturally, is answering the question. For most of us, most of the time, philosophy operates at this level. Particularly in modern philosophy, especially in so-called Analytic philosophy and those traditions that take their bearings from the natural sciences, the proper work of philosophy seems to be to produce *results* in the form of rigorous arguments with clear conclusions. This is all right and proper—as far as it goes: the question at hand seems self-evident, and we present and challenge each other's arguments by analyzing their logic and scouring their premises.

But fixating on the moment of *giving answers*, in the form of arguments, as the sole or primary work of philosophy distorts the full scope of what thinking demands of us. Failure to reflect on the question *as question* risks entrenching us in a way of addressing a problem that is blinkered and restricted, blinding us to other perhaps more fruitful avenues of thought. Failure to meditate on what is worth wondering about in the first place risks setting us loose in a questioning that is simply arbitrary and naïve, or at least inadequate to the challenge genuinely facing us.

As I said, most philosophers that we are familiar with today, and certainly the philosophical practice of the academy, focuses on the third moment. Heidegger is one of the rarer thinkers who work at all three levels, sometimes all at once. At the second level, for example, he tries to sharpen what is at stake conceptually in the question of the meaning of Being; at the third level, he provides his answers (almost always couched in provisional terms), such as his existential analytic in *Being and Time*—or, if you prefer, more darkly, in his determination that the counterforce to Western nihilism is the "inner truth and greatness" of National Socialism. But he also strives to express the experience of pure wonder that animates philosophy in the first place. We see this, for example, in his essays on the Presocratics, or in his emphasis on *Besinnung* (mindfulness), *Gelassenheit* (releasement), and an "other thinking"—and in what you and so many others (perhaps rightfully at times) condemn as oracular

pretension. But such pretension is the risk of a thinking that tries to articulate the pure wonder that precedes any determinate, articulated philosophy, because it necessarily attempts to put into words something that escapes and challenges our everyday experience and language. To cite other examples of philosophers who try to do this: there is Heraclitus, of course, but also Nietzsche, particularly in *Zarathustra*. "Common sense" has lampooned this tendency of philosophy ever since the Thracian maid laughed at Thales for falling into a well and Aristophanes hung Socrates in a basket.

I will say it again: Heidegger's political commitment came as a result of his thinking, and not accidentally so. The serious question is: Did it derive *necessarily* and *essentially* from his thinking? I say no. As I wrote in my comments to the Romano review, a philosopher does not *own* his questions, and still less his wonder, in the way that Disney owns Mickey Mouse. It strikes me as the abandonment of serious philosophical work to claim that the question of Being is purely a fantasy, that it has no philosophical merit, that *Being and Time* is a mere poem, as my dear, late teacher, Leszek Kołakowski liked to quip. Furthermore, I was *not* convinced by your book that *Being and Time* is *obviously* implicated in Heidegger's option for fascism; nor, as Mark Blitz points out in his review,[81] do you take on Heidegger's arguments there in any substantive way, which is the natural consequence of denying that he is a philosopher at all, for then there can be no arguments to refute, only his seduction and ideology to unmask and dismiss. Yes, there are the disquieting passages on the destiny of a people in section 74; yes, there is the reliance on the antisemite Count Yorck.[82] But all that proves, to me, is that Heidegger's questioning arose in the context of the anti-urban, anti-cosmopolitan spirit that was common to a nationalistic and anti-modern conservatism that was by no means unique to Germany (consider only the brilliant but vitriolic novels of Evelyn Waugh, or, for that matter, Céline). Yes, that spirit led many to Nazism, but it is not yet itself Nazism, and you do not prove that Heidegger was a Nazi in the period of *Being and Time*, even if he clearly was a conservative German nationalist. Otherwise, how *do* we explain the shock of students (and even colleagues) such as Emmanuel Levinas, Herbert Marcuse, and so many others, many of whom were Jewish, who knew as much as we do now of the spirit of the time, but who did not recognize *Being and Time* as a "blubo" text? Marcuse testified that Heidegger's "openly declared Nazism came as a complete surprise to us."[83] You argue that some of his colleagues and peers *did* detect extremism in Heidegger in the 1920s and that Heidegger hid his true views well to make his career;[84] after all the other lies and masks that you uncover (in addition to those we knew of before), I can understand that interpretation. But still: the text speaks for itself, and it is by no means an outright paean to National Socialism, whatever the *family resemblances* of some of its themes might be. If it were, how are we to account for the so many great minds that took Heidegger seriously: Sartre, Levinas, Patočka, Habermas, to name but a few? Were they truly all simply dupes? To go this far, I think, is to fall victim to the genetic fallacy and to treat a work purely as a product of its intellectual influences and milieu. Again: would that it were so easy.

In my comments on the Romano review, I compared Heidegger to other philosophers whose ideas are very distasteful to us. Plato, some would say (Popper, most obviously), advocated many of the most terrible ideas that would take wing in modern totalitarianism: infanticide, eugenics, the elimination of civil society, the rule of absolute "kings" wielding "noble" lies to enforce a sham unity among the people. Aristotle, on the basis of his most serious conceptions of the human soul and the nature of reason, justified the treatment of women as second-class human beings, and he justified the treatment of lesser human beings as natural slaves (an argument that some defenders of slavery adopted in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century). The Enlightenment was shot through with antisemitism. Take, for example, Voltaire's excoriation of the Jews as miserable enemies of progress and human brotherhood. Kant justified both racism and antisemitism on the basis of his philosophical anthropology and his understanding of religion

within the limits of reason alone (from which the Jews must be excluded, even if they once played a part). Locke, the intellectual godfather of American democracy in its classical liberal form, also justified slavery in some circumstances and the expropriation of the land of the Native Americans because they failed in their God-appointed duty to make that land as productive as its potential promise. Jefferson founded our nation on the principle that "all men are created equal" while owning slaves and arguing that Africans are racially inferior to Europeans. Sartre at times vehemently supported a political movement, even (in Sartre's dialectically ambiguous way)[85] the Great Leader Stalin, long after the crimes were manifest, crimes that claimed millions of lives.

We could drag each of these thinkers, and many more, before the bar of justice. We could quibble about just how deeply their evil ideas and their actual crimes are linked to what is essentially "philosophical" in their work. Some might be proven innocent, but I submit that many would be found guilty. Should we put them on the index, too? Shall we cordon off their writings in a special section of the libraries? Shall we forbid them from being taught in the schools and universities? Surely that would be an assault upon the very freedom of philosophy that I believe you and I would otherwise wish to uphold. To return to the three moments of philosophy: what is most significant in any genuinely important thinker, in the end, is not the moment of answers, but how those answers compel us to revisit the questions—questions which belong to no one but to philosophy itself. You assert a *droit à l'histoire*, a right to history, to unearth and publish Heidegger's works even against the wishes of his estate; but is there not also a *droit à la pensée*, a right to thinking, to turn to "his" questions and answers, and to wrest them from him? If we fixate too much on the *person* of the philosopher, or on the *system* of his or her answers, what lives as philosophy, *in* and *through* the work, is lost. Philosophy then becomes a matter of orthodoxy and heresy.

In every case where a philosophy leads to conclusions in thought or deed that we find reprehensible, the question must always be: how *much* of the philosophy is implicated in these abhorrent results? Is it what the thinker inspires us to wonder about? Is it the questions the thinker formulates? Is it some, much, or all of what the thinker argues in response to those questions? Surely this is always something that we must address in detail, in a careful confrontation with a thinker's work. While you are certainly right that deep currents in Heidegger's thinking led him to Nazism, I would argue that this connection, while by no means accidental, is also by no means *proven* to be *necessary*—and this is so *even if* we were able to prove that it was biographically or psychologically inevitable *for him*. This is a subtle but essential distinction if we are to avoid crude reductionism in philosophy. While I am no postmodernist, and I believe in the importance of taking into account the question of the coherence of a philosophic enterprise in the light of a thinker's intentions, I also believe that a genuinely philosophical body of work points beyond itself. We must have the right, after giving the author his or her due, to take on that work's wonder, its questions, and its answers for our own, which means engaging them, reflecting on them, refuting or intensifying them, in whole or in part. We see this spirit alive in the fact that many serious readers have taken up Heidegger's *questions*, and even *portions* of his way of *responding* to those questions, without becoming Nazis. Nevertheless, this is complicated and perilous in the case of Heidegger. You are right to warn that there is a danger, and I believe that we should never read or indeed teach Heidegger without taking that danger very seriously into account. It has to do with his radical historicism, his rejection of Platonism in the broad sense, and, as a result, his attempt to destroy the entire tradition of universalism in ethics and politics.[86] But as you well know, Heidegger is not the only radical historicist, and not all historicists are Nazis—although I would emphasize the great danger in all radical historicism, for it tends to gravitate to the particular in denying the universal.

I realize that you think that Heidegger is a special case. In an interview that you directed me to, where you take up precisely this question of the

guilt of figures such as Plato and Locke, you give an eloquent summary of your position:

> It is not only Heidegger's political engagement, but also his will to the destruction of logical thought, his perverted usage of philosophical language, his explicit rejection of contemporary philosophy as if it had come to an end with Hegel and Nietzsche, and his affirmation of the empty character of ethics, that constitutes the gravity of the problem. In Heidegger, all the dimensions of philosophy are progressively destroyed. This is something serious, which goes a long way in explaining the hold and the fascination that he has exercised over so many minds. One thought that Heidegger had the ability to surpass everything, because he had the ambition of destroying the entire Western philosophical tradition, but one did not see that by this means he strived to realize in philosophy an equivalent of what Hitlerism had wanted to realize in history.[87]

For you, the crimes of Nazism are so horrific, Heidegger's subjection of "philosophy" to politics is so extreme, and his ideological project so nihilistic, that we simply cannot call him a philosopher at all any more; he is truly only a dangerous propagandist, a wily hack, a brilliant charlatan, and a pretentious seducer, who aided in the *realization* of Hitlerism and of "the invention of a barbarism without a name."[88] At one point, you refer to the "irreducible specificity of the Nazi genocide,"[89] which Heidegger refuses to contemplate. For you, Nazism is incommensurable, for its crimes transcend what we can even articulate in language.

I understand your point: in Heidegger, it is not just a difference in degree, but in kind. He does more than Marx, for example, who also renounces philosophy and espouses a theory that ultimately leads to decisive and disastrous action; but Marx at least only renounces philosophy as the life of contemplation—he does not renounce reason itself. (Although I would also note that Marx also identifies a version of the *polemos* as the engine of history and the essence of what it means to *be* human: *class war*—that is, until the eradication of classes after the achievement of communism at the end of history. The parallel does not end there, either.) The grandeur of Heidegger's ambition both seduces his readers and undermines every last barrier in the philosophical tradition to the unleashing of an unprecedented barbarity.

But even if I grant you all of this, I do not think the way to counteract it is to dismiss it as an evil that cannot and should not be met on the plane of philosophy. Heidegger is not the first, and nor will he be the last, thinker to renounce reason. One need only mention Nietzsche. Nor is he the first to flirt with the Nothing. One need only mention Gorgias. Nor to renounce justice. One need only mention Thrasymachus. Socrates, through Plato, confronts both Gorgias and Thrasymachus, and he does so on the field of philosophy. That is the only place where the battle can be won. You challenge Heidegger's reading of Descartes, as a way to defend the modern understanding of the individual, against Heidegger's collectivist embrace of the *Volk*. Very well. That's a good start, if it works. I have challenged Heidegger's reading of Plato as the onset of nihilistic metaphysics.[90] To answer Heidegger, we must do our work and reconstruct the tradition he has deconstructed, but we must do so on the field of philosophy.

Between Earth and Sky

It is not uncommon to treat the rise of Nazism and the genocide that followed as an incommensurable event, a unique "caesura"[91] in history without parallel in horror and barbarity. Given the scope of the Nazi crimes, this is understandable, and yet, as I have argued in *Heidegger's Polemos*, this way of thinking has its dangers, too. If we treat Nazism as utterly incommensurable, as without any parallel or comparison in human history, then it becomes impossible to understand Nazism and its consequences as human phenomena that bear any relation to us and to a danger that we bear within us as both individuals and as societies. It becomes a demonic eruption in history, something entirely alien to who we have been, to who we are, and to what we, too, *might* become. I am not sure whether you subscribe entirely to such a view, but by treating Heidegger as a "philosopher" (always in scare quotes), you participate in this way of thinking,

and the result is that we are prevented from taking seriously how a genuine philosopher might have made the choice for Nazism. The issue is not preserving Heidegger's reputation—he was a sorry specimen as a person, no doubt; the issue is how Nazism was part of *our* history, as a Western "civilization," and how it *remains* a threat, wearing many masks, both familiar and unfamiliar, in our world today. Its potential is still part of who we are, and we are fools if we refuse to confront the fact that fascism grows from within our most venerated traditions, not from some alien infection.

One way to see this is through a theme that you identify early in your book: Heidegger's interest in *Boden*: the *soil*, as in the conventional German nationalist and National Socialist fascination with "blood and soil." While I do think that Heidegger often uses the term *Boden* in a less specific way than this to refer to a "basis" or "ground" for something, you make a convincing case for his use of it as part of a "*Blut und Boden*" discourse that merges his philosophical interest in the "grounds" for Dasein's existential situatedness (and homelessness) and his engagement with National Socialism.

My question to you is: to what extent does showing *any* affinity for the metaphor, or even the literal advocacy, of rootedness implicate a thinker in fascism? I bring this up not to exculpate Heidegger but rather to underline that there is an issue at work here that goes beyond Heidegger himself.

Consider the following lines from Hesiod's *Theogony*, where the poet describes the origin of the world:

> For truly *Khaos* came first into being, and then
> Broad-bosomed Earth, steady abode of all things forever
> . . . .
> And Earth first gave birth to starry Sky,
> Equal to herself, so that he would cover her all over,
> And so that he would be a steady abode for the blessed gods forever.[92]

Though separated by ten lines, these verses have a remarkable symmetry in word and syntax, as if confirming the equality between Gaia (Earth) and Ouranos (Sky, or Heaven). Sky covers (*kalyptoi*) Earth entirely, the domed vault that embraces everything that lives in this world. For the Greeks, we mortal human beings live in the finite world entirely bounded by the shared horizon of Earth and Sky, with everlasting death and the underworld below us, concealed in Earth, and the immortality of the heavens above us, beyond the Sky. We belong to the Earth, we are born from it and will return to it, but while we live, we are also opened up to the Sky, wondering at what is beyond us, yearning for flight to break from the gravity of the given. But it is only because we have the Earth that we have a place, a home to live, an abode (*hedos*) that is meaningful and our own, even if, because of our finitude, it can never be steady (*asphales*) like the abode of the gods. We *are* the *between*, situated in the world opened up between Earth and Sky.

I call as my witness Simone Weil, whom no one would accuse of complicity with Nazism. In 1943, as she was dying in England in the service of the Free French cause, Weil wrote *L'enracinement*, translated into English as *The Need for Roots*. There she proclaims:

> To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define. A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of a community which preserves in living shape certain particular treasures of the past and certain particular expectations for the future. This participation is a natural one, in the sense that it is automatically brought about by the place, conditions of birth, professions and social surroundings. Every human being needs to have multiple roots. It is necessary to for him to draw *wellnigh* the whole of his moral, intellectual, and spiritual life by way of the environment of which he forms a natural part.[93]

The affinities here with Heidegger are striking: that same sense that a meaningful existence must be grounded in communal belonging that mediates between past and future. But there is a difference as well, signaled by one word: "wellnigh" (*presque*, "nearly"). For Weil, although human existence depends upon rootedness, it does not

define the entirety of the human being. There is something more, an essential dimension that transcends our situated belonging, without which that belonging goes blind. You refer often to that dimension in your book as that which Heidegger rejects utterly: the universal. I think you are on to something, and it is something that Heidegger seeks to destroy above all else.

At the time of his *Kunstwerk* lecture (so, in the mid-1930s), and motivated by his work on Hölderlin, Heidegger takes on a new notion that subsumes *Boden*: the *Erde*, the earth, and more precisely the *Streit*—the strife, the *polemos*, *between* Earth and World, with the earth as what harbors, shelters, and conceals, the world as what opens, reveals, and makes accessible. When Heidegger reads those lines from Hesiod, he notices the divine Khaos that precedes both Earth and Sky. For Heidegger, "Chaos does not just mean [for us moderns now] the unordered, but this as well: the disturbed in its disturbance, the muddled together [*das Durcheinander*] in its convolution."[94] Against this modern notion of chaos as mere random disorder, and with Hölderlin, Heidegger wants to restore a sense of the divinity of Khaos:

> *Khaos* means above all the yawning, the gaping cleft, the primally self-opening Open, wherein all is swallowed. The cleft denies every support for the distinct and the grounded. And therefore, for all experience that knows only what is derivative, chaos seems to be the undifferentiated, and thus mere disturbance. Nevertheless, the "chaotic" in this sense is only the degraded and contrary essence to what "chaos" means. Thought in accord with "nature" (*phusis*), chaos remains that gaping apart out of which the Open opens itself and by which this Open grants truth to each differentiated thing in a bounded presencing. Hence Hölderlin names "chaos" and "disorder" as "holy." Chaos is the holy itself.[95]

When Heidegger replaces Sky, or Heaven, with World, he understands the latter in his existential, hermeneutic sense as the domain of meaning within which we abide and make sense of our lives. This world opens up only *on the basis* (*auf dem Grund*, *auf dem Boden*, as Heidegger might put it) of Earth. It is born from Earth, as Hesiod says; we are thrown into the world from darkness and return to darkness in death. That is why, for Heidegger, the Earth is preceded by Khaos. Beneath every *Grund* lies an *Abgrund*: our belonging to a place, our having a home, rests on an abyss. And that is why, for Heidegger, the triad of poet, thinker, and statesman must paradoxically ground the abyss, as he says in the *Beiträge*: "At times those who ground the abyss [*jene Gründer des Abgrundes*] must be immolated in the fire of what is brought to endure as truth in order that Da-sein become possible for human beings and constancy in the midst of beings be saved, so that beings themselves undergo a restoration in the Open of the strife between Earth and World."[96] Because we are mortal, such founding is always tragic, always finite, never "steady," like the home of the gods. There is no transcendence, no sky, no heaven, to provide an a-temporal, a-historical Archimedean point of rest and security. That is why the act of founding a home, the political act of making a home for a people must always be an *Aus-einander-setzung*, a setting-out-and-apart-from-one-another, to prevent the universalizing *Durcheinander-setzung* (the muddled interspersion with one another) in which we would be homogenized, placeless, and homeless. Platonism, idealism, universalism: these are all names for an otherworldly transcendence that denies the finitude and historicity of this world. For Heidegger, then, Platonism is sacrilege against "holy Chaos" and a refusal to become rooted in the only ground we will ever have, as fleeting as it must ever be.

Our planet has lived through horrendous devastation in the twentieth century. We may face even worse in this new one. We stand on the edge of a knife. Is it too much to claim that one great cause for this predicament is the confrontation between the claim of belonging to a particular place and time, with its particular community and tradition, and the claim of transcending that rootedness to a vision of universal justice and rights, irrespective of time, place, and tradition? I realize that you want to resist reading Heidegger's politics this way. In "Heidegger gegen alle Moral," you write:

> I do not agree with the conception, no matter how critical it may be, of National Socialism as a defense of a people's distinctness [*Eigenheit*] against universalism. With this, one risks providing the kind of arguments that work towards a kind of rehabilitation of National Socialism in the name of the defense of "identities," which are then rebaptized as "differences." It appeared significant to me in this respect that precisely an outspoken revisionist like Christian Tilitzki, a student of Heidegger's and Nolte's, presents National Socialism as a defense of particularism in order to give it the semblance of legitimacy.[97]

I understand the danger. I will admit that there have been times in my reading of Heidegger that I have been inclined to say "Good-bye to all that." Why dignify this with the name of philosophy? But as appealing as saying good-bye to Heidegger might be, what Heidegger represents, beyond his own character and person, is the inevitability of the confrontation with our planetary politics. Not he but his questions are unavoidable, alas. I return to the conviction that we must confront this kind of argument, even if its source is deplorable, because it arises from a crisis that is inherent to the human condition today and that won't go away by simply refusing to engage it. Nor is all of Heidegger so easy to dismiss as mere propaganda and opportunism, even though there is some of that, too. It is not a matter of avoiding giving legitimacy to fascist arguments but of understanding and responding fully and effectively to a fundamental challenge to human decency and even to human existence on a global scale.

Consider Europe today, with legislation in Switzerland to ban minarets, or in France itself to ban the veil. Consider the alarming rise of hate crimes across Europe against perceived outsiders, such as the Roma. Consider the state institutions in France or Quebec to preserve the French language against contamination by other tongues, especially English. Consider the concern among many in France that American-style fast-food will destroy indigenous French forms of agriculture and French traditions of preparing and eating food. And to be clear, this is not just a French or European problem—I mention these as what might be closest to you; but we see it in the United States, too: in the recent hysteria about the "Ground-Zero Mosque" as well as in the opposition to building new mosques in many communities across the country;[98] we see it in the English-only movement, in the growing resentment of immigrants, and in our escalating culture wars, fanned by media demagogues. Consider similar fears across the planet that everything that is radically one's own, all the precious "particular treasures" as Weil calls them, of local customs, language, religion, art, etc., will be homogenized and obliterated in the great, amalgamating *Durcheinandersetzung* of globalization. What is all this but a concern for roots and the earth? But surely we are not committing ourselves to fascism by noticing this.

As I have argued in *Heidegger's Polemos*, the problem *announced* by fascism, but not *exhausted* by its various forms defeated in World War Two, is the escalating clash between particularism and universalism. *This* is the crisis of our age, and we will either find a way through, or we will not survive. I would submit to you that it does no good to cordon Heidegger off as a Nazi, because part of the way through must be to confront the challenge that his thinking represents, in all its danger.

We are back to Löwith's insight that *historicity* is the key to Heidegger's Nazism. For Heidegger, universalism—beginning with Plato's idealism, passing through the Christian transformation of Judaism, and passing into secularized, democratic egalitarianism—is the engine of nihilism in history, because it uproots all the "particular treasures" of human belonging to a people, place, and time. Following Nietzsche, Heidegger casts at Plato's feet the charge that his otherworldly metaphysics of the Idea, where true Being exists in a suprasensible realm beyond time and beyond all particulars, is the source of the nihilistic hatred of the world as it actually *is*: a churning rush of becoming, to be embraced in its Dionysian tragedy. For Heidegger, there is no exit to the cave, for the heavenly domain of the Ideas is a falsification of Being: all we have is our Being-Here and our finitude; Platonic universalism, with its pretensions to raise us up to the sky

to see it all from above, will only succeed in uprooting us from everything we *properly are*.

That is one charge of nihilism, the one launched by the earth, by rootedness, and by belonging against Platonism in all its forms, from Socrates to Hegel. But there is a counter-charge, one as ancient as Plato's rejoinders to Gorgias and Thrasymachus. Although he does not use the term, Plato clearly treats Gorgias as a metaphysical nihilist and Thrasymachus as an ethical one. When Nietzsche takes up the term "nihilist," he draws on a tradition reaching from Turgenev to Dostoevsky, but for Dostoevsky especially, nihilism is precisely the utter denial that there might be transcendent, sky-bound standards for human action and human thought, a denial we see acted out by the monsters of his novel *Demons*, modeled on Nechayev's band of ruthless revolutionaries. So there we have it: on the one hand, nihilism is the rejection of the radical particularity, finitude, and historicity of human existence in favor of a deracinated realm of Being that exists nowhere on earth; on the other, it is the rejection of universal standards and eternal truth in favor of a Being that has been chopped down to blind becoming, the flux of sheer power, and the blind contingency of belonging.

As should be clear, I side with Plato against Heidegger, but I also believe that Heidegger's critique must be taken into account and subsumed in a full reconstruction of an idealist reply to nihilism. I take nihilism to be constituted by the refusal to see the universal instantiated in the particular, by the refusal to transcend the particular in matters of justice. In my own work, I have tried to defend a form of idealism as a situated transcendence, taking into account both our grounded finitude and the need for the universal to make sense of that finitude, against Heidegger's radical historicism.[99] But I do not believe that philosophy can ever permanently settle this battle between earth and sky and between conceptions of nihilism, for the conflict is rooted in us and will return in new forms. It is a terrible lesson, but once learned we must simply face it and do our best: nihilism is the truest revenant of all, and we must confront it ever anew, head-on through philosophy, in every generation.

Thank you again, Professor Faye, for providing me with the opportunity to respond personally to your work, and, by doing so, to revisit and reassess my own thinking. It is my sincere hope that your book may be an occasion for Heidegger scholars on both sides of the Atlantic to do the same, for in my opinion, our work has become too mired in the exposition and emulation of the work of the master. I believe that perhaps your most important contribution may be to serve as a wake-up call to Heidegger scholars, and in two ways. One is that we simply cannot ignore Heidegger's political biography and its relation to his thought; there are likely to be more disturbing revelations in the coming years, and the court of public opinion will justly condemn us if all we do is circle the wagons and defend the master at all costs, leaving those who have no sympathy whatsoever for his thinking to make sense of his thought and actions. Furthermore (and in the end, this is the decisive matter), it is high time that Heidegger scholars working in English begin to do in earnest what he did himself, namely, to address enduring questions through our own language and through its literature and philosophical traditions. Your book, and the impact of your book, demonstrate to me how pressing this problem is, because there simply is not enough of a foundation, tied to the tradition of Anglophone literature and philosophy, that brings the urgent questions to life in a way that makes them truly *ours*, in a reconstructive retrieval of our own history, rather than as a explication or transliteration of Heidegger's Germanic idiom. If there is a *droit à la pensée*, as I have claimed, then we can only assert that right by making the questions properly our own and not by endlessly channeling the master's voice. And while there are some scholars laboring to accomplish this work of philosophical independence, it is still only in its infancy. At the same time, I would encourage you to reconsider your spirit of treating Heidegger as the absolute enemy, despite the undeniable outrages of his pronouncements and his actions. Then, perhaps, a door will open for you to reconstruct in more compelling way the thinkers and the questions of a tradition that we both believe to

have greater resources than assumed by Heidegger's attempt at their destruction.

January 26, 2011

NOTES

1. Carlin Romano, "Heil Heidegger!" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Oct. 18, 2009, available at http://chronicle.com/article/Heil-Heidegger-/48806/. You contacted me on Oct. 24, 2009, to invite me to read your book, and you kindly had the press send me an advance copy. The first version of my letter in response to you was sent on Feb. 12, 2010. This present version is substantially the same, with some passages developed and footnotes added.
2. A far more measured review, also targeted to a non-specialist American audience, is Mark Blitz's "Natural Reich," *The Weekly Standard*, vol. 15, no. 20, available at http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/natural-reich.
3. Gregory Fried, post 69 to Carlin Romano, "Heil Heidegger!" op. cit. All my posts can be found under the user-name "zmrzlina," my favorite Czech word.
4. Ibid; see Berel Lang, *Heidegger's Silence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); also, Robert Bernasconi, "Heidegger's Alleged Challenge to the Nazi Concepts of Race," in *Appropriating Heidegger*, ed. James E. Faulconer and Mark A. Wrathall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and "Race and Earth in Heidegger's Thinking During the Late 1930s," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 48 (2010): 49–66.
5. Fried, post 69 to Carlin Romano, "Heil Heidegger!"
6. "Such a work [and by this, you mean Heidegger's whole body of work] cannot continue to be placed in the philosophy section of libraries; its pace is rather in the historical archives of Nazism and Hitlerism." Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy*, trans. Michael B. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 319.
7. Gregory Fried, *Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
8. Faye, *Heidegger*, 7.
9. Martin Heidegger, "Drei Briefe Martin Heideggers an Karl Löwith," in *Zur philosophischen Aktualität Heideggers*, vol. 2, *Im Gespräch der Zeit*, ed. Dietrich Papenfuss and Otto Pöggeler (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1990), 29; my translation.
10. The number given by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is 75,000; see http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/details.php?lang=en&topic=03#02.
11. I follow the practice of writing the word "antisemite" without a hyphen, because it is not "Semites" in general who are the objects of this particular form of hatred, but the Jews. It was against the Jews that this word arose in the 19th century, when a traditionally Christian prejudice took on a secular form.
12. For a discussion of the history of the French debates over Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism, see Tom Rockmore, *Heidegger and French Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1995), especially chapter 8; Rockmore's account here is now over fifteen years old, but it shows how early after the war the myth was established in France that Heidegger had stumbled naïvely into Nazism and that this accident had no real relation to his thought.
13. Faye, *Heidegger*, 312.
14. Ibid., 89, 355–56n2.
15. Martin Woessner's *Heidegger in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) is the best and most comprehensive history of the Heidegger reception in the United States. This work shows how that reception was largely grounded in a rejection of the prevailing scientism of what became the "Analytic" school of Anglo-American philosophy after World War Two.
16. For a comparative discussion of Gandhi and Heidegger, see Gregory Fried, "Heidegger and Gandhi: A Dialogue on Conflict and Enmity," in In *The Wake of Conflict: Justice, Responsibility and Reconciliation*, ed. Allen Speight and Alice MacLachan (New York: Springer Publishing, forthcoming).
17. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, vol. 1, *The Will to Power as Art*, trans. David F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979); this translation was produced before the original and unsanitized lectures were published as volume 43 of the Gesamtausgabe in 1985.
18. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Die Wille zur Macht als Kunst*, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 43, ed. Bernd Heimbüchel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985), 276.
19. Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University

Press, 1959). I should note that this was the first book of Heidegger's translated into English, and so Manheim can hardly be faulted for at least some of its problems, given the lack of any scholarly consensus at the time for how to render Heidegger's idiosyncratic terminology.

20. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
21. Ibid., 213/152.
22. I gratefully acknowledge the input of Martin Black to this rendering of the Greek. The Greek transliterated is: *polemos pantōn men patēr esti, pantōn de basileus, kai tous men theous edeixe tous de anthrōpous, tous men dohlous epoiēse tous de eleuthurous*.
23. "Letter of Aug. 22, 1933, Heidegger to Schmitt," trans. G. L. Ulmen, *Telos* 72 (Summer 1987): 132.
24. Faye, *Heidegger*, 81ff, 162ff.
25. Ibid.,167ff.
26. Otto Pöggeler, "Den Führer führen? Heidegger und kein Ende," *Philosophische Rundschau* 32 (1985): 26–67.
27. Here, you are right to point to the passage in the 1934 "Logic" lectures, where he refers to "men and groups of men who have no history," and where, as an example, he points to "negroes, the Kaffirs for example"; *GA* 38, 81, quoted in Faye, *Heidegger*, 102.
28. Karl Löwith, "My Last Meeting with Heidegger in Rome, 1936," *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 142.
29. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
30. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Wahrheit*, Gasamtausgabe, vol. 36/37, ed. Hartmut Tietjen (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2001), 90–91; *Being and Truth*, 72–73.
31. Ulrich Sieg, "'Die Verjudung des deutschen Geistes': Ein unbekannter Brief Heideggers," *Die Zeit* (December 22, 1989): 40; my translation. I have written about this letter in *Heidegger's Polemos*, 227–28. Two sources are very valuable on this matter: Berel Lang's *Heidegger's Silence*, 36–37, 70–71, and 101–11, detailing Heidegger's later denunciation of Baumgarten for his association with "the Jew Fraenkel," and Paul Lawrence Rose's *Revolutionary Antisemitism in Germany from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), especially 4–5 and 40–43, where he details the genesis of the term "*Verjudung*" in Wagner as a notion of spiritual contamination by a foreign body infesting its host and necessitating a corresponding *Entjudung*, a purifying de-Jewification. See also Charles Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 52–53, and Steven E. Aschheim, *Culture and Catastrophe: German and Jewish Confrontations with National Socialism and Other Crises* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), chapter 4, "'The Jew Within': The Myth of 'Judaization' in Germany." As does Rose, Archheim traces the first use of the term *Verjudung* to Wagner's 1850 essay "Judaism in Music," and he argues convincingly that the notion in Germany of a poisonous and corrupting Jewish influence had long been an idea in search of a name. Aschheim traces that idea to the secular influences in German thought in the post-Kantian and post-Hegelian era, in writers as diverse as Jakob Fries and Karl Marx, and he makes the point that this secular myth of a corrupting Judaism has its roots deep in the Christian tradition, reaching as far back as the conflict between the following of St Peter and St Paul over "Judaizing" tendencies in the early church. So this is an ancient story indeed.
32. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1935), 348–49.
33. Gertrud Heidegger, ed., *"Mein liebes Seelchen!" Briefe Martin Heideggers an seine Frau Elfride, 1915–1970* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2005), 51: "Die Verjudung unsrer Kultur u. Universitäten ist allerdings schreckerregend u. ich meine die deutsche Rasse sollte noch soviel innere Kraft aufbringen um in die Höhe zu kommen." See also Emmanuel Faye, "Heidegger, der Nationalsozialismus, under die Zerstörung der Philosophie," in *Politische Unschuld? In Sachen Martin Heidegger*, ed. Bernhard H. F. Taurek (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2008), 59–60.
34. Heidegger, *"Mein liebes Seelchen!,"* 176: "Baeumler hat für mich die 'Jüdische Rundschau' bestellt, die ausgezeichnet orientiert u. Niveau hat. Ich werde Dir die Nummern schicken." I am grateful to Charles Bambach for calling my attention to this passage.
35. Heidegger, *"Mein liebes Seelchen!,"* 180: "Was Du über das Judenblatt u. den Tick [?] schreibst, war auch schon mein Gedanke. Man kann hier nicht mißtrauisch genug sein." The editor of the volume

does not know who or what "Tick" was, hence the "[?]."

36. Richard Polt, my colleague in translating *Being and Truth*, with its *Vernichtung* passage, puts the matter as follows: "The deeper and more mysterious connection is the move from the casual, even tentative bigotry expressed in those quotes [from his letters to Elfride] to contemplating *'Vernichtung*.' There is a moral abyss there. Either the enthusiasm of a moment of blindness leads one to jump into the abyss, or—and I think this is more likely—the open-eyed decision to jump into the abyss contributes to the enthusiasm. There is a kind of hyperexcitement that comes from a bad conscience converted into adrenalin—the thrill of evil." Richard Polt to Gregory Fried, email communication of Dec. 6, 2010. I agree: there is a gulf between noticing a supposed *Verjudung* and deciding to reverse it through an *Entjudung*, but Heidegger made the decision to leap that gulf with his eyes open, and he never made amends in later years, when he had ample opportunity. Holger Zaborowski, in his balanced treatment of the question of Heidegger's antisemitism, acknowledges that Heidegger's antipathy to Jews was real, yet that it was not directed against individuals but against a cultural influence; in that sense, Heidegger was indeed not a rabid antisemite in the way of the most virulent biological racists, but Zaborowski fails to see that even this more courtly form of antisemitism might lead someone to conceive of the "complete annihilation" of an internal enemy, even if he never personally mistreated a Jewish friend or colleague. See Zaborowski, *"Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?" Martin Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2010), 602–45.
37. Faye, *Heidegger*, 209–12.
38. Ibid., 96–103.
39. Ibid., 18–29, 178.
40. Ibid., 36, 111–12.
41. The German reads: "Und dann kommen sie alle, alle die braven 80 Millionen Deutschen, und jeder hat seinen anständigen Juden. Sagt: alle anderen sind Schweine, und hier ist ein prima Jude." Text available at the The Holocaust History Project, at http://www.holocaust-history.org/himmler-poznan/speech-text.shtml.
42. Faye, *Heidegger*, 34.
43. Ibid., 40–43, 52–53, 124.
44. Ibid., 43–46, 157.
45. Ibid., 49–86.
46. Ibid., 49–70.
47. Ibid., 157ff, 173–202.
48. Ibid., 251ff.
49. Ibid., 151–72, 228–42.
50. Ibid., 121, 155ff.
51. But note that it does seem that some version of that course will be appearing in 2010 in *Heidegger—Jahrbuch 4, Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente und Texts*, ed. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber, forthcoming 2010); announcement available at http://www.verlag-alber.de/jahrbuecher/details_html?k_tnr=45704&k_onl_struktur=1375123.
52. Faye, *Heidegger*, 294.
53. "Weil Jünger nicht sieht, was nur 'denkbar' is, deshalb hält er diese Vollendung der Metaphysik im Wesen des Willens zur Macht für den Anbruch einer neuen Zeit, wogegen sie nur die Einleitung ist zum raschen Veralten alles Neuesten in der Langeweile des Nichtigen, in dem die Seinsverlassenheit des Seienden brütet." Martin Heidegger, *Zu Ernst Jünger*, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 90, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2004), 264–65; cited here as *GA* 90.
54. "Das Wesen der Subjektivität wurde dargelegt; sie besagt: Der Mensch ist der Grund und das Ziel nicht nur seiner selbst, sondern er ist er selbst nur, indem er und sofern er Grund und Ziel des Seienden im Ganzen ist und als solcher sich behauptet."
55. "Dann ist der vielgeforderte Vorrang des Geeinnutzes vor dem Eigennutz nur rein Schein und er steht ganz im Dienste des äußersten und äußerlichsten Eigennutzes, der, bezüglich des Tieres 'Mensch' gedacht, metaphysisch gedacht werden kann" (*GA* 90, 39).
56. See *GA* 90, 221–22; quoted in Faye, *Heidegger*, 292.
57. Faye, *Heidegger*, 270.
58. Ibid., 209ff., 292–93.
59. Ibid., 268.
60. René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 35; see also René Descartes, *Oeuvres et lettres*, ed. André Bridoux (Paris: La Pléiade, 1953), 168.
61. See "Titanism" (1936) in Jan Patočka: *Philosophy and Selected Writings*, ed. Erazim Kohák (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

62. The passage is *GA* 65, 54, quoted in Faye, *Heidegger*, 277–78. The phrase in parenthesis is in square brackets in the German, but I have put it in parenthesis to make clear that it is Heidegger's own interpolation.
63. Faye, *Heidegger*, 25–28, 255–56.
64. For a detailed study of the "one drop rule" in the history of racial typology in the United States, see F. James Davis, *Who Is Black?: One Nation's Definition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).
65. "Address to the Students," Nov. 3, 1933, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 16, 184, quoted in Faye, *Heidegger*, 71.
66. Faye, *Heidegger*, 253, 257, 271.
67. For example, see Theodore Kisiel, "Review and Overview of Recent Heidegger Translations and their German Originals: A Grassroots Archival Perspective," *Studia Phaenomenologica* 5 (2005), 277–300.
68. Having said this, an explanation is in order. I have worked as a translator of Heidegger's work, and indeed I have translated, with Richard Polt, one of the volumes of the *Gesamtausgabe*, volume 36/37. One might ask me: if you think the *Gesamtausgabe* is problematic, why associate yourself with it in any way? The answer is simple: because the material (at least the texts I have chosen to translate: the lectures of 1933–34) are so pivotally important to understanding Heidegger's politics that we must make do with what is presently available, even if it is flawed.
69. As you have suggested, Heidegger's correspondences with Max Scheler and with Alfred Bauemler, especially in the 1920s, will be especially illuminating, once they are made available—if they have not been destroyed. See Faye, "Heidegger gegen alle Moral," in *Moralität des Bosen: Ethik und nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen*, ed. Werner Konitzer and Raphael Gross (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009). Gertrud Heidegger, in the Preface to her edited volume of letters from Heidegger to his wife, writes that she believes that some cards and letters, especially from the 1930's during Heidegger's most intense involvement with politics, were destroyed, either by Elfride or Martin; see *"Mein liebes Seelchen!"* 14.
70. There is some hope that the Heidegger estate may loosen its strictures on what gets published. As noted above, Gertrud Heidegger was willing to publish Heidegger's letters to his wife, and Alfred Denker and and Holger Zaborowski have been able to publish one of Heidegger's seminars from the Nazi period that you cite in your book as one the most damning; see Martin Heidegger, "Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Statt." Übung aus dem Wintersemester 1933/34, in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus I: Dokumente*, ed. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (Freiburg: Karl Alber Verlag, 2009), 53–88.
71. Martin Heidegger, *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität; Das Rektorat 1933—34*, ed. Hermann Heidegger (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983), 28; my translation. The full passage merits quoting: "The word polemos with which the fragment begins does not mean 'war' [*'Krieg'*], but rather what is meant by the word eris, which Heraclitus uses in the same sense. But this means 'Strife' [*'Streit'*]—but strife not as quarrel and squabble and mere discord, and most certainly not the violent treatment and repression of the opponent— but rather an *Aus-einander-setzung* of a kind in which the essence of those who step out against each other in con-frontation [*die sich aus-einandersetzen*] exposes itself to the other [*sich aussetzt dem anderen*] and thus shows itself and comes into appearance, that is, in a Greek sense, into what is unconcealed and the true. Because struggle is the self-exposure to the essential that reciprocally recognizes itself, therefore, the [Rectoral] Address, which relates this questioning and reflecting to 'struggle,' continually speaks of 'being exposed' [*Ausgesetztheit*]."
72. Faye, *Heidegger*, 308–15.
73. See my critique of Žižek's championing of Heidegger and other monstrously failed heroes: Gregory Fried, "Where's the Point? Slavoj Žižek and the Broken Sword," in *The International Journal of Žižek Studies* 1, no. 4 (2007), available at: http://zizekstudies.org/index.php/ijzs/issue/view/6.
74. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Fried and Polt, 190/136.
75. See the recent book by B. R. Myers, *The Cleanest Race: How North Koreans See Themselves and Why It Matters* (Brooklyn, NY: Melville House, 2010).
76. See my book, co-authored with my father, *Because It Is Wrong: Torture, Privacy, and Presidential Power in the Age of Terror* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).
77. Faye, *Heidegger*, 322.
78. Ibid., 321.
79. "On the other hand, if such a faith does not continually expose itself to unfaith, it is not faith but a convenience. It becomes an agreement with oneself to ad-

here in the future to a doctrine as something that has somehow been handed down. This is neither having faith nor questioning, but indifference—which can then, perhaps even with keen interest, busy itself with everything, with faith as well as questioning." Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, 8.

80. Stephen Hawking's version of the first question shows that it still has life, long after Leibniz formulated it in its well-known version: "Why does the universe go to all of the bother of existing?" Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (New York: Bantam, 1990), 192.
81. Mark Blitz, "Natural Reich."
82. Faye, *Heidegger*, 12, 37–38.
83. See Frederick Olafson, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview with Herbert Marcuse," *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 6 (Winter 1977): 32–33. And Levinas, speaking many years later (1973) about his almost boundless admiration for Heidegger at the Davos Disputation with Cassirer in 1929, said, "I had no idea, we could not have known, what would take place in 1933," namely, Heidegger's involvement in the Nazi revolution; quoted in Peter Gordon, *Continental Divide: Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 327. Hans-Georg Gadamer recalls a similar overwhelming shock, not only on his part but among all Heidegger's students, in the film *Human, All Too Human*, episode 2: *Thinking the Unthinkable*, produced and directed by Jeff Morgan (BBC, 1999).
84. See Faye, *Heidegger*, 29–32 and 10.
85. See Sartre's *The Ghost of Stalin*, where Sartre pivots between deploring the Stalinist repression of Hungary and honoring Stalin as the only possible source of unity in the Soviet Union during the time when it was still fighting the vestiges of bourgeois self-interest: "Actually, Stalin does not appear at first as an individual superior to others but fundamentally like all. It is not the dignity of the person which he represents, it is social integration pushed to the limit. This indissolubility—which happens to be that of the individual—makes him the sole possible agent of unification, for it is unity alone which can unify multiplicity. . . . No one enjoys this confidence except Stalin in person; but each one knows that up there, in Stalin, the bureaucratic collectivity exists under a form of superior integration and that it is reconciled." Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Ghost of Stalin*, trans. Martha H. Fletcher (New York: George Braziller, 1968), 76–77.
86. You argue this point even more forcefully in "Heidegger gegen alle Moral."
87. Faye, *Heidegger*, 321.
88. Emmanuel Faye, "Martin Heidegger ou la traversée de la nuit: Questions à Emmanuel Faye. Gaëtan Pégny, Béatrice Fortin et Michèle Cohen-Halimi," *Texto!* 13, no. 3 (July 2008), available at http://www.revue-texto.net/docannexe/file/1583/faye_heideggernuit.pdf; my translation.
89. Faye, *Heidegger*, 304.
90. Gregory Fried, "Back to the Cave: A Platonic Rejoinder to Heidegger," in *Heidegger and the Greeks*, ed. Drew Hyland and John Manoussakis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).
91. As does Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, in *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, trans. Chris Turner (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).
92. Hesiod, *Theogony*, lines 116–17 and 126–28; my translation.
93. Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots*, trans. A. F. Wills (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1987), 41; emphasis added. Also, *L'enracinement: Prélude à une declaration des devoirs envers l'être humain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), 45.
94. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsches Lehre vom Willen zur Macht als Erkenntnis*, *Gesamtausgabe* vol. 47, ed. Eberhard Hanser (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989), 150; my translation.
95. Martin Heidegger, *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, fifth edition (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1981), 62–63; my translation.
96. Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 65, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989), 7.
97. Faye, "Heidegger gegen alle Moral," 222.
98. For example, see Laurie Goodstein, "Across Nation, Mosque Projects Meet Opposition," *The New York Times*, Aug. 7, 2010; available at http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/08/us/08mosque.html.
99. See Fried, "Back to the Cave."

Suffolk University, Boston, MA 02108