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The Masks of Heidegger: National Socialism and Anti-Semitism

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The Masks of Heidegger: National Socialism and Anti-Semitism

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by

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In the writings of a hermit one always also hears something of the echo of the desolate regions, something of the whispered tones and the furtive look of solitude; in his strongest words, even in his cry, there still vibrates a new and dangerous kind of silence—of burying something in silence. When a man has been sitting alone with his soul in confidential discord and discourse, year in and year out, day and night; when in his cave—it may be a labyrinth or a gold mine—he has become a cave bear or a treasure digger or a treasure guard and dragon; then even his concepts eventually acquire a peculiar twilight color, an odor just as much of depth as of must, something incommunicable and recalcitrant that blows at every passerby like a chill.

-- Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

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Introduction:

In the beginning of a course on Heidegger's *Being and Time* it was mentioned to us that Heidegger had been involved in National Socialism, but we were told to put this thought on hold and to try to read the book without reference to this fact. Throughout the course, however, the question of this relationship remained on my mind. In the library I read some of an old book curiously titled *German Existentialism*. In the introduction the author complained that Heidegger had insulted 'high mother philosophy' in his decision to join the Nazi party, and the following speeches were examples of this betrayal. The transcripts of the speeches made during his time as Rector of Frieberg for the party were disturbing and weighed on my mind as we worked our way through the immensity of *Being and Time*. I looked for evidence of problematic ideas that may have been related to Nazism but overall, could find nothing. Indeed the work seemed antithetical to Nazism in its descriptions of the everyday and the "They." How could this philosopher have been a part of it? How could he have fallen in with the "They" and followed the loud, small man that was Hitler (In a conversation with Jaspers he seemed to remark that it had something to do with his beautiful hands)? One day back home after the course had ended I was having a conversation with my neighbor about Heidegger. He told me about an article he had read in *Foreign Affairs* about a new source that had been published, the *Schwarze Hefte* or *Black Notebooks*, in which there was evidence of anti-Semitism. Tom printed a copy for me, beginning my investigation into the controversy.

Heidegger and his writing has been the subject of controversy ever since his involvement in National Socialism. He remained controversial for several reasons. Partly because he refused to apologize for or acknowledge the absurdity and tragedy of the deaths of millions of Jews and other minorities in concentration camps, in which, at least in the eyes of the "victors," he was

implicated. Partly because some, particularly in the French school, continued to maintain that his foray into National Socialism had been a personal mistake, and further that Nazism had not found its way into his philosophy. Still, others, most popularly Victor Farias, argued that National Socialism was central to his philosophy, which was itself inherently fascist. However, the controversy seemed to be coming alive again, but in new form, with the questions posed by the *Black Notebooks*. There were many articles, some expressing resignation that their highly regarded philosopher could have stooped so low as to make anti-Semitic remarks, and some for whom it was proof that we could finally be rid of him, the Jew-hating Nazi. A very small number still maintained that Heidegger's work is important despite his National Socialist past. Peter Trawny, the editor of the *Black Notebooks*, raised the question of whether these "being-historical anti-Semitismisms" had "contaminated" his philosophy in some way. Most certainly the reflections in the *Black Notebooks* prompt us to reexamine the Philosopher's work in light of these new revelations. They compel us to ask: what role do these anti-Semitismisms have in the Black Notebooks, and further, in his greater philosophy? Do they have any at all? Somewhere in the "Heidegger Controversy" someone remarked that Heidegger had even kept his anti-Semitism secret from the Nazis themselves. Why would he do this and what really is the nature of his relationship to the National Socialist Movement?

The first part of this project investigates *Being and Time*, specifically the sections about the concept of "historicality." I originally decided to look back to the work because I needed to build a better understanding of Heidegger's concepts of history, which is a major subject in the *Black Notebooks*. However, when I read the passages this time I began to see the basis on which Heidegger's affinity for the National Socialist Movement could have begun, which ultimately rests on his understanding of history. I also began to see possibilities upon which Heidegger

could have characterized “World Jewry” as metaphysically different and more destructive than other peoples (having to do with “heritage” and the opposition between “authentic” and “inauthentic historicity”). As I continued to read and reread the sections on historicity while investigating the historical context in which the work was written, my interpretations developed and changed. It became more clear that Heidegger’s work was not a purely philosophical, ahistorical treatise, but very definitely situated within and responding to a specific time, a specific world. In my mind there is no doubt that Heidegger’s philosophy was responding to not only “philosophical” problems, such as the forgottenness of Being and the overcoming of metaphysics, but to historical situations that affected him in his time, such as living in a collapsing society after the First World War, the diagnosis of a European nihilism that was first and profoundly described by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and furthermore his own Situation, which he later located as a turning point in world-history. In this, Hegel’s notion that philosophy cannot be separated from the spirit of its era is reflected: “Philosophy is identical with the spirit of the era (Zeitgeist) in which it makes its appearance; it is not superior to its era but simply the consciousness of what is substantial in it, or, it is thinking knowledge of what belongs to that era... Nevertheless, philosophy does stand over and above its own era, which is to say... it has the same content but as a knowledge of it goes beyond.”¹ Thus in this part of the project I argue against the traditional way of reading *Being and Time* as an ahistorical work, separable from Heidegger’s historical involvement in National Socialism, against the traditional notion of “prima philosophia” or “first philosophy,” which, as Richard Wolin writes is “an approach to knowledge that betrays a superioristic disdain for the “concrete” realms of history and society.”²

¹ Quentin Lauer, *Hegel’s Idea of Philosophy: With a New Translation of Hegel’s Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1983).

² Karl Löwith, “The Political Implications of Heidegger’s Existentialism,” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (MIT Press Edition, 1993), 265.

To fully understand the implications of *Being and Time* it needs to be read in context with its historical situation.

The second part of the project investigates passages from the *Black Notebooks* related to Jewry and attempts to work out the nature of the relationship between the anti-Semitism and Heidegger's greater philosophy. To read these passages I drew on a variety of his other works from a similar time period. I conclude that although the anti-Semitism are philosophical in context, they don't make the philosophy anti-Semitic in itself. Furthermore, they cannot be understood outside the context of his developing historical philosophy, which had begun to "turn." The *Notebooks* mark a rethinking of concepts he had begun to develop in *Being and Time*, engaging in a self-criticism of the work. Indeed, the anti-Semitism are written into Heidegger's "turn." I will argue that passages in the *Black Notebooks* are anti-Semitic and these anti-Semitism were part of a broader attempt to characterize the decline of the west (*Abendlands*), in which World Jewry played an important role, but was not the underlying cause of this declension. In this sense I tried to show that although World Jewry is part of a 'pervasive' and 'impalpable' conspiratorial force, it is not the ultimate concern of his thinking. Likewise anti-Semitism is not the philosophical ground of Western decline. The question still remains, what does this mean for Heidegger's thinking? How do we read Heidegger in light of these revelations and how do we move forward?

The third part functions as a conclusion to the project and tries to answer the question of what the revelations of anti-Semitism and National Socialism will mean for Heidegger as a thinker and his work. I examine some examples of the prominent ways the implications are understood, responding to Trawny's "contamination" argument and Nelly Motroshilova's argument that we should pay attention to some parts of his work and ignore others. Throughout

the chapter I use some of Nietzsche's meditations on the "profound spirit" from *Beyond Good and Evil*, in particular his concept of "masks" to offer a way of understanding scholarly interpretations of Heidegger and also as a way of understanding Heidegger's many faces. I also think about the nature of the debate in the internet age and deal with the issue of a prohibition of Heidegger's thinking. Unfortunately the ideas of prohibiting, censoring, or ignoring Heidegger's work have come up many times during this debate and seem to pose a major threat not only to our understanding of Heidegger's work, but to the nature of scholarly engagement with controversial, yet vitally important thought. What is at stake is not only whether or not Heidegger has a problematic past, but whether we continue to read him. I argue that prohibition of his work and division of his thought into acceptable and unacceptable is a misguided way of approaching it. Moving forward, even though Heidegger has been revealed as truly controversial and problematic, we must keep reading him and critically engaging with his work because there is still much to learn. Not only about Heidegger's thinking itself, but also about the nature of historical anti-Semitism (which is much more complicated than we make it seem when we equate anti-Semitism with condemnation, true evil) and thought during the Holocaust.

While the project will not go deeply into the history of the controversy and certainly will not provide a definitive reading of passages from the *Black Notebooks*, what it does do is try to come to a preliminary understanding of the anti-Semitic passages and decide whether or not these statements truly pose a threat to the legitimacy of Heidegger's work. I argue that they do not. In the end I hope to show that despite the controversial and highly problematic nature of his work it is still interesting and fruitful to read. I also hope to show that we should not be hesitant to read Heidegger's work in its historical context, and that this context does not take away from its philosophical complexity but makes it all the more rich and complex. I also hope that this

work will persuade scholars and professors to consider taking this context into account when reading and teaching his work, to choose not ignore or elide his past.

Part I: Historicality and National Socialism in *Being and Time*

To understand Heidegger's affinity for National Socialism one must turn to history—both Heidegger's understanding of history as articulated in *Being and Time* and the historical context in which he found himself writing. To understand what he really meant in *Being and Time*, we must look at the historical context from which the book arose. To understand how he came to the decision to involve himself in the National Socialist Revolution, we must reread *Being and Time* because the historical decisionism of the work already contains the seeds of the movement. I will attempt to lead the reader through this somewhat circular argument by looking to Heidegger's philosophical concept of Historicality and working through the relationship of its concepts. Alongside this exploration I will work back through the history that gives meaning to these seemingly abstract concepts. Through this we will find that *Being and Time* represents a kind response to the question of how to live and move forward in the aftermath of World War I. In the years that followed its publication, the vision of history contained within the work found its factual realization in the promises of the National Socialist Revolution, which according to Karl Löwith, for Heidegger can be understood as “a protestational movement of faith.”³

Out of all the sections and subsections of *Being and Time*, it is his chapter on Historicality that most suggests Heidegger's later affinity for National Socialism. It is in these sections that Heidegger starts to discuss concepts like heritage, tradition (handing down), fate, and destiny, whose implications for his vision of historical understanding and authentic living already suggest a movement that takes over its heritage and struggles in a community of *Volk*. Furthermore, when this authentic mode of Being is juxtaposed with the description of everyday,

³ Löwith, “The Political Implications,” 178.

inauthentic being, it becomes clear against what and whom, this community must struggle—that is, every day modern society.

The overall project of *Being and Time* asks what is the meaning of Being in general. Heidegger uses a methodological procedure that looks at different parts of the question and conceptualizes them accordingly. The most basic aspect of his task is twofold: to disclose how we already understand Being, the phenomenological understanding, which “may be so infiltrated with traditional theories and opinions about Being that these remain hidden as sources of the way in which it is prevalently understood;”⁴ and working from this, to exhibit Being in “a way of its own, essentially different from the way in which entities are discovered,”⁵ to give an ontological understanding of the way we actually are. In response to these tasks Heidegger analyzes Being from the perspective of two modes: the inauthentic, which represents the everyday way of being, and the authentic, representing a way of being that is in alignment with his existential-ontological study of Being. These two modes of Being will mediate the analysis of historicity. How this mediation occurs will be discussed later once I lay the groundwork for what historicity means in its most basic sense.

From the beginning the concept of the historical is not merely an afterthought to Heidegger’s analysis of Being or a tangent: rather the question of history is the question of Being. In this chapter Heidegger’s fundamental thesis is that Dasein is what is primarily historical.⁶ He begins the chapter by remarking that so far, he has only analyzed one horizon of Dasein’s existence – death – and states that he must find a way to characterize Dasein in its

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 25.

⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 26.

⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 428.

“Being-a-whole.” Thus he introduces birth as the other factual limit of Dasein’s existence. He characterizes the way that Dasein moves between birth and death while maintaining “itself with a certain self-sameness” as being stretched along between birth and death. “The specific movement in which Dasein is *stretched along and stretches itself along*, we call its ‘historizing.’”⁷ Thus Heidegger characterizes life as ‘historizing.’ “To lay bare the *structure of historizing*, and the existential-temporal conditions of its possibility, signifies that one has achieved an *ontological* understanding of *historicality*.”⁸ Thus, “historicality,” the way in which Dasein is historical, is constituted by the “structure of historizing” or the ways in which Dasein moves through life while holding itself constant. Historicality is the “kind of Being which belongs to the historical,” which is rooted in temporality.⁹ In summary, “the problem of history is coextensive with the problem of human existence.”¹⁰

Heidegger investigates this historizing life-movement from the perspective of two modes for analysis: authentic and inauthentic historicality. Authentic historicality is the way in which Dasein moves through life while holding the self constant, while inauthentic historicality describes the way in which average, everyday Dasein moves through life: the way in which people “today” conduct themselves. In this mode Dasein is unable to hold the self constant or understand its place in history. Furthermore, authentic historicality signifies that one is moving through life with respect to the ontological understanding. Regardless of whether Heidegger intended for inauthentic and authentic historicality to be interpreted as value judgments, and in fact he states that they should not be, the effect is that he paints a picture of the world in which there are two ways of being: one that is unable to understand its relation to history and another

⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 425.

⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 427.

⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 428.

¹⁰ Calvin Schrag, “Heidegger on Repetition and Historical Understanding,” *Philosophy East and West* 20 (1970), 278.

that is characterized by its ability to disclose, comprehend, and act upon its understanding of history to bring about change in the future. In this way these categories cannot be ‘neutral’ because it is obvious according to the text that one mode is better than the other. Furthermore, it follows that one must ‘choose’ authentic historicality in order to deal with one’s historical situation as it is, where the everyday person is lost and distracted. While this consequence is evident even in an isolated reading of *Being and Time*, other possibilities emerge after we read Heidegger’s “Rectorship Address,” for example, or the *Black Notebooks*. This possibility is that later authentic historicality could be analogous to the authentic, particularly German Dasein, while inauthentic historicality can be analogous to the negative aspects of modernity which are espoused by World Jewry, and further the Americans and the Russians. Nevertheless, the values created by these opposing concepts can only be fully comprehended by analyzing the various components of each concept and their relationship to “Freiberg National Socialism.” Authentic historicality can be understood by dividing it into about three general categories, each of which is composed of several other concepts, which, through their interactions and combinatory meanings, go together signify what Heidegger means by “authentic historicality.” These three categories are anticipatory resoluteness (the future); handing down, heritage, and repetition; and fate and destiny. Inauthentic historicality is will be discussed in a more cursory way because its meaning becomes clear in its opposition to authentic historicality.

One of the most important aspects of Heidegger’s conception of authentic historizing is its orientation toward the future and the future’s role in making the past and the present understandable. The futural character of authentic historicality is grounded in death, and thus, in anticipatory resoluteness. Anticipatory resoluteness answers the call of conscience that proclaims one “Guilty!” Guilty in the sense that one is responsible for a “lack of something in the Dasein of

an Other.”¹¹ Here anticipatory resoluteness already suggests a duty to fix the way Others live, or at least a responsibility for the problematic ways that Others live. Understanding the call of conscience “means ‘wanting to have a conscience.’”¹² Resoluteness is defined as “a projecting of oneself upon one’s own Being-guilty—a projecting which is reticent and ready for anxiety.”¹³ Further, “Resoluteness gains its authenticity as *anticipatory* resoluteness.”¹⁴ Anticipatory resoluteness is a resoluteness that anticipates Dasein’s death. In this sense it is futurally oriented. Dasein looks forward to its own death and comes to terms with the fact that its existence will cease. By holding onto this fact the possibilities of life become all the more powerful.

In this, Dasein understands itself with regard to its potentiality-for-Being, and it does so in such a manner that it will go right under the eyes of Death in order thus to take over in its thrownness that entity which is itself, and to take it over wholly. The resolute taking over of one’s factual ‘there’, signifies, at the same time, that the Situation is one which has been resolved upon.¹⁵

By Schrag’s analysis, the analytic of Dasein is “an analysis of human finitude in which death provides the most decisive index of man’s finite temporality. Human finitude provides the proper context for the understanding of history.”¹⁶ Schrag notes that while Heidegger does not fully take up Hegel’s approach to history, “For both... history becomes a problem through the consciousness of crisis. Historical consciousness is grounded in a consciousness of crisis.”¹⁷ For Heidegger the consciousness of crisis arises from the anticipation of death and historical understanding is first grasped at by letting death become “powerful.”

In *Being and Time* the consciousness of crisis arises from death. Heidegger chooses to interpret death as the ground for historical understanding perhaps because it is the most basic

¹¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 328.

¹² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 334.

¹³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 434.

¹⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 434.

¹⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 434.

¹⁶ Schrag, “Repetition,” 288.

¹⁷ Schrag, “Repetition,” 288.

form of existential crisis from which others arise. However, in the time that Heidegger wrote, it was not necessarily only the crisis of one's ownmost death that seemed to precipitate the need to understand one's place in history, but the very historical situation the world was in: this being the aftermath of World War I. Karl Löwith paints a picture of the mood of this time.

The extraordinary fascination that Spengler, Barth, and Heidegger—despite their various divergences—exerted upon a generation of young Germans following the First World War derives from a common source. Their shared position can be seen in the clear awareness of being situated in a crisis—a turning point between epochs; and thus being obliged to confront questions whose nature was too radical to find an answer in the enfeebled, nineteenth-century belief in progress, culture, and education. The questions that agitated this young generation, devoid of illusions, yet sincere, were fundamentally questions of faith.¹⁸

Löwith's essay espouses the difficult tensions and feelings that pervaded at the time. There is the question of what to put one's faith into, what to believe in, now that the older ideas of progress had been shattered by Germany's defeat in World War I and the memory of the millions dead in the trenches. Now hope and faith come in the form of the belief that one will make one's future death matter, that it will be in the service of history even though one will not live through it. According to Johannes Fritsche's book *Historical Destiny and National Socialism in Heidegger's 'Being and Time'*, the translation of "vorlaufend Entschlossenheit" as "anticipatory resoluteness" does not give the full meaning of the German. He argues that John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson's translation of "vorlaufen" as "anticipation" "cleansed" the word of its important everyday meaning, which is "to run ahead."¹⁹ "Since 'to anticipate' does not have the sense of physical motion, the translation forecloses the associations that could hardly have been avoided by German readers who "ran into" Heidegger's phrase in the years between World War I and World War II. «Entschlossen in den Tod vorlaufen» (to resolutely run

¹⁸ Löwith, "The Political Implications," 172.

¹⁹ Johannes Fritsche, *Historical Destiny and National Socialism in Heidegger's 'Being and Time,'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 2.

ahead into death) was how the acts of those who were later called the “Helden von Langemarck” (heroes of Langemarck) were characterized. World War I was the first war characterized largely by trench warfare.”²⁰ With the analogy of Trench warfare, running to one’s ownmost death takes on a new meaning. Jumping out of the relative safety of the trenches, the soldier runs forward to his enemy, into the hail of bullets, to his ownmost death. It is not toward an afterlife that one runs, but to the culmination of one’s life in death. This may provide better context to why Carl Löwith was critical of the practical implications of the anticipation of death, “In this projection toward the imminence of death, the supreme freedom of Dasein as such is affirmed. But when one thinks of the thousands of actual suicides committed in Germany after 1933, first, by the adversaries and victims of the Third Reich, and later by its defeated representatives, one cannot deny that the attitude toward there-being and not-being [Dasein and *Nicht-Sein*] expressed in Heideggerian philosophy has an importance concerning practical consequences for life that cedes nothing to the belief in God and immortality.”²¹ Here we see an example of the ontical Situation, the ‘world’ of the time, and how this world’s mood is reflected in the conception of what constitutes authentic historicity.

Once Dasein resolves to take over its thrownness by running ahead to its death it has resolved to take over its factual ‘there,’ to take responsibility for, to be in control of its life. Dasein makes a resolution. However, Heidegger says that we cannot in this analysis discuss “what Dasein factually resolves [upon] in any particular case.” Instead he asks, “whence, *in general*, Dasein can draw upon those possibilities upon which it factually projects itself.”²² He answers that one’s anticipatory projection of oneself on death only guarantees that one’s

²⁰ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 3.

²¹ Löwith, “The Political Implications,” 174-175.

²² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 434.

resolution is authentic, not, again, what it resolves upon. Dasein resolves upon possibilities, its potentiality-for-Being. But from whence do these possibilities come? The possibilities which will be disclosed do not come from death, but from somewhere else. Heidegger reveals that the possibilities come from heritage, handing down, and repetition.

Heritage is introduced after Heidegger states “those possibilities of existence which have been factually disclosed are not to be gathered from death” and rhetorically questions whether these authentic possibilities can come from thrownness or something else.²³ He shows that these possibilities do not come from thrownness because

As thrown... Proximally and for the most part the Self is lost in the “they”. It understands itself in terms of those possibilities of existence which ‘circulate’ in the ‘average’ public way of interpreting Dasein today. These possibilities have mostly been made unrecognizable by ambiguity; yet they are well known to us.²⁴

The Self is lost in the “they.” To find itself Dasein must disavow the ‘today’ and the ‘they’ and seize upon something else for other possibilities to emerge. By resolutely coming back to one’s thrownness one realizes the triviality and lostness in which the irresolute navigate the world. By resolutely coming back to oneself possibilities are disclosed in what is handed down to one, by taking over one’s heritage.

The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself, discloses current factual possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* [*aus dem Erbe*] which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over*. In one’s coming back resolutely to one’s thrownness, there is hidden a *handing down* [*Sich uberliefern*] to oneself of the possibilities that have come down to one, but not necessarily as having thus come down. If everything ‘good’ is a heritage, and the character of ‘goodness’ lies in making authentic existence possible, then the handing down of a heritage constitutes itself in resoluteness.²⁵

Heritage can be understood in a general sense as good possible ways of existing that have been handed down to one from the past. Heritage is good because it is not just possible ways of

²³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 435.

²⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 435

²⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 435.

existing that are handed down, but possible ways that make authentic historizing or authentic living possible. Fritsche comments that “*Überlieferung*,” in this passage written as “a handing down [Sich überliefern],” “most often means tradition.”²⁶ When we read “handing down” also as “tradition,” more interpretive possibilities arise in English. In the idea of heritage is the idea of a lineage that is given to one by birth. One’s birth in a certain place, by certain people, gives one this heritage. This is not the only sense of heritage, but can provide context for understanding. By taking over one’s heritage a tradition comes down to oneself. Thus it is through heritage and through tradition that one discovers possibilities of existing that will make authentic existing possible. In this vision of historical understanding, one must turn away from the ‘they’, away from the “‘average’ public way of interpreting Dasein today,” and turn towards ways of existing that worked in the past, in traditions that are a part of one’s heritage.

When Fritsche comments that “*Überlieferung*” “most often means tradition,” he continues, “and the loss of tradition was what haunted German intellectuals between World War I and World War II—and by no means only them.”²⁷ Thus we begin to see that Heidegger is perhaps concerned with the loss of tradition, its loss being exemplified in the way the ‘they’ exist, in the modern distractedness and lostness. Fritsche writes “For conservatives, this destruction of *Überlieferung* took place in the parliament of Weimar and in the big cities, notably Berlin, with their night-bars, with all their different sorts of strange Mickey Mouses, with “*Asphalt-Literaten*” (“asphalt writers”) and “*Neger-Jazz*” (“nigger-jazz”), and, of course, with social democrats and communists and Jews.”²⁸ The loss or destruction of tradition was an issue that conservative thinkers (among many others) saw playing out on a large scale throughout

²⁶ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 14.

²⁷ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 14.

²⁸ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 15.

modern society. A more liberal thinker Walter Benjamin interpreted the works of modern artists like Paul Klee “as efforts ‘to get rid of experience.’” Fritsche comments that “to get rid of experience is the new ‘dream of human beings today,’ one we can dream of only by reading ‘Micky Mouse.’”²⁹ Benjamin’s idea of the modern as trying ‘to get rid of experience’ by dreaming (of distractions like Mickey Mouse) is a kind of forgetting or trying to forget one’s situation. Heidegger’s work *Being and Time* itself attempts to tackle the issue of the forgottenness of Being. He traces the forgottenness of Being throughout the history of metaphysics back to the Greeks, but also locates it factually in the way that modern people today exist in the world. Thus Heidegger posits heritage and tradition as a way of combating the forgottenness of Being that is pervasive in the modern world. In his attention to the problem of the loss of tradition we see that Heidegger is part of a cast of conservative thinkers who were concerned with this problem.

Heidegger builds upon the ideas of heritage and tradition with the concept of repetition. While repetition is not discussed until after he gives definitions of the concepts of fate and destiny, it makes much more sense to explain them in this order. The action of repeating, or more accurately, of ‘fetching again’ possibilities, is the primary way by which Dasein begins to understand the relationship between past possibilities and the way they are useful in the present. It is also the primordial action by which heritage and tradition are passed down to oneself. While repetition does not seem to have any connection to National Socialism, its function with tradition as handing down and with resoluteness makes it key to this understanding.

The resoluteness which comes back to itself and hands itself down, then becomes the *repetition* of a possibility of existence that has come down to us. *Repeating is handing down explicitly*—that is to say, going back into the possibilities of the Dasein that has-been-there. The authentic repetition of a possibility of existence

²⁹ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 15

that has been—the possibility that Dasein may choose its hero—is grounded existentially in anticipatory resoluteness; for it is in resoluteness that one first chooses the choice which makes one free for the struggle of loyally following in the footsteps of that which can be repeated.³⁰

The passage says the act of resolutely coming back to itself and handing itself down is in itself an act of repetition. Thus “Repeating is handing down explicitly” could say that repeating is upholding tradition. Heidegger says that authentic repetition is the possibility that Dasein may choose its hero—resolutely making the choice to repeat is choosing a hero—choosing to make tradition (past possibilities) its hero. That is, one makes oneself free to struggle to ‘loyally follow’ the footsteps of tradition. By running forward to one’s ownmost death, one chooses to make the good possibilities that arise from tradition its hero and to loyally follow it. It is by loyally struggling to uphold this hero that Dasein can ensure this possibility will be repeated in the future. The fact that Heidegger suggests authentic living is a choice to loyally follow a hero, a tradition, makes the fact that Heidegger chose to loyally follow a hero which represented the renewal of German greatness and tradition seem much more in character with his philosophy; the fact that Heidegger “chose” Hitler does not seem so implausible. It also prefigures his thought in the *Rectorship Address*, which is concerned with the relationship between the leader and his followers.

The concept of repetition is further elaborated as disclosure and understanding of the historical situation of today with aid from the concept of the moment of vision [*Augenblick*] and the disavowal of the today.

Arising, as it does, from a resolute projection of oneself, repetition does not let itself be persuaded of something by what is ‘past’, just in order that this, as something which was formerly actual, may recur. Rather the repetition makes a *reciprocative rejoinder* to the possibility of that existence which has-been-there. But when such a rejoinder is made to this possibility in a resolution, it is made *in*

³⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 437.

*a moment of vision; and as such it is at the same time a disavowal of that which in the “today”, is working itself out as the ‘past’.*³¹

Here the sense of repetition not only as repeating or fetching again becomes apparent. When one goes back to possibilities from heritage that might be repeated, one is in conversation with the past. As Macquarrie and Robinson’s note suggests, the past “proposes certain possibilities for adoption,” which Dasein then reciprocates by making a rejoinder to the proposal.³² In the moment of vision Dasein sees perhaps the incompatibility of the possibility offered by the past and the way people live in the “today.” Dasein sees that the today is not the inevitable end or way of living that has come down from the past. Dasein disavows the today, that is it must disavow, refuse to live in the distracted, ambiguous, traditionless way that is ubiquitous in its modern time and find its own way that has come down in heritage.

Fate is the culmination of the characteristics of authentic living. It is first defined right after Heidegger introduces heritage and handing down (tradition). He writes,

Only Being *free* for death, gives Dasein its goal outright and pushes existence into its finitude. Once one has grasped the finitude of one’s existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one—those of comfortableness, shirking, and taking things lightly—and brings Dasein into the simplicity of its *fate* [*Schicksals*]. This is how we designate Dasein’s primordial historizing, which lies in authentic resoluteness and in which Dasein *hands* itself *down* to itself, free for death, in a possibility which it has inherited and yet chosen.³³

The realization of one’s finitude snatches one back from the confusion of the “endless multiplicity of possibilities” that arise from inauthentic living and shows Dasein the simplicity of its fate. This fate “is how we designate Dasein’s primordial historizing”—that is, fate is characterized as the most originary and closest to Being way of moving through life. Fate is the

³¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 438.

³² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 438.

³³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 435.

“authentic resoluteness which hands itself down to itself in a possibility it has inherited and yet chosen.” Fate is coming back to oneself and choosing to look for possibilities of existing in what one has inherited. Living fatefully is living to reintroduce and uphold tradition. Following this passage Heidegger elaborates,

Dasein can be reached by the blows of fate only because in the depths of its Being Dasein is fate in the sense we have described. Existing fatefully in the resoluteness which hands itself down, Dasein has been disclosed as Being-in-the-world both for the ‘fortunate’ circumstances which ‘come its way’ and for the cruelty of accidents. Fate does not first arise from the clashing together of events and circumstances. Even one who is irresolute gets driven about by these—more so than one who has chose; and yet he can ‘have’ no fate.³⁴

Heidegger reminds us that his concept of fate is not fate in the ordinary sense, not the accumulation of events. One who is irresolute can have no fate. The irresolute is caught up in the trade and traffic of today, it has no concern with the meaning of its death, it does not choose to uphold its tradition or heritage as it is blind to it. Fate is not given to everyone, but is a mode of historicizing that is authentic. It is a mode in which Dasein chooses to confront its death and to uphold tradition. Heidegger writes that existing in the mode of fate is being historical in the very depths of Dasein’s existence.³⁵ That is, existing in this mode as being free for death and repeating possibilities (tradition) which it has inherited is the way in which Dasein is truly historical. By choosing to represent authentic historicity as fate [*Schicksal*] Heidegger gives it the sense that this way of living is unavoidable or one is bound to it.

Destiny develops the idea of fate, but describes the way in which groups of people, not just individuals, are gathered in the mode of fate. The passage on destiny is extremely important because it creates the possibility that a group of people can exist authentically together, perhaps a

³⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 436.

³⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 437.

group like the National Socialist Movement. It is also significant in Heidegger's discussion of World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*.

But if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with Others, its historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as *destiny* [*Geschick*]. This is how we designate the historizing of the community [*Gemeinschaft*], of a people [*Volk*]. Destiny is not something that puts itself together out of individual fates, any more than Being-with-one-another can be conceived as the occurring together of several Subjects. Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities. Only in communicating and in struggling does the power of destiny become free. Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its 'generation' goes to make up the full authentic historizing of Dasein.³⁶

Every Dasein, but especially fateful Dasein does not live alone, but is essentially Being-with Others. Thus Dasein's fateful historizing is a historizing that it does with others as people move through life alongside one another. Authentic historizing with others is designated as destiny. Destiny is the historizing of of a community, of a people. Destiny is not simply the combination of individual fates. "Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities." Our fates are guided in advance because of the way people live in the same world (the issues of the particular world affect everyone in it) and because of our "resoluteness for definite possibilities." This seems to suggest that fates that are guided together become destiny because the fateful Daseins have resolved on the same possibilities that they have decided will become definite. That is, perhaps, these fateful Daseins (by definition) have all chosen to follow the possibilities that have arisen from a shared heritage, a shared tradition, especially because they are a community. Only in communicating with other fateful Daseins and by struggling—and one must struggle against something, against the loss of tradition, the distractedness and lostness of the everyday—does the

³⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 436.

power of destiny become free. Finally, Heidegger defines destiny, “in and with its ‘generation’,” as the full authentic historicizing of Dasein.

Fritsche addresses this passage as well and pays attention to the ideas of community [*Gemeinschaft*], *Volk*, and destiny [*Geschick*] (where destiny is the fateful historicizing of a community of *Volk*), and their relationship to right-wing discourse of the 1920s.

In right-wing discourse, the notion of *Vorsehung* (providence) is related to *Schicksal* (fate) and *Geschick* (destiny). *Gesellschaft*, *Gemeinschaft*, *Volk*, *Volksgemeinschaft*, *Geschick*, *Schicksal*, *Vorsehung*—each of these concepts has its specific history in which it acquired different meanings and polemical functions. However, in the 1910s and 1920s a peculiar constellation of these notions emerged that was exclusively used by authors on the political Right... In the first two decades of this century, authors were “politically Right” if they explicitly argued against (classical) liberals and if, at the same time, they also argued against leftist authors... For social democrats as well as for liberals the development of society—the enormous advance of the means of production in capitalist economy and the progress of parliamentary democracy—was a step upward and forward. For right-wingers, however, this advance was actually a fall, even a downward plunge, that had to be “corrected” by cancelling society [*Gesellschaft*] and by rerealizing community [*Gemeinschaft*].³⁷

Heidegger’s use of these terms, as well as other concepts that have already been discussed, places his rhetoric firmly within the right wing belief that the problems posed by modern society must be struggled against by revitalizing community [*Gemeinschaft*] as opposed to modern society [*Gesellschaft*]. Fritsche goes on to compare it with Hitler’s use of fate [*Schicksal*] in *Mein Kampf* (1927).

There is no choice, for I can’t not do what is my duty. This in no way diminishes the greatness of the individual—quite the contrary. Obeying the call proves the greatness of the person who is capable of recognizing the enormous duty to save the Germans and the entire world. Only a coward, or an inauthentic Dasein, shies away from the task fate has ordered him to carry out. Obeying the call, however, is also already the first step toward the rerealization of the Aryan race, for the strong sense of duty and the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the community of the people and the race are both indications and effects of the superiority of the

³⁷ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 69-70.

Aryan race, whose political domination over the entire world has to be reestablished (e.g., MKe 296ff.; MK 325ff.).³⁸

Although Heidegger and Hitler's rhetoric is remarkably similar, this does not necessarily suggest that Heidegger was working from Hitler's ideas or that their formulations were the same. However, it does show that both were working within the same conservative right-wing rhetoric that was prevalent at the time. Further, this similarity suggests the compatibility between Heidegger's historical thought in *Being and Time*, and his political decision to involve himself with the National Socialist Movement.

To complete the picture of the precursor to National Socialism in *Being and Time*, the character of inauthentic historicality must be examined. Heidegger's description of the inauthentic is not separated from the historical situation of the 1920s in Europe, but clearly is a critical description, a diagnosis, of the problematic way that modern man lives. In contrast to the way that authentic historicality is constantly in the process of renegotiating the past and projecting what it wants in the future, inauthentic, everyday historicality is lost in the bustle of daily affairs and tries to understand itself in terms of its progress in work.

When we are with one another in public, the Others are encountered in activity of such a kind that one is 'in the swim' with it 'oneself'. One is acquainted with it, discusses it, encourages it, combats it, retains it, and forgets it, but one always does so primarily with regard to what is getting done and what is 'going to come of it'. We compute the progress which the individual Dasein has made—his stoppages, readjustments, and 'output'; and we do so proximally in terms of that with which he is concerned—its course, its status, its changes, its availability.³⁹

Inauthentic historicality becomes lost in trying to pull together its complex web of daily affairs.

If everyday Dasein does try to understand its circumstances, instead of repeating possibilities, "it

³⁸ Fritsche, *Historical Destiny*, 73.

³⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 439-440.

first computes itself.”⁴⁰ Because of this it does not care about the ‘past,’ what matters is the ‘today.’ But in focusing on the today, everyday Dasein does not have access to all the good things that come down to one in heritage. Throughout Heidegger’s description of inauthentic historicality he brings up its relationship to calculation and computation. While in *Being and Time* his attention to calculation is not very pronounced and he does not spend very much time analyzing it, in the *Black Notebooks* and in later works calculativeness in its relationship to machination becomes a major focus; indeed, it is also a defining characteristic of World Jewry. While I do not spend very much time analyzing calculation in this part of the project, it will be discussed in more depth in the next part.

Descriptions of inauthentic historicality are characterized by confusion, loss of memory, blindness, and a dependence upon the “modern” to understand its situation.

In inauthentic historicality, on the other hand, the way in which fate has been primordially stretched along has been hidden... In awaiting the next new thing, it has already forgotten the old one. The “they” evades choice. Blind for possibilities, it cannot repeat what has been, but only retains and receives the ‘actual’ that is left over... Lost in the making present of the “today”, it understands the ‘past’ in terms of the ‘Present’. On the other hand, the temporality of authentic historicality, as the moment of vision of anticipatory repetition, *deprives* the “today” of its character *as present*, and weans one from the conventionalities of the “they”. When, however, one’s existence is inauthentically historical, it is loaded down with the legacy of a ‘past’ which has become unrecognizable, and it seeks the modern.⁴¹

Inauthentic historicality is characterized as being unable to understand its historical situation. Furthermore this Dasein does not choose to take over its life, but is “lost in the making present of the ‘today.’” It cannot see or imagine other possibilities of living. It does not choose to look into its heritage, as it is caught up “in awaiting the next new thing” having “already forgotten the old

⁴⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 441.

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 443-444.

one.” While authentic historicity incorporates the past into its future and present, inauthentic Dasein is “loaded down with the legacy of a ‘past’” which it does not understand or even recognize. This ‘past’ could be read as many things: the past greatness of Germany, which its inauthentic generation does not understand or want; or the past as heritage or tradition that holds a community together. Because inauthentic historically passively disavows the past, forgets it, it seeks and upholds “the modern”—what is ‘great’ about the present. Notably, “the modern” is only used in descriptions of inauthentic historicity. This can easily be read as a criticism of liberal modern society, which is caught up in capitalist production and only concerned with its ‘progress,’ while for Heidegger modernity has not shown progress, but only declension.

Lastly, we can see the juxtaposition between authentic and inauthentic historicity simply in the way that the two modes deal with death and the crisis that should arise thereby. “Our lostness in the “they” and the world-historical has earlier been revealed as a fleeing in the face of death.”⁴² While authentic historicity runs ahead towards its death, projecting itself upon its ownmost possibility, inauthentic being “flees” from death, signaling its cowardice, whereas authentic is heroic and loyal. The modern, cowardly, irresolute, and confused mode of being in inauthentic historicity, which shirks its possibilities and forgets or ignores its heritage, is the image of what Heidegger perceived in many sectors of society and probably assumed was the case in other countries as well. This is his diagnosis of the present. Heidegger’s later comments about Americans, Bolsheviks, and Jews in the *Black Notebooks* and other places indicate that they would easily fit into this picture of inauthentic historicity. Furthermore, Jews and many other people living in Germany who fall into this category or could not be deemed fit to become authentic would have no place in the authentic community of struggling *Volk* that Heidegger

⁴² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 442.

envisioned. While when I first began to read *Being and Time* this description of problematic ways of modern living struck me as an uncannily true description of the problems of modern capitalist living that I encounter in my time, I began to realize that its implications in justifying the political actions of a societal takeover cannot be overlooked.

By comparing my analysis of historicity in *Being and Time* with information other writers have provided about the concerns and rhetoric of thinkers in Post World War I Germany, I have tried to show that Heidegger's historical thought is compatible with his decision to join the National Socialist Movement; furthermore, without the historical context many possible meanings are elided. Authentic historicity has been disclosed as a way of understanding one's historical Situation in terms of heritage, tradition, and repetition as fate. The concern with the loss of tradition and the struggle to build a community places his thought in line with right-wing thinkers at the time. Because of this, more investigation into Heidegger's earlier work in context with this conservative movement of thinkers is called for. Inauthentic historicity has been interpreted as Heidegger's diagnosis of the hegemonic ways of being in the modern world that contribute to the forgottenness of Being. It is unable to integrate or understand its relationship to history and so seeks the modern and attempts to calculate its progress. In this way inauthentic historicity seems to be continuous with what Heidegger will later characterize in the *Black Notebooks* as "the historyless." While probably not every conservative thinker at the time joined the Nazi Party, Heidegger eventually did. This is to say that while his conservative thinking alone is not enough to support a National Socialist reading of *Being and Time*, his later involvement with the movement compounded with his right-wing tendencies makes the possibility of my National Socialist reading sufficient.

Part II: World Jewry in Heidegger's *Schwarze Hefte*

Martin Heidegger was elected Rectorate of the University of Freiburg on April 21, 1933, and on May 1, joined the Nazi Party. He offered his resignation a year later on April 23, 1934, but remained a member of the faculty and the party until the end of World War II. Ever since, there has been controversy as to what his affiliation with National Socialism means for Heidegger as a thinker and for his philosophical thought. Last year, a new source was finally published consisting of the first three volumes of Heidegger's *Black Notebooks* or *Schwarze Hefte*, as he called them, which contain his personal notes from the years 1931-1941. Heidegger had stipulated before his death on May 26th, 1976, that they be published last, only after all his other works had been published. While the three published volumes are twelve hundred pages long, twelve volumes have been planned that will contain Heidegger's writing into the 1970s. Although these three volumes are only a small portion of the writing to come, they can provide insight into his private thoughts during the controversial period in which Heidegger was a member of the National Socialist Party. The notebooks confirm that Heidegger has made anti-Semitic remarks, although only a small portion of the writing was about Jews. However, these relatively few anti-Semitic remarks have prompted a reassessment and reinterpretation of the philosophical implications of his earlier works. These passages first prompted me to reread Heidegger's discussion of historicity in *Being and Time*, in which I found a much deeper affinity for National Socialism than I had previously imagined. It became clear in reading Heidegger's anti-Semitic remarks that they were inextricably connected with Heidegger's greater philosophizing about history and his time. These passages raise the question, what role in world history did Heidegger believe Jewry played and how is this related to his philosophy? A further

question that has been asked by many is, does Heidegger's anti-Semitism contaminate his philosophy in any way? This can only be answered after the philosophy surrounding his anti-Semitism is laid out. I use *Being and Time* along with other documents, such as lectures, from the period of WWII as my primary tool for interpretation of the passages. In this investigation I argue that for Heidegger, world Jewry was the paragon of an inauthentic community that has absorbed the destructive essence of modernity and which plays a major role in this turning point in world history. However, it is not suggested that world Jewry is the underlying cause of world's current crisis, but is one of many historical actors and tendencies that are contributing to the forgottenness of Being and decline of the West.

In order to give a better context of what the *Black Notebooks* are, I would first like to turn to Nelly Motroshilova's essay "On Heidegger's Black Notebooks: Or, Why Has the Publication of Volumes 94-96 of Martin Heidegger's Collected Works Caused a Sensation." She describes several sensations, having to do with Heidegger's criticism of "vulgar" National Socialism while developing his own "genuine" National Socialism, how the anti-Semitic ideas are "clearly, and even with an enthusiasm, *written into the decline of the West (Abendlands)* in modern time," and lastly, what this means for Heidegger's fate.⁴³ However, she also points out how the work as a whole provides the first instance and chronological development of Heidegger's "turn" towards a new philosophy of Being, his "turn" (*Kehre*) away from Dasein towards *Sein* and *Seyn*. She writes,

His *Black Notebooks* allow us to trace when he began to self-criticize his work, what caused this self-criticism, and what its consequences are. It can be said in advance that everything is tied to Heidegger's reevaluation of his former doctrine

⁴³ Nelly Motroshilova, "On Heidegger's Black Notebooks: Or, Why Has the Publication of Volumes 94-96 of Martin Heidegger's *Collected Works* Caused a Sensation?" *Russian Studies in Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (2015): 70-86, doi: 10.1080/10611967.2014.1030326.

of Being centered on Dasein (and the whole set of categories of *Being and Time*).⁴⁴

These ideas were part of “a multistage evolutionary process” in which, among other changes, there was “the emergence of a general outline of *Seynsgeschichtliche*, that is, the “historical” concept of Being [as Seyn].”⁴⁵ Thus, it is within this context of an evolving self-criticism, a continual reworking of the ideas first raised in *Being and Time*, and an attempt to describe the decline of the West in these terms that we must contextualize Heidegger’s passages on World Jewry. It should be noted that while many of the concepts from *Being and Time* that I discussed in the previous chapter appear in these passages, they appear in a changed form.

One preliminary question that must be answered is what kind of anti-Semitism appears in the *Black Notebooks*? Are Heidegger’s comments really anti-Semitic at all? He does not ascribe to the biological racism that was prevalent during the day and is pointedly against it. However, his characterizations of Jewry always harken back to a few culturally-held stereotypes of calculativeness and rationality, but do not venture much further beyond them. The implications of his statements also gain their meaning from his broader philosophical ideas. Recently, Peter Trawny, the editor of the *Notebooks*, has argued that it is in fact a “philosophical” anti-Semitism. I agree with this, but am hesitant to claim that Heidegger has made a philosophy of anti-Semitism. Neither could I say that Heidegger’s overall philosophy is anti-Semitic itself. So, we return again to the question of whether Heidegger’s statements about Jewry anti-Semitic. I argue that they are. Nowhere does Heidegger write about a Jewish person as an individual with unique strengths or flaws. Instead, every Jew becomes representative of the broader ‘type,’ every characteristic is taken not as one’s own, but only as a greater symbol of one’s Jewishness. This is

⁴⁴ Motroshilova, “On Heidegger’s Black Notebooks,” 75.

⁴⁵ Motroshilova, “On Heidegger’s Black Notebooks,” 79-80.

evidenced in several passages where Heidegger discusses Pavel Litvinov, Freud, and most notably, Husserl. These anti-Semitismisms stem from the broader culture of that was prevalent during the day, from Nazi propaganda, and also from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. However, whether Heidegger's remarks are anti-Semitic cannot itself condemn his philosophy when we consider how anti-Semitism was not simply a mark of the evil Nazi, but was participated in even by those who were trying to argue against anti-Semitism. For example, Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew: An Exploration of the Etiology of Hate*, first published in 1946. While attempting to defend the Jew from anti-Semitism he actually partakes in those stereotypes. Thus, I believe that it is not the burden of this investigation to show whether or not these ideas are anti-Semitic because, for the most part, the whole of white Western society was anti-Semitic at that time. When we read these passages today, it is from a very different perspective that only arose after World War II and white Western culture's general acceptance of Jewish people as "white," no longer 'oriental nomads' or 'foreigners.' Rather, the burden of this investigation is to show what historical role Heidegger believed World Jewry played and how this relates to his philosophy.

The first passages I want to discuss deal with the conspiratorial nature of World Jewry that point towards the influence of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in Heidegger's thought. He describes Jewry in a way that is consistent with the way Jews are represented in the *Protocols* as calculating, extremely rational, greedy for money and power, as well as in some way mystical and extreme. Although there is no reason to believe Heidegger agreed with every word of the *Protocols*, it is not far-fetched to grant that he accepted their basic premise: that there is a dangerous Jewish world conspiracy. Peter Trawny argues this as well.

In addition, I was criticized for the thesis that Heidegger's anti-Semitism was at least influenced by the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion". It was and is objected,

that Heidegger had not read and did not know the “Protocols”. This pseudo-philological argument is the same as saying that the only one who read Hitler’s “Mein Kampf” could be a Nazi. This would immediately reduce the number of Nazis during the “Third Reich” to a pretty small number. I do not claim that Heidegger read the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion”. He could have been under their influence, just as anyone who heard (of) Hitler’s speeches was under their influence.⁴⁶

This first passage illustrates how Heidegger characterized World Jewry. It shows that he in some way partook in the propaganda of Jewish conspiracy that was widely circulated at the time. Here, Heidegger complains that even though World Jewry is powerful and pervasive, it doesn’t have to sacrifice its people in war, while Germans must fight and die. He betrays a belief that Jewry is getting the better end of the bargain.

World Jewry, incited by emigrants allowed to leave Germany, is pervasive and impalpable, and even though its power is widely spread, it doesn’t need to participate in military actions, whereas all that remains to us is to sacrifice the best blood of our own people.⁴⁷

Here, Jewry echoes with conspiratorial force. It is “pervasive and impalpable” a secret underlying force that cannot be pinpointed, apparently incited by emigrants “allowed” to leave Germany. This passage illustrates the sense of the pervasiveness of conspiratorial Jewish power that unfairly does not have to shed blood. It is important to recall that this statement does not make sense outside of a nationalistic context. The influence of the *Protocols* is even more prevalent in the following passage, where Heidegger further characterizes Jewry as a massive, secret, conspiratorial force.

⁴⁶ Peter Trawny, *Heidegger und der Mythos der jüdischen Weltverschwörung*, (Germany: Klostermann RoteReihe, 2015), 138. Translation by Thomas N. Delmer, letter to author, April 15, 2015.

⁴⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe IV. Abteilung: Hinweise und Aufzeichnungen Band 96 Überlegungen XII-XV (Schwarze Hefte 1939-1941)*, ed. Peter Trawny, (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2014), 262, quoted in Greg Johnson, “Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*,” last modified March 29, 2014, <http://www.counter-currents.com/2014/03/heidegger-on-world-jewry-in-the-black-notebooks/>.

One of the most secret forms of the *gigantic* [*Riesigen*], and perhaps the oldest, is the tenacious skillfulness in calculating, hustling, and intermingling through which the worldlessness of Jewry is grounded.⁴⁸

Here we read: the worldlessness of Jewry is grounded in the skill of calculating, hustling, and intermingling which is an old, secret form of the “gigantic.” Jewry as old, secret, and gigantic follows the themes of the *Protocols* very nicely. It is a force that is unseen. The concept of the “gigantic” is a term that appears later in the essay “The Age of the World Picture,” but refers to something different from World Jewry, but still related to calculativeness.

The gigantic is rather that through which the quantitative becomes a special quality and thus a remarkable kind of greatness... But as soon as the gigantic in planning and calculating and adjusting and making secure shifts over out the quantitative and becomes a special quality, then what is gigantic, and what can seemingly always be calculated completely, becomes, precisely through this, incalculable.”⁴⁹

The gigantic is said to be a sign of the “fundamental event of the modern age[,] the conquest of the world as picture.”⁵⁰ Thus we see that Jewry is grounded in some tendency for calculativeness that is characteristic of the modern age and forms part of the gigantic. The statement that Jewry is worldless may have several possible philosophical implications when reading it from the perspective of *Being and Time*. To understand what Heidegger means by the “worldlessness” of “World Jewry” will further our understanding of the historical situation he describes.

In the section on history and historicity in *Being and Time* Dasein is always already within-the-world and a part of worlds. That Jewry is worldless could mean that Jewry is un-

⁴⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe IV. Abteilung: Hinweise und Aufzeichnungen Band 95 Überlegungen VII-XI (Schwarze Hefte 1938-1939)*, ed. Peter Trawny, (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2014), 97, quoted in Zachary Siegel, “7 New Translated Excerpts on Heidegger’s Anti-Semitism,” trans. Richard Polt, last modified February 23, 2015, <http://www.critical-theory.com/7-new-translated-excerpts-on-heideggers-anti-semitism/>.

⁴⁹ Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture,” in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 135.

⁵⁰ Heidegger, “World Picture,” 134.

Dasein and un-human. What lacks a world, such as animals and stones, lacks one because they cannot have a history. Heidegger's thesis of Part II, Section V, is that Dasein is historical. Rocks and animals become historical by being a part of Dasein's world, incorporated into its concern.⁵¹ Further, if Jewry is 'worldless,' it is also historyless. Heidegger's passages confirm that Jewry is also considered historyless in this philosophy. However, if we broaden our interpretation of what worldless may mean beyond the context of how worlds are described in his writing on historicity, its meaning may become more clear.

In one of the passages of Heidegger's lecture course, published under the title of *Nature, History, State*, he discusses homeland, peoplehood, and folklore. In this context he makes a remark about Jewish people.

...From the specific knowledge of a people about the nature of its space, we first experience how nature is revealed in this people. For a Slavic people, the nature of our German space would definitely be revealed differently from the way it is revealed to us; *to Semitic nomads, it will perhaps never be revealed at all*. This way of being embedded in a people, situated in a people, this original participation in the knowledge of a people, cannot be taught; at most, it can be awakened from its slumber. One poor means of doing this is folklore...[my emphasis].⁵²

This quote at least suggests that Jewish people are incapable of experiencing or understanding the nature of "German space," the 'world' arises from the environment and from folklore. Jews here are referred to negatively as nomads, they do not belong to a particular place. He suggests that they cannot fit into a German landscape, they cannot have this "original participation in the knowledge of [the German] people," because "it cannot be taught," because it arises from something else, perhaps what Heidegger often refers to as 'rootedness in the soil.' Later in this

⁵¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 432.

⁵² Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, *Nature, History, State: 1933-1934* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 56.

passage Heidegger refers to the way that nomads have often left wastelands where they found rich cultivated fields.

History teaches us that nomads have not only been made nomadic by the desolation of wastelands and steppes, but they also often left wastelands behind them where they found fruitful and cultivated land—and that human beings who are rooted in the soil have known how to make a home for themselves even in the wilderness.⁵³

Heidegger displays a prejudice towards nomads that used to be used more readily in discrimination against Jewish people, but today is expressed across Europe and beyond mostly as prejudice against the Roma people, who are generally referred to by the derogatory term, “Gypsies.” What I am trying to suggest here is that when Heidegger characterizes Jewry as “worldless” he may be referring to the way that they, at this time, have neither a ‘state,’ nor a particular soil to which they are tied. Heidegger may be suggesting that Jewry should not have a place in the particular world of the ‘German homeland,’ and furthermore, perhaps that it should not have a place anywhere. However, if we recall that Heidegger was still working on “essential” analyses and descriptions, he may not be suggesting whether or not Jewry should have a place in the ‘world,’ but that Jewry is in an essential condition in which it does not belong to any particular place or world. Still, we must remember that in the “gigantic” passage this “worldlessness” was grounded some tendency for calculativeness, so its meaning is probably broader than simply the fact that Jewry ‘lacks a home.’

In the *Notebooks* it is not only Jewry that is historyless, but it is a state that modernity itself is in. The following passage exemplifies the crisis Heidegger believes the world to be in and can be best understood in terms of his Being-historical thinking.

What is happening now is the end of the history of the great inception of Occidental humanity, in which inception humanity was called to the guardianship

⁵³ Fried and Polt, *Nature, History, State*, 55.

of be-ing, only to transform this calling right away into the pretension to re-present beings in their machinational unessence...

In the historyless, that which belongs together only within it also comes most readily into the unity of complete mixture; apparent construction and renovation, and complete destruction—both are the same—the groundless—what has succumbed to mere beings and is alienated from be-ing. As soon as the historyless has ‘set in,’ ‘historicism’ begins to run rampant; the groundless, in the most diverse and contradictory forms, falls—without recognizing itself as having the same unessence—into the most extreme enmity and craving for destruction...

And maybe in this ‘struggle’— which struggles over goallessness itself and which hence can be only the caricature of “struggle”—the greater groundlessness will ‘triumph,’ which is bound to nothing and makes everything serviceable to itself (Jewry). But the authentic triumph, the triumph of history over the historyless, is won only where the groundless excludes itself because it does not venture be-ing, but instead always merely calculates with beings, and posits its calculations as what is real.⁵⁴

Heidegger situates his time at a turning point in the history of Being, “What is happening now...” For Heidegger the history of Being begins with the Greeks, who started to write and think about the essential question of Being. However, once Plato has arrived, the question was forgotten. Heidegger would probably agree that the rest of the history of Being up until now is a narrative of declension and degeneration that reaches its crux in the modern period. At this crux, or turning point, Heidegger sees a decision, a choice, a possibility, to change the course of the world towards something better and more authentic, that “loyally” follows the question of Being and “struggles” to make itself authentic against the machinational power of the historyless. This is also what Heidegger argues in *Being and Time*, that today the question of the meaning of Being has been forgotten. His task is to bring it back to the fore. However, due to Western metaphysics, the question is transformed into “the pretension to re-present beings in their machinational unessence,” to turn beings into numbers, objects, resources, ready for implementation and optimization. In the second paragraph he says that even the “apparent construction and renovation, and complete destruction” are the same. That is to say that any

⁵⁴ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* 95, 96-97, quoted in “7 New Translated Excerpts.”

reworking of traditional metaphysics or even the complete destruction of it are the same in that they are already “groundless,” already having “succumbed to mere beings” and “alienated from being.”

In the third paragraph Heidegger refers to the “struggle” in single and double quotation marks. “Struggle” is suspended this way to indicate that it is an inauthentic “struggle,” a parody of “the struggle” that Heidegger writes about in his lecture series “On the Essence of Truth” in the winter semester of 1933-1934. In a section titled “The saying of Heraclitus. Struggle as the essence of beings” he characterizes struggle in terms of confrontation and an enemy:

...the struggle of πόλεμος, war... Struggle [*Kampf*] as standing against the enemy, or more plainly: standing firm in confrontation.

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 [my emphasis].

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.⁵⁵

This is the authentic struggle, the one that Heidegger finds necessary to teach his students about.

Heidegger continues “And maybe in this ‘struggle’— which struggles over goallessness itself and which hence can be only the caricature of “struggle”—the greater groundlessness will ‘triumph,’ which is bound to nothing and makes everything serviceable to itself (Jewry).”⁵⁶

Maybe in this caricature of “struggle,” Jewry—“the greater groundlessness”—will triumph.

⁵⁵ Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, trans., *Being and Truth* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 73.

⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe 95*, 96-97, quoted in “7 New Translated Excerpts.”

However, he says, “the authentic triumph, the triumph of history over the historyless, is won only where the groundless excludes itself because it does not venture be-ing, but instead always merely calculates with beings, and posits its calculations as what is real.” In other words, the authentic triumph is won where “the groundless” has already excluded itself by not venturing into being, which seems to be the case in the world he describes. Thus the passage ends on a somewhat positive note: authentic triumph is possible. Who must the authentic triumph over? The “greater groundlessness,” which includes World Jewry.

The notion of an enemy that must be found or made in the “struggle” passage “so that [the German] Dasein might not lose its edge” is quite foreboding. Heidegger has translated *polemos* as “struggle” [*Kampf*], and “struggle” as in against “an enemy” or, at least, standing firm in opposition to something. This brings up the question: did Heidegger ‘make’ Jewry the enemy of the German Dasein? Did he believe Jewry to be the enemy’s true face? In the previous sentence he stated that “The enemy does not have to be external, and the external enemy is not even always the more dangerous one.” Is Jewry the substitution of the internal enemy Heidegger was ‘fundamentally required’ to find or make? Perhaps the enemy should not have been Jewry, but “machination” or “Enframing” all along as Heidegger seems to imply later in *The Question Concerning Technology*. Commenting on the political implications of this passage, Slavoj Žižek writes in the essay “Struggle, Historicity, Will, and *Gelassenheit*,”

Does this not imply that, if there is no enemy out there to be discovered, we are justified in “making” (fabricating) it so that our people’s movement will not “lose its edge,” that is, so that it will be able to assert its will and program in contrast to the enemy? Did Hitler not do exactly this when he “made the enemy” out of Jews? Did Stalin not do exactly this in fabricating ever new enemy plots to sustain the unity of the Party?⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Fried and Polt, *Nature, History, State*, 165.

Heidegger's last words in the passage, "to cultivate and intensify a constant readiness and to prepare the attack looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation," are also very ominous. While this seems like it could be an answer to the Jewish Question, which he has always kept silent about, the context of the quote (Heraclitus on war) constrains that interpretation.

In the next passage Heidegger describes the relationship between Jewry's apparent increase in power and the development of Western metaphysics. It also introduces important terms in Heidegger's being-historical thinking that must be used as an interpretive context,

Jewry's temporary increase in power is, however, grounded in the fact that Western metaphysics, especially in its modern development, furnishes the starting point for the diffusion of a generally empty rationality and calculative ability, which in this way provides a refuge in "spirit" [*Geist*], without being able to grasp the hidden decision-regions [*Entscheidungsbezirke*] on its own. The more originary and primordial the prospective decisions and questions, the more they remain inaccessible to this "race."⁵⁸

This quote first espouses Heidegger's opinion that World Jewry has undergone an "increase in power." This power is not due to the Jews in themselves, but to a trend in Western metaphysics which enables "a generally empty rationality and calculative ability" to become a dominant mode of thinking. This way of thinking "provides a refuge in "spirit." Oddly, Heidegger never explicitly gives a definition of "*Geist*" or "spirit." In *Being and Time*, Heidegger says the word should be avoided, because of the metaphysical connotations it carries. However, in his *Rectorship Address*, "*Geist*" is unveiled as an essential aspect of history and a legitimate term. The inclusion of quotation marks around "spirit" in the passage indicates that this is not the authentic spirit of the Germans, but the pseudo-spirit of Jewry. However, by understanding that "empty rationality" "provides a refuge" "without being able to grasp the hidden decision-regions on its own," it can be inferred that despite providing "a refuge in 'spirit,'" empty rationality

⁵⁸ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* 96, 46, quoted in "Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*."

cannot “grasp” the “hidden decision-regions” by itself alone. “Hidden decision-regions” [*Entscheidungsbezirke*] is a term that stands out as being inextricably connected with Heidegger’s idea of historicity. Generally put, this term indicates the kind of knowledge that is necessary to understanding one’s historical Situation, and the kind of knowledge that is revealed through authentic historizing as fate, repetition, and the moment of vision as disclosure. Historical destiny [*Geschick*] is defined in a passage from *Being and Time* as “how we designate the historizing of the community, of a people,” while ‘fate’ signifies the authentic historizing of a single Dasein. On the same page Heidegger writes,

Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities. Only in communicating and in struggling does the power of destiny become free. Dasein’s fateful destiny in and with its ‘generation’ goes to make up the full authentic historizing of Dasein.⁵⁹

Through repetition and fate, possibilities of existence are disclosed from the past and future. These disclosed “possibilities” imply that some knowledge about what to do in the present has been revealed. This knowledge may come in the form of decisions and questions: choices one must make in order to make the right possibilities come into existence, decisions to make a better world, questions that enable more reflections on these choices. Thus, the passage can be read as claiming that empty rationality and calculative ability are unable to grasp the knowledge that would enable the understanding of the historical destiny of a people by itself. Heidegger concludes by writing “The more originary and primordial the prospective decisions and questions, the more they remain inaccessible to this ‘race.’”⁶⁰ Race is placed in quotation marks, indicating a part of Heidegger’s broader critique of the concept of biological “race.” This passage can be understood as the more important these decisions and questions concerning the

⁵⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 436.

⁶⁰ “Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*.”

history of Being become, the more inaccessible they become to the Jewish people, on account of their deriving strength from empty rationality and calculative ability. In summation, this passage tells us that World Jewry has become powerful not through its own means, but by excelling at a historical trend of thinking that is hegemonic in the modern time period. However, this power is lacking in the sense that Jewry is unable to grasp its historical destiny and cannot so long as it merely calculates. This leads to the more general idea espoused by Heidegger's writing that the Jewish people are not and cannot be actively engaging in the process of history because they cannot grasp these "hidden decision-regions."

The previous quote actually continues parenthetically, making a long remark on the Jewishness his former colleague, Husserl. In it, Heidegger criticizes Husserl's reliance upon traditional metaphysics and claims this criticism marks an important historical moment in the history of Being.

...The more originary and primordial the prospective decisions and questions, the more they remain inaccessible to this "race." (Thus Husserl's writing on phenomenological observation while dismissing psychological explanation and historical settlement of opinions is of lasting significance — and yet it goes nowhere near the regions of essential decisions, but rather presupposes the historical tradition of philosophy throughout; the necessary consequence is reflected immediately in the swing to neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy that eventually makes a progression to a Hegelianism in formal sense inevitable. My "attack" against Husserl is not directed against him alone and indeed inessentially — my attack goes to the neglect of the question of Being, i.e., the essence of metaphysics as such, on the ground of which the machination of beings can determine history. The attack grounds a historical moment of the highest decision-making between the primacy of beings and the grounding of the truth of Be-ing.)⁶¹

The passage says that although Husserl has made remarks of "lasting significance," he "goes nowhere near the regions of essential decisions" (authentic historicity), but merely "presupposes the historical tradition of philosophy throughout." Heidegger states that his

⁶¹ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* 96, 46, quoted in "Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*."

“attack” is not aimed at Husserl alone, or at least perhaps not his Jewishness, but at the neglect of Being. However, the way the parenthetical passage immediately follows the passage about ‘Jewry’s increase in power,’ beginning with “thus,” we can assume that the Heidegger is continuing the logic of the former, saying roughly: ‘Jewry cannot grasp ordinary decisions because it is calculative, thus it makes sense why Husserl, being a Jew, also misses these high decision-making regions.’ The final sentence reiterates that his criticism comes at an important time in history. Heidegger’s criticism of Husserl shows how Husserl, as a Jewish philosopher, is representative of the greater ills of Jewish thought, his ideas attributed to his Jewishness.

According to Heidegger, England is also a major player in the historical process. The following passage introduces other historical groups who are engaging in a role similar to World Jewry; however, it also differentiates them. Furthermore it reveals the ultimate danger that Heidegger believes to be at stake: the uprooting of all beings from Being. This danger is found to be the destiny of the Jewish people.

[Why are we recognizing so late that in truth, England is and can be without an Occidental stance? Because only in the future will we grasp that England began to erect the modern world, but according to its essence, modernity is directed to the unfettering of the machination of the entire globe.] The idea of an understanding with England in terms of a distribution of imperialist “prerogatives (jurisdictions) [*Gerechtsamen*]” misses the essence of the historical process, which is led by England within the framework of Americanism and Bolshevism and at the same time World Jewry to its final conclusion. The question of the role of world Jewry is not racial, but the metaphysical question of the type of humanity that can accept the world-historical “task” of uprooting all beings from Being.⁶²

Here Heidegger says that understanding England “in terms of a distribution of imperialist “prerogatives” misses the essence of the historical process.” The essence of the historical process must be understood in terms of the history of Being, not in the traditional historiographical way of understanding world events, which only describes things that are present-at-hand. Instead

⁶² Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* 96, 243, quoted in “7 New Translated Excerpts on Heidegger’s Anti-Semitism.”

Heidegger says “the essence of the historical process” “is led by England within the framework of Americanism and Bolshevism and the same time world Jewry to its final conclusion.” This can be interpreted as saying, England is leading the historical process at the same time as World Jewry, however World Jewry will lead it to “its final conclusion.” Next, Heidegger states “The question of the role of world Jewry is not racial,” meaning the question is not based on biology, there is no biological reason why the Jews have this historical role. The question is the “metaphysical question of the type of humanity that can accept the world-historical “task” of uprooting all beings from Being.” Heidegger implies that the Jews are precisely the type of humanity who can accept the “task” of uprooting all beings from Being. Thus we also find that the destiny of World Jewry in the historical process is the “uprooting [of] all beings from Being.”

Through these passages it has been suggested that although Jewry is somehow metaphysically different from other modern groups, the qualities they exhibit and that condemn them are not ‘inherently’ Jewish, but modern qualities that Heidegger argued develop from the Western tradition of metaphysics. What differentiates Jewry from Americanism, Bolshevism, or the English is not decisively evident from these two passages. Perhaps it is that the Jew’s “power” is believed to have increased. However, Heidegger would probably agree that the power of Americanism and Bolshevism has increased as well. To fully understand the possible qualitative or, perhaps in Heidegger’s mind, essential differences between the power and danger of World Jewry and other historical entities that would make Jewry the type of humanity who can metaphysically take up the “world-historical task” of “uprooting all beings from Being,” one would have to look to further sources, which is not possible in the scope of this paper. However, it does seem possible at this point to suggest that world Jewry is somehow the expression or even the paradigm of this dangerous way of being—empty rationality and calculativeness—that

evolved out of Western metaphysics in its modern development. In this way the Jews are not exceptionally different from many other historical identities, but the paradigm of modern thinking other entities exhibit as well. Thus, Heidegger's criticism of the Jews becomes in effect his criticism of modernity.

The next passage is difficult to interpret and sometimes seems self-contradictory, however it deals with the important term "machination" or *Machenschaft*. Machination describes what Heidegger will later conceive of as "enframing" [*Gestell*], which is the subject of Heidegger's critique of modern technology in "The Question Concerning Technology." However, in this passage it is first related to Jewry.

The Jews, *with their marked talent for calculation*, "live" longer than anyone by the principle of race, which is why they are resisting its consistent application with the utmost violence. The establishment [*Einrichtung*] of racial breeding does not stem from "life" itself, but from the overpowering of life through machination. What it pushes forward with such a plan is the complete *deracialization* of all peoples by claiming them to a uniformly constructed and tailored establishment of all beings. At one with deracialization is the self-alienation of peoples – the loss of history – i.e., the decision regions of Being.⁶³

The passage begins by criticizing the idea of race. If Jews are part of a race, and this race has continued since biblical times, they are the oldest people in the world. I assume that "resisting its consistent application" means that they are resisting the application of perhaps the Nuremburg Laws which treat every Jewish person as part of a race which is subject to certain laws and differentiates them from the "Aryan" race. However, because the Nuremburg Laws were first introduced in 1935 and this quote comes from the volume of writing that takes place between 1939 and 1941, Heidegger could have been referring to other more recent ways in which Jewish people were "resisting [race's] consistent application;" although, my research did not go so far. The next sentence is more ambiguous. Its subject could be Jewry or the Nazi party, which

⁶³ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe 96*, 156, quoted in "Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*." GA 96: 156.

instituted racial breeding. However, Heidegger's assessment of it is clear: racial breeding is not an evolutionary necessity or normal biological function of life, but arises from machination—the ordering of beings so that they produce the most resources. The passage continues that the outcome of “such a plan” is the “complete *deracialization* of all peoples.” It does not seem to be racial breeding that leads to deracialization, but machination that “clamp[s] them into a uniformly constructed and tailored establishment.” Deracialization is introduced as a principle danger to all peoples because it will cause “the self-alienation of peoples” which leads to the “loss of history.” From reading about historicity we know that the loss of history is one of the worst things that can happen to a people because being historical is what is most essentially human. Heidegger seems to imply from this passage that because Jewry's “talent for calculation” and closeness to machination, which will end in the “loss of history,” Jewry should not be resisting the “consistent application” of race, which is only being used against them to prevent “the self-alienation of all peoples.” In this passage, perhaps what is most important is the way Heidegger ties machination with World Jewry. This signifies the beginning of the way Heidegger was trying to conceive of machination. As a card holding National Socialist at the time, it is somewhat unsurprising that he first began to diagnose this problem in National Socialist terms: as an effect of the created enemy.

Another passage similar to the previous, also deals with machination. This one too suggests dangers that lurk about world Jewry.

Thus both [the imperialistic-bellicose and humanitarian-pacifistic way of thinking] can be used by “international Jewry” to proclaim and accomplish one as a means for the other [their common end of a rootless, leveled, homogenous, technological mass civilization] – this machinational “history”-making entangles all players equally in their webs –⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe 96*, 133, quoted in “Heidegger on World Jewry in the *Black Notebooks*.”

Here Heidegger describes how both Jewry's imperialist and pacifist ways of thinking are dangerous to the world. However, "this machinational... entangles all players equally in their webs" implies something very important to the way he conceives of Jewry. For Heidegger Jewry is both active and passive. It actively is trying to influence its position in the world to make a better life for itself. However, it is passive, because their actions are destined to lead to a "technological mass civilization," and they too will be "entangle[d]... in their webs" equally. He suggests that Jewry's actions are also detrimental to itself. They are further passive because, as in a previous passage, they cannot see what their actions will lead to. Heidegger writes himself as a frustrated philosopher who sees the end of the world in a people, the Jews, who cannot see it themselves.

These passages from the *Black Notebooks* bring up many more questions than answers. I have found that although I have argued that Jewry stands in for what is wrong with modernity, and in the end it is modernity that is dangerous to being and not Jewry, the two become so conflated throughout his writing that it is difficult to say whether it can really be one or the other. Perhaps this conflation is what makes his writings so damning and irrevocably anti-Semitic. After reading the passages the question returns: Has Heidegger's work been contaminated by the new revelations of anti-Semitism? Only if it was formerly pure, and what would 'pure' writing be anyway? We certainly should not take Heidegger's anti-Semitism as a reason to disregard his thought. If anything it makes it all the more important to come to terms with his thought, as anti-Semitic, but also important to understanding what these prejudices meant. Although, even some arguments that Heidegger makes (such as that Jewry is historyless as long as it does not have its own "rootedness in the soil," its own nation) are made by Zionist philosophers as well. What seems more important is not that Heidegger used Jewry as an example of the kind of being we

should strive away from, but that Heidegger was trying to understand the situation of his own time in terms of the force of machination, of which World Jewry is not the only example.

Heidegger's thoughts at this period were so imbued with Nazi propaganda that he could not separate Jewry from the underlying problems of machination that were actually at stake. However, it is not unusual that he interpreted the world with respect to Jewish people considering it was such an important topic at the time and it was not only National Socialists who were thinking about the "Jewish Question," as European civilization had been developing its identity over hundreds of years by contrasting itself with its Jewish populations. After the war ended, hopefully Heidegger would have realized that he had in fact, despite the promises of his historical philosophy, been on the wrong side of history, fought for a side that lost, and further, a side that destroyed the sanctity of what is most important about Dasein, that Dasein is a human being. However, it has been argued that Heidegger never fully disavowed his National Socialist past, and from my research I am led to believe that he probably didn't. But we must remember that it was not the party-line Nazism that Heidegger upheld, but his own 'spiritual' version of it, which was more concerned with saving Germany from an uprooted technological mass civilization than from 'lesser' races. What is most important about the passages I have analyzed from the *Notebooks* is that they show the evolution of his criticism of modernity. In *Being and Time* he was most wary of the calculative, everyday, inauthentic ways of being; however, in the *Notebooks*, he has become concerned with machination, mass civilization, and the uprooting of being. Later, these ideas would be distilled in the idea of "enframing" [*Gestell*].

Part III: Nietzsche's Masks and Interpreting the *Notebooks*

A man whose sense of shame has some profundity encounters his destinies and delicate decisions, too, on paths which few ever reach and of whose mere existence his closest intimates must not know: his mortal danger is concealed from their eyes, and so is his regained sureness of life. Such a concealed man who instinctively needs speech for silence and for burial in silence and who is inexhaustible in his evasion of communication, *wants* and sees to it that a mask of him roams in his place through the hearts and heads of his friends. And supposing he did not want it, he would still realize some day that in spite of that a mask of him is there—and that this is well. Every profound spirit needs a mask: even more, around every profound spirit a mask is growing continually, owing to the constantly false, namely *shallow*, interpretation of every word, every step, every sign of life he gives.—⁶⁵

The scholarship surrounding Heidegger's relationship to anti-Semitism asks us to think of the task of reading Heidegger as the task of removing masks. It seems to presume that somewhere beneath these many layers lies Heidegger's true face, his naked self. As Nietzsche points out, the paradox of this situation is that the profound spirit needs the mask, and furthermore, even if he does not want it, already "a mask of him is there." There have been two general ways of responding to Heidegger's controversial realities, two ways in which some kind of separation happens. The first tells the narrative of two Heideggers: the good Heidegger and the bad Heidegger. The good Heidegger wrote *Being and Time*, waxes poetic about language and thinking, contributes meaningfully to philosophical discussion and is for the most part unproblematic, able to be praised as a hero of the Western canon. The bad Heidegger took a political detour, maybe made a personal miscalculation, a mistake, and joined the National Socialist party, was an anti-Semite. The first narrative says it is possible to separate these two Heideggers, and that one should be saved, while the other avoided, or looked down upon. The

⁶⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 51.

good Heidegger is real, while the bad is not; behind the masks of anti-Semitism, of National Socialism, of quite possible madness, lies the true face of a laudable philosophy. This is the way that Heidegger has traditionally been understood and is the narrative that Nelly Motroshilova falls into.

In the second narrative the bad Heidegger, the National Socialist, anti-Semitic Heidegger, is the real Heidegger. This Heidegger has contaminated the good Heidegger and as such the rest of his work stands contaminated, thus rendering it unsavory and unfit to be read, perhaps even unfit to be considered 'Philosophy.' Behind the masks of a good Heidegger is the face of an enemy of philosophy, of respectable humanity. This is the sort of narrative that Victor Farias ascribes to, the same that Peter Trawny falls into, although he does not come to the conclusion of banning Heidegger. All this discourse attempts to divide Heidegger, to separate him into real and fake, to attempt to prove which part of him is real, which part is fake, which part matters and which does not. In this way a false choice has arisen. We are asked either to ignore his unsavory side or reject him altogether.

By following either of these narratives we do not disclose Heidegger, but rather conceal him further, adding another layer; another "mask [which] is continually growing, owing to the constantly false, namely shallow, interpretation of every word, every step, every sign of life he gives.—" It is true, Heidegger has many masks, and in this controversy we are constantly trying to tear them off, peel them away layer by layer, in hopes of seeing his face, looking upon his true nature to decide once and for all whether to keep him or not. But this is not the real issue. If, like in these narratives, one interprets Nietzsche's masks as implying that there is something truer, more real, beneath the surface, one would have read Nietzsche incorrectly. Once one digs deeper one encounters only more layers, another cave beneath the surface. There is no real Heidegger

beneath the many masks. Every mask is Heidegger, has become Heidegger, whether it could reflect his intentions or not.

I was drawn to research this topic partially because the controversy seemed to be coming alive again in a new, changed form. Indeed it has. This controversy has largely taken place over the internet, opinions being circled in both scholarly and non-scholarly circles. Articles about the *Black Notebooks* took on catchy titles like “The King is Dead – Heidegger’s ‘Black Notebooks’,” “Heidegger in Black,” and “What Heidegger was Hiding.” The logic of the majority of these articles goes, if Heidegger was an anti-Semite, then we must: stop reading him, take away his laurels, and avoid contamination. Babette Babich’s essay “Heidegger’s Black Night: The Nachlass & its Wirkungsgeschichte” has most effectively, so far, commented on the immensely complicated nature of this most recently published work and the strangely simplistic nature of the debate. Her work evokes the somewhat absurd nature of these debates that are reminiscent of a hall filled with the chattering of disembodied voices, an endless production of words that all too often seem to take the forest for the trees:

A year ago disseminated via blogs, today’s Heidegger scandal transpires on Facebook, via video, via shared online articles and posts: instant announcement with instant commentary on no less than three dedicated Facebook group pages, if we do not mention the Heidegger Circle email list.

What has happened to scholars? What has happened to scholarship? I am not here asking Heidegger’s question regarding what he called thinking but a perfectly ontic question: what are we doing? We are reading immensely complicated, that is to say and on balance, actually fairly diverse texts, reading multiple volumes at a time, texts unpublished in the ordinary way of publication, all in the absence of any genre or style, all as if the context were immediately clear, all as if the tone were in every case unproblematic, accompanied by assertoric and perfect authoritative commentary. Is this the new scholasticism?⁶⁶

The internet has not seemed to help scholarship come to grips with the newly published material.

Because of its nature or structure in which there can be “instant announcement with instant

⁶⁶ Babette Babich, “Heidegger’s Black Night: The Nachlass & its Wirkungsgeschichte,” forthcoming in *Reading Heidegger’s Black Notebooks 1931-1941*, ed. Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016), 12.

commentary” many (obviously, not all are scholars) are writing about the work without having read or understood Heidegger’s other works, and people are able to focus on a few incriminating passages, taking them as representative of the work as a whole. Furthermore her criticism of the way tone has not been taken into consideration is especially important, as, besides her own interpretation of a passage from the *Notebooks*, I have not come across any interpretations of the passages that did not read them at face value, as “assertoric and perfectly authoritative commentary.” Babich most importantly points out that the nature of this debate is centered on the idea of proscription.

Scholarship is seemingly now to be about proscription, banning Heidegger in philosophy as Emmanuel Faye has suggested for as long as the past decade and in political theory, as Richard Wolin... as Tom Sheehan in theology/philosophy... Most recently, to add to the disciplinary fields of proscription, Christian Fuchs demands the elimination of all references to Heidegger from Media Studies and theoretical discussions of technology, digital and otherwise. Citing on Faye’s contention that Heidegger, “who has espoused the foundations of Nazism cannot be considered a philosopher,” Fuch’s solution is non-mention, exclusion from theory, non-citation.⁶⁷

It follows that there is something greater at stake than just the meaning of Heidegger’s anti-Semitism, but whether or not Heidegger should be read or studied at all. This conclusion is especially troubling, considering that we are still just beginning to understand him, and so much of his work remains relevant to our world. I will examine this further after I respond to two philosopher’s responses to this controversy.

Nelly Motroshilova’s essay “On Heidegger’s *Black Notebooks* Or, Why Has the Publication of Volumes 94-96 of Martin Heidegger’s *Collected Works* Caused a Sensation?” was very helpful to me in providing the context of Heidegger’s self-criticism of *Being and Time*. It also attempts to understand what was so ‘sensational’ about the publication and its controversy.

⁶⁷ Babich, “Heidegger’s Black Night,” 9.

While analysis of the *Notebooks*' relation to Heidegger's *Contributions* and his understanding of the decline of the West (*Abendlands*) is on point, I have to disagree strongly with her conclusion. In it she argues that Heidegger's thought ought to be divided into that which is worthy of his already praised name, and that which is not. In this she exemplifies the first narrative of division that I discussed earlier.

Today, as in the past, the question has been raised: How to reconcile the philosophical ideas (not by chance ranked as some of the most serious, potent, and even classical to come out of the twentieth century) with the anti-Semitism that also influenced his concept of nationhood (as well as other –anti's, e.g., his anti-English sentiments). I believe (along with a number of authors who have reflected on the issue) that these *should not be conflated*; instead, *they sharply contradicted one another*. The legacy of Heidegger's thought is not composed of these parts, but *fragments* into them, one of which (i.e., the philosophical-theoretical part) is worthy of the outstanding, original thinker (including all the changes and turns), while the other, concerned for the most part with social, political, and philosophical-historical questions, was as if conceived by another person whose arguments often fell into the most abhorrent stereotypes and prejudices (originating worst of all from the Nazi period).⁶⁸

Motroshilova subscribes to the often used notion that one part of Heidegger is “serious, potent, and even classical,” while the other is bumbling, prejudicial, a mistake. These two sides “should not be conflated” and “they sharply contradicted one another.” The good part should be saved, while that bad part should be cordoned off with caution tape. While I do agree with her that the anti-Semitisms in the *Notebooks* often do sound “like the ravings of a madman,”⁶⁹ his more lucid writing does not seem to strongly contradict many of his remarks on world history. However, do they really contradict one another, in the sense that his writing on Being and ontology might contradict with the logic of his writing on “social, political, and philosophical-historical questions”? Are they really “as if conceived by another person”? No. I would strongly suggest that they are indeed creations of the same person. They do not contradict, but as I have shown in

⁶⁸ Motroshilova, “On Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*,” 80-81.

⁶⁹ Motroshilova, “On Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*,” 80.

Parts 1 and 2 of this project, Heidegger's thinking on Being and his thinking on his historical situation are intimately entwined; his understanding of one is predicated on his understanding of the other. Motroshilova argues these two sides must not be conflated; I argue, however, that we must conflate them. We must integrate our understanding of Heidegger's faults and virtues if we are ever to really come to terms with his philosophy.

Peter Trawny initiated the scholarly debate on the meaning of the *Black Notebooks* as he is the editor of the volumes and published the first book that deals with their contents, *Heidegger and the Myth of Jewish World Conspiracy*. In this book, and more accessibly, in a discussion last year at the Goethe Institute titled "Heidegger's Black Notebooks: A discussion with Peter Trawny and Roger Berkowitz," he brings up the question of whether Heidegger's work has been contaminated by his anti-Semitic thought. Trawny explains that even before the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger was known to be anti-Semitic in a private sense, in letters to his wife, etc. What has changed now with this publication is that anti-Semitism is implicated in his philosophy:

He was known in a private level as an anti-Semite... [But] it is a difference if the philosopher takes these anti-Semitic stereotypes and makes a philosophy out of it and this is called being-historical anti-Semitism. At this time anti-Semitism becomes a moment of his view of being and this is of course even worse that he takes these fatal stereotypes and he transforms them and tries to make a philosophy out of them. So that's the point I guess. What is dangerous for the whole philosophy [is] we now have to deal with it in this philosophical context. We cannot say anymore, well he has private feelings... that is not the point anymore...⁷⁰

It is in the sense of an anti-Semitic, "spiritual National Socialism," that Trawny couches the question of contamination. This kind of question falls into the second narrative of separation in that it suggests that because Heidegger's anti-Semitism is now "philosophical" instead of merely

⁷⁰ Hannah Arendt Center. "Heidegger's Black Notebooks: A discussion with Peter Trawny and Roger Berkowitz." *Vimeo* video, 1:07:56. May 2, 2014. <https://vimeo.com/93670604>.

“private” it may contaminate the rest of his work, making the ‘bad’ face of Heidegger the real one. I would first reply that Heidegger’s work could only be contaminated if it was originally pure. I have attempted to show that even *Being and Time* was not ‘pure’ as it too has unsavory implications. But what other praised philosopher’s work is truly pure? The majority of our celebrated thinkers throughout history have been sexist, racist, anti-Semitic, and pro-slavery, not to mention speciesist. If Heidegger’s work is impure, so is the canon of Western philosophy; and with this, today, I think many may agree. The suggestion that if Heidegger’s work is contaminated, it should not be regarded so highly, speaks mostly to the white Western assumption that its praised ‘fathers’ are without fault, and what is praised is pure. This is not the case. What we must learn from this great embarrassment is that philosophy today has to come to terms with the legacy of its contribution to oppression. To learn from this we must not ignore Heidegger or stop teaching him. Rather, we must do the opposite. We must study and engage with him even more critically for what Heidegger is and has been: a great teacher and philosopher, a National Socialist, and an anti-Semite. Even Trawny has criticized his concept of contamination by wondering if his own thought has been “contaminated” by a “logic of purification” which he considers to be problematic.⁷¹ Thus, in this project I aim to turn the question regarding the *Black Notebooks* and their meaning away from the logic of separation, of contamination and purity, toward the question of how to integrate the many masks of Heidegger in order that we might better understand him.

⁷¹ “In one respect, I should like to criticize myself. The concept of “contamination” corresponds to a logic of purification that may have transferred from Heidegger’s idea of a “Purification of Being” into my text. I have let my thoughts “contaminate” themselves in some cases. However, poisoned thinking is weak, blind. Have I over interpreted Heidegger’s remarks on “World Jewry”? Have I understood the concept of “contamination” literally in the sense of becoming-in-contact-with or becoming-comprehended-understood-with. For some reason, Heidegger’s thoughts were hung up on the imaginary threat of the “World Jewry.” What, then, would become-in-contact with this added threat? It is this logic of cleansing, purification, from which all thinking must unconditionally be protected. This means the protection from purification but not the protection from purity.” From Trawny, *Heidegger und der Mythos*, 139. Translation by Delmer, letter to author, April 15, 2015.

An approach to integrating the supposedly disparate sides of Heidegger is through Nietzsche's discussion of the hermit and the metaphor of masks representing the process of thinking, writing, and being read.

The hermit does not believe that any philosopher—assuming that every philosopher was first of all a hermit—ever expressed his real and ultimate opinion in books: does one not write books precisely to conceal what one harbors? Indeed, he will doubt whether a philosopher could *possibly* have “ultimate and real” opinions, whether behind every one of his caves there is not, must not be, another deeper cave—a more comprehensive, stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abysmally deep ground behind every ground, under every attempt to furnish “grounds.” Every philosophy is a foreground philosophy—that is a hermit's judgment: “There is something arbitrary in his stopping *here* to look back and look around, in his not digging deeper *here* but laying his spade aside; there is also something suspicious about it.” Every philosophy also *conceals* a philosophy; every opinion is also a hideout, every word also a mask.⁷²

Heidegger concealed much in his books and left us with many silences. Indeed in the later part of his life he began to bury himself in silence, to let only his written word speak. Nietzsche's hermit tells us that the philosopher's “ultimate and real opinions” are not expressed in books and doubts whether it is even possible to have them. This asks us to question whether anything Heidegger wrote was ultimately ‘what he thought,’ and further if what he is showing even now isn't another mask. Surely this is the case. For example, immediately after *Being and Time* was published he began to revise and correct it. In the *Black Notebooks* Heidegger had begun to self-criticize the work, rewrite it, and change his concepts. Heidegger's process was of repetition of written words, thoughts, and ideas as self-communication, and through this, the evolution of thought.⁷³ Below the surface of his published works there were deeper caves. Heidegger gave us a view into a “deeper cave” in his decision to publish his *Schwarze Hefte*, a view into “a more comprehensive, stranger, richer world beyond the surface.” By allowing us glimpses into these

⁷² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 229.

⁷³ Ulrich von Bülow (Archivist, German Literary Archive in Marbach, Germany), interview by author, Bard College, NY, September 21, 2015.

subterranean places, we are being challenged to dig deeper and find that more comprehensive meaning. If we take the anti-Semitic passages in the *Notebooks* at face value, judge them solely for being offensive, we have failed to interpret them, failed to pick up the spade at all.

The question still arises, what can we learn from the anti-Semitic passages that occur in the *Black Notebooks*? Following Motroshilova's argument that the *Notebooks* represent a turning point in Heidegger's work from *Being and Time*, I believe that his comments on World Jewry are a small but important part of his attempt to understand and characterize the 'dangerous' forces at work in the modern world. Heidegger conflates World Jewry and machination: what is clear is that he was trying to understand the force of machination, how it comes about, how it presents itself. He did this by writing about machination in many examples. What remains unclear is exactly what role Jewry serves in aiding the process of machination. Whether he eventually stopped associating World Jewry with machination in his private mind we may never know, or we may discover when more volumes of the *Notebooks* are published, as these only cover his thoughts from 1931 until 1941. However, in his later writing, especially in *The Question Concerning Technology*, machination is no longer tied to a particular group of people, but to the metaphysical force of "enframing" (*Gestell*). One might then ask, does this mean that because of machination's proximity to World Jewry, and logically following this, enframing, they are anti-Semitic ideas themselves? This conclusion can only follow from the logic of contamination. Machination and enframing deal with what Heidegger has pinpointed as the essence of Western metaphysics. It is the idea of logical ordering, efficiency and management that has become 'a force of nature,' so to speak, where even human beings become 'natural resources,' ready for manipulation and optimization. Even Heidegger's conception in the *Black Notebooks* of Jewry's tendency for calculativeness, its connection to machination is not a trait that arises

from Jewry's very nature and thus something that philosophically grounds these ideas, but arises from their appropriation of the essence of Western metaphysics. In this way World Jewry's nature is not the philosophical grounding of the theory of machination, but functions as an expression of the theory's consequences. In this I am arguing that Jewry's conflation with machination does not make the concept of machination an inherently anti-Semitic one, but it does mean that one cannot approach the concept of machination without dealing with Heidegger's example of Jewry. One of the major issues at stake in the *Black Notebooks* is not 'how world Jewry ruined the world,' but how people are increasingly estranged from their past rooted-in-the-earth traditions, and how their lives are increasingly ordered and mechanized on a mass scale. Thus I read his comments on World Jewry not merely as examples of prejudice, but as one of many lenses through which Heidegger viewed a problem, one answer to the question of how machination manifests itself in the world. In this way World Jewry is another mask of machination.

Although Heidegger was mainly concerned with the West, the effects of *Gestell*, of enframing and machination, are felt throughout the globe. To ignore the evolution of this thinking in the *Black Notebooks*, or to condemn it as a contamination unfit to be interpreted, would not give Heidegger the hermeneutic justice he deserves. Furthermore, to condemn the rest of his work by its association with anti-Semitism and National Socialism seems to me to be mere intellectual cowardice, and in the examples of people who have attempted to dissociate themselves from Heidegger's work since the *Notebooks*' publication there is more of an attempt to save one's own reputation than an act of moral righteousness.

The traditional ways of reading Heidegger such as an ahistorical reading, attempts to unmask the real Heidegger and thus to label another part fake, to count one mask as more

important than another, one more worthy of the title of philosophy than another, to condemn an entire body of work based on the contamination of one idea, are all problematic. In each one of these something important is elided, some meaning is lost. Instead we must attempt to read Heidegger 'holistically.' This means that we take every one of his writings as a legitimate part of his philosophical oeuvre, as parts of an interconnecting whole, even if parts of it are problematic. In this we protect Heidegger's writing from "logic of cleansing [and] purification, from which all thinking must unconditionally be protected." However, by making even the problematic parts of Heidegger's work important, we do not want to forget their issues. This is why I want to stress that we must read his writing and interpret him critically.

Heidegger's writing is implicated in a legacy of oppression, but this is a legacy that the majority of the history of philosophy is a part of as well. Refusing to read or to teach one man's thought that is a part of this legacy does not save us from the legacy of oppression ourselves because we have already partaken in it. But, the risk of separating the oppressions in philosophy, of eliding them through censorship, is not only a risk to philosophy itself, but a risk to the way we position ourselves to resist oppression. If we exculpate philosophy we risk stripping it of its potential to resist and understand oppressions. From the anti-Semitism in the *Black Notebooks* we learn not only about machination and history, but also about the history and philosophy of anti-Semitism and the history of thought during World War II. The right thing to do is not to ignore, to be blind to thought, but to come to terms with it. As my project itself attests, we must continue reading Heidegger, both the 'good' parts and the 'bad.' This is the only way that we may begin to read Heidegger "authentically."

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