

## What can we do with Heidegger in the twenty-first century?

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The past two years have been eventful for Heidegger scholarship. Heidegger's *Black Notebooks* from the 1930s were published (GA94–96), exposing his antisemitism in a new way, and reigniting several debates. The question that mattered most was whether his *philosophy* – rather than the person – was inherently antisemitic. If yes: *should we continue reading and teaching Heidegger in the twenty-first century?*

Many colloquiums and conferences took place around the globe around the theme of Heidegger's antisemitic remarks; understandably so, because these remarks indicate the most appalling critical failure. The president of the *Heidegger Gesellschaft*, Günter Figal, resigned from his post, while at the same time the University of Freiburg announced that it would rescind “Lehrstuhl I”, which is associated with Heidegger (and Husserl).<sup>1</sup>

A residual uncertainty and aporia about Heidegger's philosophy remains, and we must face up to it. The same philosophical virtues are always needed when we reassess a philosopher's work: critical judgement, as opposed to knee-jerk reactions prompted by confirmation biases.

There is evidence to suggest that *some* of Heidegger's concepts are antisemitic. However, for the most part, it is not evident that Heidegger's entire philosophy is inherently antisemitic: some of it can be said to be *compliant* with antisemitism and fascism, and some of it is clearly incompatible with any sort of totalitarian ideas, including antisemitism and fascism.

Serious work still needs to be carried out in order to show *how* Heidegger's philosophy is antisemitic, and the few shocking sentences in the *Black Notebooks* do not suffice in order to come to philosophical conclusions,<sup>2</sup> unless one is satisfied with dogmas that fall prey to *ignoratio elenchi*.<sup>3</sup>

Reviewing a volume, which was published *before* the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, involves unique challenges, and one could be hesitant to review a recent volume that does not mention the *Black Notebooks*. However, reviewing *Heidegger in the*

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<sup>1</sup> The university itself said that this was **already** planned a year before the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, so the timing was mere coincidence.

<sup>2</sup> Recent examples of delicate scholarly work that deal with Heidegger's antisemitism in the *Black Notebooks* seriously, *without* using it as an excuse to advocate banning Heidegger from philosophical bookshelves, but rather advocate a philosophically more nuanced stance *because* of Heidegger's importance as a philosopher, include: Cohen and Zagury-Orly, “De la ‘Vérité de l'être’ à l'‘auto-annihilation du judaïsme’.”

<sup>3</sup> See Sheehan, “L'affaire Faye: Faut-il brûler Heidegger? A reply to Fritsche, Pégny, and Rastier.”

*Twenty-First Century*<sup>4</sup> helps us take stock: it gives an opportunity to reflect on *recent visions* of Heidegger scholarship in comparison to more updated ones, in order to see what has actually changed. Such a review helps us re-evaluate recent visions as well as more “updated” ones.

As far as Heidegger’s work is concerned, the essays in this volume show the richness and diversity that is inherent in Heidegger’s thought. The essays in the volume show that Heidegger’s thought surpasses oppressive, monolithic demands which strip thought from variation and difference. The volume engages with Heidegger’s legacy, without accepting the tyranny of a single thesis. So what can Heidegger’s philosophy offer to the twenty-first century?

*Heidegger in the Twenty-First Century* offers *some* suggestions. The volume contains an introductory essay by the editors, and nine essays by Heidegger scholars that fall under three distinct headings. Part I features essays that touch on methodological issues; part II features essays on ethical and historical issues; part III features essays that apply Heideggerian insights to other contemporary, interdisciplinary issues.

In the Prolegomena (Chapter 1), the editors immediately point to the horizon to which this volume belongs: the origin and future of philosophy. In a sense, the immediate character of this volume is historical: it is an *invitation* to reflect on, or to think through, the *historical* character of philosophy, and of philosophical beings (human beings). Right from the outset, the editors *performatively* indicate what they take to be the “essence” of the Heideggerian call to philosophy, which can (or ought to) be carried into the twenty-first century. The anticipative character of thought, aroused by a mood of uneasiness and apprehension: “In philosophy, anticipation and apprehension arrive together and consummate an open field of ambiguity and uncertainty ...” (2).

The aim of the volume, the editors tell us, is to offer a “rather ‘difficult’ reflection on what thinking might become after Heidegger’s philosophy”, traversing “tangled paths” and mapping out “new routes” (2). Indeed, the volume does offer what the editors say it does: a non-dogmatic, pluralistic compilation, essays with different vantage points and different directions. This is partly due to the richness of Heidegger’s philosophy which offers countless possible *ways*, but it also results from the inherent subversive character of Heideggerian phenomenology, which resists dominant, established paradigms by embracing openness and uncertainty – something that opens up to the indeterminate and the unfinished; as a result, the discourse is multifarious.

There are many strengths in this volume, and a few weaknesses. The strength of the volume as a whole is that it is open in scope and presents a justifiably optimistic proposal as to the *potential* in Heidegger’s thought. The volume focuses on how certain significant philosophers (such as Nietzsche and Husserl) informed Heidegger’s thought, without reducing Heidegger to a syncretic philosopher; hence the volume manages to situate Heidegger’s thought in the history of western philosophy. Some of the essays are highly nuanced, and manage to bring out the best aspects of Heidegger’s philosophy. At the same time, the volume comprises an *example* rather than an exhaustive account. Regarding the weaknesses of the volume, I found that there was too strong an emphasis on Derridean readings of Heidegger, at the expense of other approaches – for example, there is nothing to satisfy an “analytic Heideggerian”, nor was there anything on the ways in

<sup>4</sup> Ennis and Georgakis, *Heidegger in the Twenty-First Century*.

which Heidegger's thought has been useful to cognitive science. But let me now offer a brief discussion of a selected few essays.

In "Dasein as Transcendence in Heidegger and the Critique of Husserl", Dermot Moran investigates how Heidegger's work is closer to Husserl's phenomenological work than Heidegger admits. Moran rightly situates Heidegger's early philosophy within the transcendental trajectory, arguing that his ontology, despite the critique of Husserl, still remains very close to Husserl's own fundamental discoveries. Moran investigates how Heidegger's early phenomenology relies on the notion of transcendence, which is not so radically different from Husserl's use of the notion. Heidegger's own breakthrough is made possible by virtue of rethinking intentionality in terms of finite transcendence by turning his attention to Dasein, and this is, according to Moran, enabled via his critique of Husserl's notion of the transcendence of the ego and intentionality, which Heidegger finds to be still caught up in the metaphysics of subjectivity and the dichotomies set up by Cartesian ontology.

Moran argues that Heidegger acknowledges the influence of Husserl's analyses in *Ideas II*, but Heidegger rejects Husserl's layered analyses of human being, and his cognitivist conception of intentionality, and rethinks transcendence in terms of transcendence towards the world (25). As a result, Heidegger almost completely neglects the notion of intentionality in *Being and Time*. However, Moran argues, this is not because he rejects intentionality per se, but rather because he believes Husserl does not offer a deep enough phenomenological analysis of the foundations of the very intentional relation, which Heidegger indicates as Dasein (27). Moran presses on this point, taking the opportunity to pre-empt any future "non-correlationist" readings of Heidegger, such as those proposed by contemporary speculative realists.

Heidegger's interest in the ground of intentionality itself leads him to the essential finitude of Dasein. This enables Heidegger to recast the problem of transcendence as one of how Dasein both belongs to the world in a very special sense and also lives out its individual existence (41).

Moran's essay is a lucid, sober interpretation that puts Heidegger squarely within the transcendental idealist and neo-Kantian trajectory, which opens the way for highlighting the overlaps between Heidegger and Husserl. At the same time, it undermines quasi-mystical interpretations of Heidegger's project. Moran's essay engages with contemporary trends, in particular speculative realism. Moran sets out his position both on this trend, and on how Heidegger ought to be read in the future.

In Chapter Four, entitled "The Self that Belongs to an Abyssal Ground: Reading Heidegger's *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*", Niall Keane looks at how Heidegger's early and later thought differ with respect to the conception of "ground". It is fitting that Keane's essay follows Moran's, because it explores the same topic, the topic of grounding and transcendence, but from a different perspective. As such, it is useful to read them in tandem. According to Keane, Heidegger's early phenomenological work on Dasein still operates under the spell of the "Kantian idiom", albeit with a "refashioned understanding of subjectivity and ground" serving as the driving force (47). In the mid-1930s, though, Heidegger appears to have reformulated the phenomenological-ontological task, by openly aiming to "challenge and transform" the transcendental method – an attempt exemplified in his second magnum opus, the *Beiträge*. In order to consolidate his point,

Keane quotes Heidegger: “the notion of ‘transcendence’ in every sense must disappear.”<sup>5</sup> Both Keane and Moran identify the “disappearance of transcendence” from Heidegger’s later phenomenology as a critical moment in his work.

140 This very transition is the topic of Keane’s essay. In his words, his essay “is an attempt to trace and make sense of this transition by looking at the issue of ‘phenomenological ground’ as a self-retracting or self-retreating ontological ground that nonetheless grounds genuine selfhood” (48). Keane focuses on the problem of grounding, the articulation of the ground as that which traverses the entire Heideggerian corpus, and the way in which Heidegger struggles to overcome the transcendental (Kantian and Husserlian) sense of ground, which remains attached to subjectivity. In this context, self and ground go hand in hand, and Heidegger tries to retrieve “a forgotten or abandoned self”, a withdrawing ground, a ground that necessarily withdraws *while* it grounds, or, to put it otherwise, a ground that withdraws *in order to* ground (50).

150 There are two senses of ground at work in Keane’s essay, and the distinction between the two is key to understanding and accepting his argument: the first sense involves grounding as the *layering* of new foundations; the second sense involves grounding as *excavating* towards the truth of being. As I understand it, the former ascribes a more *active* role to the founding event, whose philosophical definition inevitably leads to the terminal locus of a subject, whereas the latter involves an ambiguous, mediopassive relation, whereby ground “is intended as giving ground or as *Ergründung*, in the sense of ‘letting the ground be, so that the human being can again come to itself and recover self-being (GA 65, p. 31)”, a grounding that “does not appear to signify the laying of new foundations but rather a leaping-in, an excavation towards the ground of the truth of being, the ‘more-than-human’” (50).<sup>6</sup>

160 This new sense of grounding is what characterizes the proclaimed “other beginning”, which will not itself be yet another epoch in the history of metaphysics, *because* “for the various epochs of metaphysics Grund means ‘cause’ or ‘reason’”, and this new conception of grounding overcomes this metaphysical logic (53). Keane explains why and how Heidegger’s radicalized sense of “ground” operates in a way that does not fall back into the logic of production and creation (57), and how it connects to the notion of reservedness [*Verhaltenheit*]. As Keane argues, Heidegger’s later philosophy may not be offering a new philosophy that leaves transcendental philosophy behind, but in it we see Heidegger’s transcendental heritage “by taking a step back into what is most unthought in that heritage” (60).

170 Keane says that “the future of Heidegger scholarship involves recognizing that the matter of Heidegger’s thinking emerges only when we allow the essence of questioning to come upon us, that is, when we are seized by an essential need for questioning” (60). As regards Heidegger’s uniquely phenomenological style of thinking, he sees it as “an attempt to formulate transitional vocabulary that could aid in a recovery that will always remain incomplete and forgetful of itself” (60–61).

175 Part II of the volume, entitled “History, Responsibility and Voice” comprises chapters 5, 6 and 7. Chapter 5 is an essay by Ullrich Haase and Mark Sinclair, entitled “History and

<sup>5</sup> (GA 65, p. 217), p. 48.

180 <sup>6</sup> Keane argues against Michel Haar’s interpretation that posits the human Dasein as a passive recipient. Keane wants to stress that we are not dealing with the human being or subject as the privileged entity who submits itself and subsequently loses itself to an external force that need simply be “safeguarded” (55–56).

the Meaning of Life: On Heidegger's Interpretations of Nietzsche's 2nd Untimely Meditation". The essay focuses on Volume 46 of the Gesamtausgabe, entitled *Zur Auslegung von Nietzsches II Unzeitgemäßer Betrachtung*, which is based on notes with which Heidegger led what were officially seminar exercises in the Winter Semester of 1938/39 (65). The general aim and scope of the essay is to note the influence that Nietzsche had on the early Heidegger, especially since the existing secondary literature focuses on Heidegger's engagement with Nietzsche in the 1930s and 1940s (66). The result of this restricted focus was, according to Haase and Sinclair, "the covering over of the true presence of Nietzsche" in Heidegger's work between 1927 and 1938. The authors' aim is to

ascertain the sense and legitimacy of [the transformation that Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche underwent] and to show that it does not separate independent periods of Heidegger's work but it is rather a matter of an internally related development of his thinking. (66)

In this context, the authors identify "the question of life" as a question that has not been sufficiently addressed by Nietzsche and Heidegger scholars – something that an analysis of Heidegger's 1938 seminars can illuminate – an analysis that will "determine the shape of studies of the Nietzsche–Heidegger relationship for years to come" (67). On the question of life, the 1938 lectures "contain the most extensive reflection on the question of animality after the lectures of 1929/30" [*The Basic Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, GA 29/30] and hence cover crucial and seldom charted ground on this topic (65).

According to the authors, Heidegger employed two distinct methods in reading Nietzsche: appropriation/destruction [*Destruktion*] (in the 1920s) and setting apart [*Auseinandersetzung*] (in the 1930s and 1940s). Regarding the early period of the 1920s and the "positive appropriation" of history, Haase and Sinclair highlight some fundamental ways in which Heidegger's philosophy is fundamentally permeated by Nietzschean insights; in order to see this, though, so say the authors, we must be able to see the motivations underlying the texts, extending beyond explicit mentions of Nietzsche: (1) *Being and Time* stands as a meditation on Nietzsche's hermeneutic dictum that there are no truths, only interpretations; (2) the idea of Eternal Truth as the last remnant of Christian theology within philosophy derives from Nietzsche; (3) the idea of authenticity is indebted to Nietzsche's imperative "to become the one who one is" (65).

The authors go so far as to suggest that perhaps the very notion of truth as ἀλήθεια can be traced back to the 2nd Untimely Meditation, insofar as this interpretation of truth is tied to the function of destiny as *necessary forgetting* (71). Bringing into relief the historical nature of truth qua ἀλήθεια and tying this to Nietzsche is indeed an intriguing reading, one deserving of more time and space; I am deeply skeptical about this interpretation, especially because – following the principle of Ockham's razor – as there is more textual evidence for seeing other philosophers implicated in the genealogy of this notion.

Haase and Sinclair find more obvious connections between *Being and Time* and Nietzsche's 2nd Untimely Meditation in the fifth chapter of the second division where Heidegger discusses temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] and historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*].

The authors argue that Heidegger himself seems to want us to see Nietzsche's 2nd Untimely Meditation as an ontological precursor to *Being and Time*, when he enigmatically argues that "the beginning of [Nietzsche's] 'meditation' allows us to suppose that he understood more than he has made known to us" (75). The authors make the case that the idea of the ontological projection of historiology, which reveals Dasein's historicity,

is expanded upon by Heidegger in light of Nietzsche's meditation on the uses and abuses of history (73).

Finally, Haase and Sinclair point out how Heidegger in GA 46 achieves more clarity on why Nietzsche fails to distinguish between the notions of *Geschichte* and *Historie* (76): Nietzsche's definition of the historical in terms of *life* retains an ahistorical element in the definition of human being, and thus prohibits the overcoming of metaphysics (76). It is this opaque idea of life as an "unhistorical power" that will be responsible for Nietzsche's failure to grasp the distinction between *Geschichte* and *Historie*.

Chapter 6 is an eloquent essay by François Raffoul entitled "The Ex-appropriation of Responsibility". The essay deals with how Heidegger's early and late work radicalize the traditional way in which philosophers have understood "responsibility" (and related concepts), and how this is taken up and further radicalized by Derrida himself.

Raffoul begins by referring to the traditional way of defining responsibility in terms of *accountability*, which is normally "conceived in terms of will, causality, freedom or free-will and subjectivity", whereby "responsibility is understood in terms of the subjectum that lies at the basis of the act, as ground of imputation, and opens onto the project of a self-legislation and self-appropriation of the subject" (83). Raffoul wants to focus on how responsibility is defined in terms of the subject *appropriating* itself, and how appropriation operates.

Raffoul's essay at first glance appears to be an essay on existential ethics, but such a characterization would only scratch the surface. In fact, we should understand Heidegger's project as being in line with the Kantian project, whereby responsibility signals not just the capacity for moral action, but rather a more general project of self-understanding and the conditions of possibility thereof. As Raffoul writes, he hopes to engage Heidegger's reception in the twenty-first century by emphasizing the ethical import of his thought "and how indeed ethics itself *was given another foundation* in [Heidegger's] writing at the very limit of its aporetic nature" (85; my emphasis). So responsibility is not just about an agent's action; it is also about self-understanding – what it is that *constitutes* selfhood. In this context, Raffoul points out that Heidegger's notion of Dasein effectively displaces the origin of responsibility as autonomous subject (85), and this shows how the topic of responsibility is a penetrating way of attaining a deeper understanding into Heidegger's project (both early and late).

Raffoul uses Derrida's notion of ex-appropriation in order to clarify Heidegger's notion of responsibility, which subverts the traditional sense of responsibility as self-legislation, and promotes the understanding of responsibility as being constituted by "the encounter and exposition to an event as inappropriable" (84). Raffoul shows how responsibility, for Heidegger and Derrida, is *constituted* by its delimitation by the *inappropriable*, that which cannot be appropriated. The *inappropriable* is not opposed to appropriation, though; it is not a simple disjunctive opposition. Rather, it partakes in appropriation, it enables appropriation, and so it is the condition of possibility of appropriation and of responsibility (85). In this way, the origin of responsibility is *displaced* but without being dissolved, **because** it will still be found to be part of Dasein itself, **as** these remain "instances of inappropriability in Heidegger's existential analytic" (85).

Raffoul identifies the limits of the appropriable, i.e. the inappropriable, in the affective notions of Heidegger's existential analytic, namely moods [*Stimmungen*] and guilt. In

Raffoul's words: "Such limits [of responsible appropriation] can be found in the very notions of facticity, thrownness and being-guilty" (86–87). Moods reveal the thrownness of Dasein, and it is these phenomena that resist appropriation because they evoke the darkness of our Being; through these notions and around these phenomena, Heidegger emphasizes "the element of opacity and withdrawal in them that seems to interrupt and foreclose any possibility of cognitive or practical appropriation" (86). Thrownness is that primordial aspect of existence behind which existence can never go; instead, it remains simultaneously inappropriable and constitutive (87).

Having a mood is having an "inexorable enigma", which becomes manifest as a burden [Last] (86). As such, moods afford the aporetic moment par excellence in Heidegger's philosophy. And it is at this aporetic moment ("the juncture") "that Heidegger paradoxically situates the responsibility of Dasein, a responsibility arising as it were from its own impossibility" (87). Hence, Heidegger speaks of the facticity of responsibility [*Faktizität der Überantwortung*] to indicate the thrownness of responsibility, which is constitutive of responsibility itself: one needs the experience of the inappropriable, what Derrida calls the impossible, in order to have a paradox, an aporia, which is at the heart of responsibility.

Raffoul further explicates Heidegger's radical version of responsibility, by appealing to Derrida's reversal of Heidegger; Derrida speaks of the impossibility of possibility (of appropriation), as that which allows for the possibility of appropriation to arise in the first place. This impossibility is called "ex-appropriation": responsibility is situated in paradox, it is the experience of the impossible, the paradox of impossibility, of one becoming responsible by encountering the inappropriable (87). Derrida's fruitful reading of Heidegger brings about the insight that responsible *decision* itself is not founded on comprehension and possibility, ethical responsibility cannot be based on a rule or the unfolding of a programme, but rather it is an event, a risk. Decision itself arises out of the undecidable (95). Decision is based on an irresolvable aporia, which marks a hiatus within the subject, an otherness in the subject itself (96–97).

Raffoul's essay thematizes an under-researched topic: the role that moods play in the becoming of responsibility, becoming authentic, as well as the ontological depth of moods. Just as crucially, Raffoul touches on the unresolved topic of ethical responsibility and moods, and opens the way for new research into how moods and facticity are implicated in Heidegger's political thought. To what extent does facticity and thrownness set up a decisionism (if at all)? Are there any discerning criteria by virtue of which some moods are deemed more privileged than others, when it comes to the revealing of the paradox that sets up responsibility?

The third part includes essays that focus on how Heidegger's thought can be fruitfully applied within other disciplines. In Chapter 8, entitled "Heidegger and International Development", Glazebrook and Story offer a highly politicized re-reading of Heidegger's critique of modern technology and science (technoscience). They show that International Development has a lot to gain from Heidegger's critique of technoscience.

Their main (and commendable) task is to show how Heideggerian thought offers alternatives to the hegemony of modern, *western*, technoscience, and these can be found in the different ways in which non-Eurocentric cultures, particularly in the global South, relate to nature (137). They particularly focus on women's subsistence agricultural practices in the global South.

The paper has four sections. The first section argues that modernity *is not* the destiny of the global South; the second section claims that, according to Heidegger, the intellectual destiny of the West culminates in scientific objectivity; the third section argues that modern science entails the mathematization of nature, which enables the reduction of everything to economic value; finally, the fourth section argues that women's subsistence agriculture in the global South is a blind spot to the essence of technology, which offers an alternative that grows within postcolonial imperialism (123).

Modernity, they argue, is a cultural project, and culture is an a priori project that shapes experience, including how we understand nature. **However, while** culture is an a-priori structure, providing the norms for understanding, no cultural outlook is inevitable and absolute. This also holds for the western, modern culture of technoscience: "there is no necessity to this technological interpretation of beings" (124).

The authors then draw from Heidegger's account of Dasein and truth in *Being and Time* in order to show that Dasein is not exclusive to the European tradition, and argue that no culture has inherent priority (126). In fact, Heidegger's redefinition of truth as unconcealment undermines modernist "developmental narratives", which are responsible for imposing historical trajectories (where the global North is seen as inevitably superior to the global South) (126). The authors argue that Heidegger's talk of epochs is analogous to occupying cultures as incommensurable paradigms: it is not necessarily the case that one paradigm is dismissive of another.

In **analysing** the modern, western technoscientific culture, Glazebrook and Story focus on its *violent* nature, as carried out through experimentation. Experimentation involves violence with respect to the way natural beings move: modern science fails to grasp movement in terms of teleology (as opposed to mechanical movement) and cannot make the distinction between violent and non-violent motion (130). Thus, "[e]xperiments commit hermeneutic violence by forcing natural entities to behave in ways they would not left to themselves" (130). The authors point out that Heidegger was able to associate modern science with violence in the mid-1930s in his discussion of Aristotle, and in the 1950s in *Was Heißt Denken?* Heidegger argued that science is grounded in technology, and that the essence of technology is an assault on nature (130–31).

The paper then draws the connection between capitalist exploitation and violent technologization, which enables economic reductionism. As they write: "The scientific projection of objectivity renders invisible all values beyond the calculable, which capitalists and their accountants readily reckon as expense and revenue" (131–32).

The way to resist technoscientific oppression, the dominant culture of the West, and to enable another beginning is by exposure of non-European cultures to the Eurocentric logic: this exposure would reveal the homelessness of modernity to other ways of Dasein dwelling, which need not be characterized by homelessness, as suggested in Heidegger's analysis in *Being and Time* (136).

Chapter 10 is entitled "The 'New' Heidegger", by Babette Babich. In this essay, Babich offers a scathing critique of academics who desire to see a new reading of Heidegger emerge; scholars who desire to see a devastating reappraisal of Heideggerian philosophy that will somehow constitute an apocalyptic promise whereby the "real" Heidegger will emerge (178). It is quite appropriate to have this essay last, as a sort of self-reflexive epilogue, which creates a new hermeneutic space, despite the veneer of hermeneutic conservatism.



Babich takes aim at scholars who strive to earn “anti-Heideggerian stripes”, and names Tom Sheehan as an example. Even though Babich’s reductive approach to Sheehan’s work is unfair, I am sympathetic to Babich in opposing widespread dogmatic trends, but what is the trend she opposes? It is an uncritical disposition, which so many scholars nowadays have, which involves an active search for the next scandal so as to be able to “advocate a restart”, “to start again, to return to the early Heidegger, the late Heidegger, to reflect after Heidegger and thus, post-Heidegger, to think beyond him” (169). I take it that Babich does not take aim at nuanced calls for reappraisal of certain aspects of Heidegger’s philosophy, but rather targets those totalizing approaches which seek to “[o]mit Heidegger and move on”, because – inter alia – Heidegger “has already been too well represented to require either analysis or discussion” (169).

Babich draws attention to consumerist behaviour in order to explain the trend. She compares the calls for a new Heidegger with the desire to buy new things, which is an affliction of the modern passion of “curiosity” “that seeks newness “but only in order to leap from it anew to another novelty”” (171). In effect, Babich takes Heidegger’s insights from *Being and Time* on curiosity and how we get drawn by the new, by objects and how we get absorbed by tools (what she now aptly calls “gadgets”) and reflectively applies these insights to the very way we read philosophy nowadays, the new mode of engaging with philosophical texts and their (mis)interpretation:

we need new things to read, especially as it transpires, distracted as we are in a way that Heidegger who wrote on idle talk, curiosity, ambiguity could never have imagined distraction, that we read less and less, even as we live our lives more mediatedly than ever through the text, texting, email, online posts. (176)

The problem with this, says Babich, is that we end up with the conviction that we not only need a new Heidegger, but rather “a new everybody and everything else in philosophy” (178).

Babich offers a principled hermeneutic proposal that points out that **while** we haven’t yet understood the already printed and translated Heidegger corpus, we rush to the new Heidegger that will be revealed in the (then forthcoming) *Black Notebooks*. Babich’s remarks are accurate in many respects: for example, **while** many scholars were carried away by media sensationalism, awaiting for the publication of the *Black Notebooks* in order to discover in them Heidegger’s antisemitism and further proof of his Nazism, they had – ironically – missed possibly even worse remarks already published in *Nature, History, State*<sup>7</sup> where his ethnic chauvinist vision was combined with his antisemitism.<sup>6</sup> They missed these remarks because they had not been reading Heidegger at all. As Babich notes: “Heidegger scholarship has long been fraught by interpretations bent on articulating and defending/attacking one, usually limited, version of Heidegger’s work and scope” (179). In sum, it is not hard to agree with Babich, and this does not in any way constitute a totalizing defence of all of Heidegger’s ideas: Babich is clearly set against Manichaeistic readings, and wants to highlight the complexity of textual corporuses. ~~At the end of the day~~, one has to *understand* where the danger in a thinker’s work lies, the better to fight it.

<sup>7</sup> *Nature, History, State: 1933–34*, translated and edited by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.

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