

# Emmanuel Faye: The Introduction of Fraud Into Philosophy?

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**ABSTRACT:** Emmanuel Faye's *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy* is so freighted with mistranslations, misinterpretations, the wrenching of sentences from their context, and perverse rewritings of Heidegger's texts that it raises questions about (1) whether Faye intentionally rewrote and misinterpreted Heidegger or is simply a sloppy scholar; and (2) whether he is a competent reader of any philosophical texts, and especially Heidegger's. Detailed evidence is provided of the countless errors, gross misrepresentations, and howlers that populate his books and lectures. However, the question of whether Faye is a fraud or simply incompetent is left to the reader's judgment.

**KEY WORDS:** Emmanuel Faye, Black Notebooks, Heidegger, Nazism, anti-Semitism

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No one working in contemporary Western philosophy can be unaware that Martin Heidegger's Black Notebooks (*Gesamtausgabe* 94–97, with more to come) confirm what has long been known: that this “greatest philosopher of the twentieth century” was an unabashed anti-Semite. He was also a strong supporter of Hitler and the Nazis from 1930 through at least 1934, and a convinced fascist long after he took distance from the Party. If anything, the Black Notebooks reveal how Heidegger tried to launder his anti-Semitism through his idiosyncratic “history of being,” his devolutionary narrative about Western civilization that ends by claiming that “machination”—the terrible state of the world today—is amply instantiated in world Jewry.<sup>1</sup>

The problem then becomes how to read the *philosophy* that Heidegger produced over the sixty years stretching from 1912 to 1976. Is there anything at all in the 102 volumes of his *Gesamtausgabe* that is not contaminated by either anti-Semitism or Nazism? We note how Heidegger in the late 1930s explicitly tied his earlier option for the Nazis to his theory of history:

Thinking purely “metaphysically” (that is, in terms of the history of being), I took National Socialism in the years 1930 to 1934 to be the possibility of a transition to another beginning, and that is the interpretation I gave it.<sup>2</sup>

Also in that vein, Karl Löwith reports that Heidegger told him privately in 1936 that his option for the Nazis grew out of his doctrine of historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) found in §74 of *Being and Time*.<sup>3</sup> And in 1947 Heidegger (speaking of himself

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1. A note on references: (1) I cite Heidegger's works by page and line (the line number follows the period) both in the original German and in the English translations. A typical citation is SZ 385.31 = 437.25–26, that is, Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* page 385, line 31 = *Being and Time* (Macquarrie-Robinson), page 437, lines 25–26. References to the volumes of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* (GA) and their English translations follow the rubrics in my *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 307–18. (Also at [https://www.academia.edu/9830630/HEIDEGGER\\_S\\_GESAMTAUSGABE\\_TEXTS\\_AND\\_THEIR\\_ENGLISH\\_TRANSLATIONS\\_as\\_of\\_October\\_2014](https://www.academia.edu/9830630/HEIDEGGER_S_GESAMTAUSGABE_TEXTS_AND_THEIR_ENGLISH_TRANSLATIONS_as_of_October_2014).) (2) I cite Faye's *Heidegger, l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie* in the same fashion. Thus *Heidegger*, 15.24–30 = 4.29–34 refers to the 2005 French edition of Faye's book, page 15, lines 24–30 = ET page 4, lines 29–34. His open letter of September 20, 2014, is cited as: “Letter,” followed by the line numbers. (3) Bibliographical information on other texts cited is given at the end of this essay.
  2. GA 95: 408.5–8. See also Heidegger's letter to his brother Fritz on May 4, 1933, the day after Heidegger joined the NSDAP: GA 16: 93.5–8: “Ich bin gestern in die Partei eingetreten nicht nur aus innerer Überzeugung, sondern auch aus dem Bewußtsein, daß nur auf diesem Wege eine Läuterung und Klärung der ganzen Bewegung möglich ist.”
  3. Karl Löwith, *Mein Leben*, 58.24–28 = 60.8–12.

in the third person) said that he was precisely adhering to what he had written in *Being and Time* when

in 1933 he attempted to immediately seize upon an historical moment as a possible occasion for an all-encompassing reflection on the West.<sup>4</sup>

Arguably the most virulent attack on Heidegger has been advanced by Emmanuel Faye in his widely read *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy*. Faye is a specialist on certain figures in early modern French thought (Raymond Sebond, Charles de Bovelles, and Montaigne, along with Descartes: see his doctoral thesis, expanded and published in 1998 as *Philosophie et perfection de l'homme*). But over the last years he has broadened his interests to include all of Heidegger's publications. Central to his book is the claim that long before Heidegger joined the NSDAP in 1933, his "philosophy" (those are Faye's scare quotes) was anti-Semitic and philo-Nazi, especially *Being and Time*, published in 1927. If one were to accept that premise, one might view Heidegger's entire oeuvre as what Faye claims it to be: nothing but a sometimes clandestine, sometimes blatant insinuation of Nazism into twentieth-century philosophy. This is why Faye calls for all of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*—every article and book he wrote from 1912 to 1976, along with all the posthumous publications—to be removed from the world's libraries and relocated where he says they belong: "in the historical archives of Nazism and Hitlerism."<sup>5</sup>

It is this key claim of Faye's—that from the get-go Heidegger was conspiring to introduce anti-Semitic Nazism into philosophy—that I challenge in the following pages. This essay will show that Faye's reading of Heidegger as a whole, and of *Being and Time* in particular, is so philosophically inept and demonstrably in error as to disqualify Faye from being taken seriously as a reader of Heidegger. My goal is not to discredit Faye so much as to show how he discredits himself and thereby exiles himself from the company of serious readers of philosophy.

What follows in no way attempts to whitewash Heidegger or deny the obvious: that, after reading *Mein Kampf* in 1930–1931, he became a convinced Nazi; that he was an idiosyncratic Nazi-fascist long thereafter; and that he remained an anti-Semite throughout his life. These are facts that many of us worked to put on the record more than twenty-five years ago.<sup>6</sup> Rather, what is at stake in this essay is how, and how not, to read Heidegger's philosophy (or à la Faye, whether

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4. GA 97: 174.22–24: "als er 1933 versuchte, einen geschichtlichen Augenblick unmittelbar als eine Gelegenheit einer möglichen Gesamtbesinnung des Abendlandes zu ergreifen." Literally: "as an occasion for a possible all-encompassing reflection."

5. *Heidegger*, 513.11–12 = 319.9–10.

6. See Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*, 15.16–19. Also Sheehan, "Heidegger and the Nazis" (1988).

to read it at all) now that we have the Black Notebooks as proof positive of his most despicable convictions.

These pages have a backstory that is relevant to my critique of Faye's book. That history unfolds in the first two sections that follow. Thereafter, the next eight sections address some of the more egregious fabrications that Faye pulls off in his *magnum opus*.

### 1. EMMANUEL FAYE VISITS STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Some years ago, not long after he had sent me an unsolicited copy of his *Heidegger, l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie*, Emmanuel Faye wrote to say he would be visiting Stanford University, and he suggested that we meet. We sat down over coffee on campus one afternoon and discussed his book in some detail. I had read the French edition and had learned some notable things from its pages on Heidegger's then unpublished seminars from 1933 to 1935. However, I found the book as a whole—and especially its conclusion that there was no philosophy at all in Heidegger—to be so flawed as to make the work philosophically unusable. After considerable reflection I came to the view that the book as a whole is quite bad: philosophically uninformed and rhetorically tendentious.

Moreover, as regards Faye's extraordinary suggestion that the entire *Gesamtausgabe* be relocated to the archives on Nazism, I wasn't sure if this were merely a Gallic flourish or if he really meant it. During our meeting at Stanford and then again in New York some years later (September 12, 2014), he affirmed that he really did mean it. I finally decided that Faye's suggestion was not so much outrageous as just plain silly. But the question hung in the air: Given its countless errors and its misrepresentations of Heidegger's texts, should Faye's *own* book be removed from the philosophy shelves? But then where would one put it? After all, we do place both good *and* bad philosophy books in the philosophy section.<sup>7</sup>

Of course one does not express such things exactly that way when welcoming a colleague to one's campus. Rather, at our meeting I asked Faye a number of questions about how he reads Heidegger philosophically. He was not very forthcoming, and before our conversation was over, I told him courteously but directly how ill-informed I found his book to be. Since I frequently teach *Being and Time*, I pointed out how particularly shoddy his treatment of that text was. I distinctly recall that, before we said goodbye to each other, he said that he agreed with me (at least *juxta modum*) about the pages on *Being and Time* I had mentioned and that he intended to redo them in the next edition, presumably the paperback version that was to appear two years later in *Le Livre de Poche*.

But in fact he changed nothing.

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7. Perhaps (following the Library of Congress's cataloguing system) Faye's own book could be relocated at HV6691 .F353, where some might argue it would better fit.

## 2. EMMANUEL FAYE IN NEW YORK

In the spring of 2014 Professor Richard Wolin began organizing what would become “Heidegger’s Black Notebooks: A Conference,” held at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York on September 12 of that year. On April 23, 2014, Wolin invited me to join six other scholars in speaking at the conference, and I accepted, announcing my title as “Heidegger: The Greatest Philosopher of the Twentieth Century?”<sup>8</sup> Given the damning revelations in the Black Notebooks (at that point, only GA 94–96 were published), the focal question of the conference was to be, in Wolin’s words,

How, then, should one go about resolving the conundrum of a great thinker who remained entirely convinced that the Nazi regime, with its unbridled racism and its exterminationist militarism, represented an adequate solution to the “decline of the West”?<sup>9</sup>

In the event, Wolin positioned Faye and me as the last two speakers of the conference. Faye’s lecture provided an irrefutable demonstration of Heidegger’s anti-Semitism as evidenced not only in the Black Notebooks and the seminars of the 1930s but also in his earliest writings, including letters going as far back as 1916 and 1920 that rail against “the Jewification” of German culture and the power of “Jews and profiteers.” Of course none of this was new, but what stood out was Faye’s clear insistence on one of the main theses of his book: that Heidegger’s anti-Semitism and Nazism infect not only his work after he joined the NSDAP in 1933 but even his lectures and courses from the 1920s, and therefore the whole of the *Gesamtausgabe*. As Faye put it in his lecture: “In reality, this radical opposition between the German race and the Jew will reveal itself to be *the structuring principle of Heidegger’s entire work*.”<sup>10</sup>

Following Faye’s lecture, my own presentation addressed not only the question of how and how not to read Heidegger’s philosophy but also the extraordinary claim that Faye had just made in his lecture. Is it indeed the case that “the struc-

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8. Later I emailed all the panelists to say I would be talking through a PowerPoint presentation at the conference rather than reading a paper. No one, including the convener of the conference, asked to see the PowerPoint ahead of time, although I would have been happy to comply with any such request.
  9. From the original announcement of the conference (April 2, 2014), which at that time was entitled “Heidegger’s Black Notebooks: National Socialism, World Jewry, and the History of Being.” The entire program can be viewed at <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Public-Programming/Calendar/Detail?id=26766>.
  10. From Faye’s lecture of September 12: “Anti-Semitism and Extermination: Heidegger, the Collected Works, and the *Black Notebooks*,” ms. p. 7. (My emphasis in the citation above.)

turing principle of Heidegger's entire work" is anti-Semitism in the form of the "radical opposition between the German race and the Jew"? Does that hold for *Being and Time*, the work that Faye argues is the foundation of all Heidegger's work, including the Black Notebooks?

I provided an overview of Heidegger's philosophical career and his involvement with Nazism and then tested Faye's thesis against what he had written in his book. I began with his reading of Heidegger's work in the 1920s and continued up through the post-war period. I showed in precise detail how and where Faye consistently mistranslates and misinterprets Heidegger's texts.

To say the least, Faye's response to my presentation was acrimonious. He accused me of refusing to show him the PowerPoint beforehand (false), of avoiding the subject of the conference (false), and of misrepresenting his arguments (false). He was joined in his acrimony by Richard Wolin, the convener of the conference, and Sidonie Kellerer, one of the panelists and a colleague of Faye's.

A week after the conference (September 20, 2014) Faye circulated an extraordinary 3500-word open letter in French to the conference panelists, protesting against my presentation and trying to counter some of its arguments. I responded to Faye a week later with a 5500-word open letter refuting in detail each point of his circular letter and further exposing the obvious and quite serious flaws in Faye's reading of Heidegger.<sup>11</sup>

What follows are the details of the mistranslations, misrepresentations, and falsehoods that populate both Faye's book and his open letter. Unfortunately it is a long and dreary chronicle. (The footnotes, tedious as they may seem, are crucial to the argument). After examining the evidence, the reader may decide whether or not Emmanuel Faye is engaged in an effort to trash Heidegger without managing to understand him.

### 3. HEIDEGGER IN THE 1920S: A PROTO-NAZI POLITICAL ACTIVIST

Faye claims that from the very beginning of his career Heidegger set his goal as the introduction of anti-Semitism and German fascism (and eventually Nazism) into German philosophy. In fact, says Faye, from the very early 1920s Heidegger's work was not philosophy at all but only an expression of proto-Nazi racism.

Heidegger's work is not a "philosophy" he formed before happening upon Nazism but a doctrine that as early as the 1920s was founded on conceptions of "historical existence" and "surrounding world" [*Umwelt*] that are closely

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11. The substance of my response has been incorporated into the present essay. Faye's open letter is presumably available from him (<http://www.univ-rouen.fr/version-francaise/outils/m-faye-emmanuel-154065.kjsp?RH=1374833262562>). The entire exchange is available from the Heidegger archives at Stanford.

allied to the racial doctrine of National Socialism as it spread through and colonized intellectual life, in forms partially transposed or disguised.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, says Faye, Heidegger's work in the 1920s articulated a "call to Nazism":

"Before 1933: Heidegger's Radicalism, the Destruction of the Philosophical Tradition, and the Call to Nazism." [The title of Faye's first chapter]

There is no doubt that in 1930–1931 Heidegger was strongly convinced by Part 2 of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and that he joined the Nazi party on May 3, 1933, just six weeks after the opening of Hitler's first concentration camp at Dachau. But Faye goes further and asserts that "Martin Heidegger's complicity in National Socialism emerges from a radicalization that began much earlier than 1933."<sup>13</sup> He argues that already as a *Privatdozent* at Freiburg University from 1919 to 1923 Heidegger was pursuing "radical, concerted, and clandestine" political activism and "a power strategy" that "must have played a decisive role in his political commitments of the 1930s."<sup>14</sup>

We note the insinuation of Faye's "*must have [sic]* played a decisive role." Well, did it or didn't it? Given his exceptionally strong claim, we would expect Faye to present some hard evidence to support it. But what he advances as "evidence" are only five brief phrases, all of them torn out of context and twisted to bolster Faye's foregone conclusion.

1. In his letter of January 22, 1921, to Karl Jaspers, Heidegger speaks of needing to keep in check some of his more enthusiastic (and less talented) students who merely babble back sentences from his lectures. But Faye takes those words out of context—and rewrites them—so that now Heidegger "holds them tightly under [his] control" (the brackets are Faye's) like a clandestine cult. What Heidegger actually said, however, was that he has such babbling students "under control" ("*ich habe sie in der Kontrolle*"),<sup>15</sup> but Faye gratuitously adds the French "*étroitement*" ("strictly" or "tightly") and distorts the German to make it say that Heidegger "*les tient étroitement sous [son] contrôle*."<sup>16</sup>

2. In another letter to Jaspers written on July 14, 1923, when he was moving from Freiburg to Marburg University, Heidegger jokes that he will take "an assault detachment [*Stoßtrupp*] of sixteen [students]" with him.<sup>17</sup> Missing the humor, Faye smells a rat because . . .

12. Heidegger, 15.24–30 = 4.29–34.

13. Ibid., 395.8–9 = 243.9–10.

14. Ibid., 24.4–7 = 11.16–19.

15. Heidegger/Jaspers, *Briefwechsel*, 17.9–10 = 25.16–17.

16. Heidegger, 23.3 = 10.35–36.

17. Heidegger-Jaspers, *Briefwechsel*, 41.12 = 46.21–22. Faye cites it at Heidegger, 23.12–13 = 11.7–8.



3. ...in that same letter Heidegger says he hopes for an “invisible *community*” to overthrow the sclerotic German university. From this Faye jumps to the conclusion that “these preoccupations must have played a decisive role in his political commitments of the 1930s.”<sup>18</sup>

4. Faye thinks his suspicions of clandestine political activity are confirmed by Toni Cassirer, who recalled “*die Schar der Heideggerschen Elite*” (“the group of Heideggerian elite”) who accompanied Heidegger to Davos for a debate with Ernst Cassirer in March–April 1929. In a typical act of legerdemain, Faye tacitly links the word “*Stoßtrupp*” (the letter to Jaspers, 1924) with “*Schar*” (Frau Cassirer’s recollection of 1929), and then provocatively (and falsely) translates *Schar* (“group”) as “un groupe de choc,” even italicizing the phrase. Thus in Faye’s nimble hands “*Schar*” (“group”) becomes “a shock troop,” with the resonance of “storm troopers.”<sup>19</sup>

These four pieces of “evidence” cannot be taken seriously. None of them, when read in context, has anything to do with politics in general or with Nazism in particular. But Faye’s fifth and last bit of proof is really over the top.

5. Wrapping up his claim that from the very beginning Heidegger was not a philosopher at all but a “radical, concerted, and clandestine” proto-Nazi activist, Faye concludes his argument with:

We can understand what made it possible for [Heidegger] to be able to tell Löwith that he [Heidegger] was “not a philosopher.”<sup>20</sup>

At last Faye has found an admission *by Heidegger himself* that already in the summer of 1921 (at the very time that Hitler was assuming leadership of the NSDAP), he was not doing philosophy at all at Freiburg University but instead was pursuing a far-right-wing “power strategy.”

Refuting this ridiculous claim would be a waste of time except that it illustrates Faye’s recurring method of wrenching things out of context and wrapping them in bizarre interpretations.

In his letter of August 19, 1921 to Karl Löwith, from which Faye takes the words “not a philosopher,” Heidegger is contrasting his own philosophical approach, grounded in existential facticity, with both “scientific” philosophy (for which he had very little respect) and the work of “creative and deep philosophers” like Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Scheler (for whom he had a great deal of respect). Heidegger tells Löwith that in contrast to those two groups “*ist zu sagen, daß ich kein Philosoph bin*” (“it must be said that I am not a philosopher”)—that is: I am neither a “scientific” philosopher nor am I at the level of the three aforementioned greats. He goes on to say that he considers himself “a Christian theo-*logian*”

18. *Heidegger*, 23.11–24 = 11.6–15.

19. *Ibid.*, 23.12–16 = 11.5–6. See Toni Cassirer, *Mein Leben mit Ernst Cassirer*, 183.20.

20. *Heidegger*, 24.8–9 = 11.19–21.



(Heidegger's own emphasis), that is, someone working *philosophically* on such Christian themes as Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians. But Faye intentionally omits all of that and instead rushes to conclude that Heidegger privately confessed to Löwith that he wasn't doing philosophy at all.<sup>21</sup>

But Faye trips up. In a footnote he admits that he extracted those words ("I am not a philosopher") *not* from the German text of Heidegger's letter but from a *footnote in a French book*.<sup>22</sup> Worse yet, a check of the French book shows that the footnote *does* give the context of Heidegger's letter—but Faye surprisingly overlooks or chooses to ignore that information. Only after his editorial sleight of hand had been publicly exposed at the New York conference did Faye—a full nine years after his book was published—finally get around to citing Heidegger's words in the original German (his letter of September 20, 2014, lines 102–03). But even then he still omitted the context—and understandably so, since the context reveals Faye's interpretation to be utterly groundless.

#### 4. *UMWELT* IN HEIDEGGER'S 1925 KASSEL LECTURES

Faye claims that a key term of Heidegger's early work—*Umwelt*, the lived world of everyday experience and activity—was

closely allied to the racial doctrine of National Socialism as it spread through and colonized intellectual life, in forms partially transposed or disguised.<sup>23</sup>

Faye is referring specifically to the four lectures on Wilhelm Dilthey and the struggle for a historical worldview that Heidegger delivered at Kassel (Hesse) in mid-April, 1925. These lectures were virtually a mini-course on what would become *Being and Time* two years later. In the sixth section of his presentation Heidegger discusses the lived world (*Umwelt*) that we inhabit. He argues that we find ourselves ineluctably "in a world," understood not as the sum-total of all the things around us but rather as the realm of meaningfulness within which things make sense to us in a variety of ways. *Being and Time* would eventually discuss this realm in terms of *In-der-Welt-sein*, our "engagement with the meaningful world."<sup>24</sup>

Faye starts off on the right foot: he does understand that Heidegger gives primacy to the lived world in which we find ourselves. But good Cartesian that he is,

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21. Heidegger, "Drei Briefe Martin Heideggers an Karl Löwith," II, 28.27–28; English translation in Kisiel and Sheehan, eds., *Becoming Heidegger*, 99.28–29. In early 1924 Heidegger was still wary of calling his phenomenology by the exalted name of "philosophy": GA 17: 276.31–277.5 = 212.32–38.

22. Faye lifts it from Jeffrey Barash (Faye spells it "Barrash"), *Heidegger et son siècle*, 80n3. See *Heidegger*, 24n15 = 337n10.

23. *Heidegger*, 15.24–30 = 4.29–34.

24. See Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 124.8–12.

Faye is appalled that Heidegger does not start with *consciousness*, and he presents that failure as the reason behind Heidegger's "continual attacks on understanding and reason."<sup>25</sup> Faye completely misses Heidegger's point, namely, that the lived world is *λόγος* in its most basic form. It is what allows us to discursively "take this as that" (Aristotle's *τὶ κατὰ τινὸς λέγειν*) and thus is the foundation of all rationality and understanding.<sup>26</sup>

But Faye goes further and declares *Umwelt* to be a proto-Nazi racist concept. His purpose in bringing up *Umwelt* in his book is not to investigate it seriously and critically in order to understand it as a philosophical concept. Instead, he chooses to recast it as a racist term in a crude effort to demolish Heidegger's philosophy. His procedure, which unfolds in six steps, is simply stunning.

1. First, he digs up a proto-Nazi who *also* uses the term *Umwelt*, although in a completely different sense from Heidegger's. Faye settles on Ludwig Clauß, the racist anthropologist who wrote the pathetic treatise *Die nordische Seele* [*The Nordic Soul*], which spoke of the communal destiny (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*) of the Nordic or German people. (Below we shall see how Faye smuggles Clauß's Nazi term *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* into *Being and Time*.)<sup>27</sup>
2. Then he connects that person in some way or other (no matter how absurd) with Heidegger. Faye offers two such links:
  - (i) Faye links Clauß with Heidegger insofar as Clauß is "an author coming from phenomenology" (!). (Clauß had taken courses with

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25. Respectively Heidegger, 28.5–7 = 14.11–12; 28.17–19 = 14.21–23; and 510.8–10 = 317.3–4.

26. Aristotle: *De interpretatione* 5, 17a21 and 10, 19b5; *Metaphysics* VIII 3, 1043b30–31. Literally: "to say something about something." Faye offers up a brief rejoinder to these points in his "Letter," lines 213–20, but even then he misses the point. First he backtracks and agrees that *λόγος* is an important issue in Heidegger; but then he claims that "[*λόγος*] se rapporte chez lui [= Heidegger] au langage, non à la raison." But not so: (1) *λόγος* is Heidegger's designation of the *whole* of Dasein (SZ 349.32 = 401.3) and thus the whole of the clearing. (2) *λόγος* "mostly expresses itself in language" ("sich zumeist in der Sprache ausspricht," *ibid.*, 349.8–9 = 400.20) and thus in discursive rationality; but it is neither the same as nor reducible to spoken language or propositional-discursive rationality. (3) Therefore, contra Faye, *λόγος* certainly *is* related to reason, and in an utterly fundamental way: it is the ground of reason. Therefore, (4) far from "destroying" reason (sic Faye, *passim*), Heidegger grounds reason.

27. Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß, *Die nordische Seele. Artung. Prägung. Ausdruck*. (Halle am Donau: Max Niemeyer, 1923). See page 379 and note 40 below.

Husserl.) Faye's argumentation on this point is simply amazing, and I lay out the details in note 28.<sup>28</sup>

(ii) And the clincher: Clauß's book "was published by Max Niemeyer [Verlag], the press that would publish *Being and Time* four years later" (!).<sup>29</sup>

3. Having made that "connection," Faye then insinuates a conspiratorial communion of ideas between Heidegger and Clauß on the question of *Umwelt*. "Ludwig Clauß began to show his true colors in 1923; Heidegger, by contrast reveals himself at first only privately, in a few letters."<sup>30</sup> "In 1925 Heidegger was certainly more moderate and less explicit [in his racist use of *Umwelt*] than Clauß."<sup>31</sup>

28. *Heidegger*, 28.10 = 14.15–16. There is no evidence that Heidegger and Clauß were close at all. The best Faye can come up with is the following bizarre concatenation (*ibid.*, 34.3–27 = 18.6–24):

(1) *Did Clauß and Heidegger ever meet?* Faye: "Clauß had received philosophical training, mainly from Husserl, and at the beginning he presented himself as the latter's disciple. It is therefore likely [*sic*] that Clauß and Heidegger became acquainted during the last years of the 1910s or at the beginning of the 1920s, when Heidegger was Husserl's assistant at Freiburg."

(2) *What was Heidegger focused on during those early years?* Faye: "a long thought-out strategy" of "political radicalism," as evidenced in Heidegger's alleged employment of "Schicksalsgemeinschaft" in *Being and Time*—even though that term appears nowhere in Heidegger's writings.

(3) *How do we know that?* Faye: Because of "the following comment by Heidegger, related by Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß to Erich Rothacker after the war, 'I'll say what I think [about Husserl's philosophy] when I'm a full professor.'"

(4) *After which war did Clauß relate this comment to Rothacker?* Faye: After the Second World War, in 1954, *thirty-five years* after Heidegger allegedly made the remark in private.

(5) *What was Heidegger referring to in that comment?* Faye: Not Husserl's philosophy at all! Rather: Nazism.

(6) *To whom did Heidegger make that comment?* Faye: "Heidegger's remark . . . was probably [*sic*] made in confidence directly to Clauß, or [*sic*] to their mutual friend Oskar Becker."

(7) *Faye's conclusion:* "Heidegger reveals the [Nazistic] foundation of his doctrine only in small increments and with extreme prudence." Q.E.D.

29. *Ibid.*, 28.14–16 = 14.19–20.

30. *Ibid.*, 22.10–13 = 10.12–14.

31. *Ibid.*, 28.16–17 = 14.21–22.

Insinuation: Heidegger and Clauß were in agreement on the Nazistic meaning of *Umwelt*, but Heidegger was more devious about it.

4. Faye then traces Heidegger's notion of *Umwelt* back to the biologist Jakob von Uexküll (something that Heidegger frequently acknowledged) . . .<sup>32</sup>
5. . . . and connects Uexküll with racism: "It is worth noting that Uexküll was to become the editor of the raciologist Houston S. Chamberlain."<sup>33</sup>
6. And finally Faye links Heidegger, Clauß, and Uexküll to the "racist" notion of *Umwelt* by way of a statement made by a *fourth* party, the Nazi Erich Rothacker: "Rothacker associates Heidegger with Clauß, emphasizing the influence of Uexküll." However, one notes that Rothacker invented that association only in 1934, nine years after Heidegger's Kassel lectures.<sup>34</sup>

What Rube Goldberg machine could possibly outdo Faye's loopy logic? To wit: Heidegger derived the notion of *Umwelt* from Uexküll. But Uexküll edited a posthumous book by Chamberlain nineteen years after Uexküll had published his own treatise on *Umwelt*. Ludwig Clauß *also* used the word *Umwelt*, albeit in a radically different sense from Heidegger's. Nonetheless, Niemeyer published both Clauß (1923) *and* Heidegger (1927). And finally: the Nazi philosopher Erich Rothacker once associated Heidegger with Clauß and Uexküll nine years after Heidegger's lectures on *Umwelt*. Faye's resounding conclusion: In the 1920s Heidegger used the racist concept of *Umwelt* to introduce Nazism into philosophy.

The utter speciousness of this procedure was spelled out for Faye on September 12, 2014, at the New York conference; but in his subsequent open letter he simply brushed the criticism aside by calling *Umwelt* a "very *technical* issue."<sup>35</sup> Yes, *Umwelt* certainly *is* a very technical philosophical issue in Heidegger: he comments on it more than 300 times throughout his work. It has been the subject of countless professional books and articles, of which Faye is demonstrably ignorant. Given the devastating conclusions that he draws from this concept, would Faye agree that

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32. Uexküll was best known for his *Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere* (1909) as well as for his later work, *Theoretische Biologie* (1921). Heidegger refers to him at GA 29/30: 284.16–17 = 192.35–37 (et passim); GA 21: 215.33–216.2 = 181.38–182.2; etc. But Heidegger's notion of *Umwelt* differs markedly from Uexküll's work on animals: see GA 29/30: 263.24–25 = 177.41–42 and GA 15: 237.1–2 = 146.21–22: *weltarm* vs. *weltbildend*.

33. *Heidegger*, 28.27–28 = 14.30–31. Uexküll edited Chamberlain's posthumous *Natur und Leben* in 1928. For Heidegger's dismissal of Chamberlain's "metaphysics," see GA 65: 174.3–9 = 137.1–6 and GA 94: 445–46. I am grateful to Richard Polt and to Ian Moore for these references.

34. *Heidegger*, 29.2–3 with note 24 (which gives the year 1934) = 14.35–36 with note 19 at p. 337 (which omits the year).

35. "Letter," line 192: "ce point assez *technique*."

*Umwelt* deserves just a bit more philosophical attention than the embarrassing fly-by treatment he accords it in a mere 2.5 pages?<sup>36</sup>

### 5. FAYE ON *BEING AND TIME* §74

The brunt of Faye's argument that *Being and Time* is anti-Semitic and Nazistic is focused on two sections of that work: §74 on historicity and §77 on *Boden* and *Bodenlosigkeit*. (The English translation of these terms will emerge below.) Faye maintains that these two sections are the keystone of *Being and Time*—"everything converges on the sections concerned with historicity"—and in those pages Faye finds "the ideas that are at the foundation of National Socialist doctrine."<sup>37</sup>

This is a momentous claim that presumably would require some serious philosophical work to substantiate. After all, *Being and Time* is a thickly argued book comprised of 497 pages and 143,000 words in the German. But despite the magnitude of his claim, Faye devotes only 1550 words to his analysis of Heidegger's *magnum opus*—while in the process passing a damning judgment on the entire book.<sup>38</sup>

On this page of §74 [namely, SZ 384 = 436], which constitutes the culmination of the developments of historicity of existence (and therefore of existence, and therefore of the entire work, since everything converges on the sections concerned with historicity), the ideas that are at the foundation of National Socialist doctrine are already present—the *Gemeinschaft* ["community"] understood as *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* ["a community of destiny"] and *Volksgemeinschaft* ["a community of the Volk"].<sup>39</sup>

Before taking up Faye's treatment of §74, we should note that the two Nazi terms he cites above—*Schicksalsgemeinschaft* and *Volksgemeinschaft*—appear *nowhere* in §74 or anywhere else in *Being and Time*. Where, then, did Faye dig up those terms, and how did he give himself permission to fallaciously read them back into *Being and Time*? Only when, with considerable difficulty, we hunt down an obscure footnote later in the book, do we discover that Faye—without informing the reader—pilfered that term from Ludwig Clauß's Aryan creed *Die nordische Seele* (p. 146) and surreptitiously slipped it into *Being and Time*.<sup>40</sup>

36. Heidegger, 28.5–29.34 = 14.11–36, and 35.13–28 = 19.3–23.

37. Heidegger, 31.22–23 = 16.26–27.

38. *Ibid.*, 29–33 = 15–18. The count of 1550 words includes Faye's thirteen footnotes to these pages.

39. *Ibid.*, 31.19–24 = 16.23–27.

40. *Ibid.*, 36n49 = 338n40. *Being and Time* never speaks of a *Volksgemeinschaft*, only of *das Geschehen des Volkes*, the historical life of a people, any people. On *Geschehen*

This is hardly full and fair disclosure, much less responsible scholarship, but it is typical of Faye's "hermeneutics."

In addition, Faye claims that Heidegger, particularly in §74, attempts to destroy the I or ego.

The real project of *Being and Time* is the will to destroy the idea of the I [*le moi*] in order to make room for the "the most radical individuation" (*radikalsten Individuation*), which is emphatically realized not in the individual but in the organic indivisibility of the *Gemeinschaft* of the people.<sup>41</sup>

Here we find yet another phrase that Faye wrenches out of context and misinterprets. First of all, the German words in the preceding citation—"die Möglichkeit und Notwendigkeit der radikalsten *Individuation*"—come not from §74 but from §7 of *Being and Time*, and there they have the *exact opposite sense* from what Faye gives them.<sup>42</sup> They refer to Dasein's "radical individuation" in its very personal, very individual, very *jemeinig* confrontation with its own mortality—something that Heidegger insists cannot be realized (as Faye wrongly claims) in "the organic indivisibility of the *Gemeinschaft* of the people."

Faye clearly has not grasped this most basic tenet of *Being and Time*. It would be impossible for someone who had actually read and understood the book to claim that Heidegger wants to "destroy" the idea of the individual. And far from abolishing the I, he wants to show that that it is grounded in something more fundamental, the thrown-openness (*geworfener Entwurf*) of ex-sistence, which makes the I both possible and necessary. This, too, was pointed out to Faye at the New York conference. However, in his open letter of September 20 he tried to show how Heidegger swallows up the individual in the community—but he does so by forcing together two texts that refer to two very different topics within §74.<sup>43</sup>

**Text no. 1: On the individual.** Heidegger describes how an *individual* can retrieve from the past-that-is-still-present a possibility that he or she may pursue authentically in the present and future.<sup>44</sup> This is a matter of choosing one's individual destiny, one's *Schicksal*. Such an action by an individual is what Heidegger, citing Goethe, calls "choosing one's hero" and struggling to follow that ideal.<sup>45</sup>

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as historical living see Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 178.10–179.2.

41. Heidegger, 32.23–27 = 17.11–14.

42. SZ 38.13–14 = 62.26–27.

43. "Letter," lines 270–77. The two texts that Faye forces together are separated by thirty-six lines of German text.

44. SZ 385.31 = 437.25–26. Rockmore also misses this point in his *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*, 44. See Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 179–82.

45. Heidegger is quoting Goethe when he writes "daß das Dasein sich seinen Helden wählt" (SZ 385.28–29 = 437.23). Far from having to do with Heidegger's politics, as some have claimed (see note 47 below), this phrase was a schoolboy's motto in

**Text no. 2: On the community.** For Heidegger “historical living” (*Geschehen*) entails, as we just noted, an individual’s retrieving from the past-that-is-still-present a possibility to pursue in the present and future. But we are also essentially social beings who live with one another in community (= *Miteinandersein*). Thus §74 speaks of how we can also forge a *common* destiny, a *Ge-schick*. “This we call the historical living of a community, of a people,” whether they be Navajos, Basques, Amish, or whoever. Ideally we forge such a common destiny through social interaction and cooperation rather than by merely adding together our personal destinies or forfeiting our individuality.<sup>46</sup>

But Faye rides roughshod over this quite obvious and crucial distinction between the individual and society. He says that SZ §74 swallows up individuals in a fascistoid organic community, a claim that Faye can make only because he has not read this section carefully, much less understood it. Even a superficial reading of the text would have revealed (1) that SZ 384.1–14 = 435.22–36 within §74, is a long exhortation to choosing one’s *own individual* destiny; and (2) that the emphatic climax of *Being and Time* (SZ 385.11–18 = 437.6–12, with bold print no less) is entirely about achieving *individual* authenticity. All of this notwithstanding, Faye flagrantly denies that §74 has anything to do with an individual forging his or her destiny. Ignoring the text entirely, he falsely claims that, for Heidegger, struggling to follow one’s own personal ideals has nothing to do with individual authenticity but instead is realized only in the community.<sup>47</sup>

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late nineteenth-century Germany, taken from the end of Act II, scene 1, of Goethe’s *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, where Pylades, the cousin of Orestes (and co-murderer of Clytemnestra), encourages Orestes in prison: “Ein jeglicher muß seinen Helden wählen, / Dem er die Wege zum Olymp hinauf / Sich nacharbeiten.” (In Anna Swanwick’s classic translation: “Each must select the hero after whom / To climb the steep and difficult ascent / Of high Olympus.”) On the basis of his notion of historicity in §74 Heidegger could have chosen Rosa Luxemburg or Harry Bridges (not Adolf Hitler) as his “hero.” That is: it was Heidegger’s *personal and social biography*—not *Being and Time*—that led him to make the choice he did.

46. SZ 384.29–31 = 436.17–18.

47. One thing Faye does *not* do is commit the embarrassing blunder of Richard Wolin, who, as an intellectual historian, presumably should know that the phrase “sich seinen Helden wählen” (SZ 385.28–29 = 437.23) is a citation from Goethe and not a pre-announcement of Heidegger’s later option for Hitler. (See note 45 above.) Wolin finds Heidegger’s 1933–1934 move to the collective “prefigured in the arguments of *Being and Time* itself, specifically in the discussions of ‘destiny,’ ‘repetition,’ and ‘choosing one’s hero’ as they figure in Heidegger’s elaboration of the category of ‘historicity” (*The Politics of Being*, 33.18–21). Wolin goes on: “The ‘hero-worship’ proposed by Heidegger—the search for an archetypal exemplar of human greatness—is sug-



In these pages [§74] it is no longer really a question of an I or even of an individual self. As regards “being in common” (*Miteinandersein*) and “the happening of the community, of the people” (*das Geschehen der Gemeinschaft, des Volkes*), which is the focus of section 74 [*sic*], Heidegger specifies that this *Geschick* [common destiny] “is no longer based on individual destinies [*Schicksalen*] that get gathered together” (*das Geschick setzt sich nicht aus einzelnen Schicksalen zusammen*)—p. 396. It is difficult to be more explicit.<sup>48</sup>

Faye fabricates this patently false claim by way of a typical feat of either ignorance or legerdemain.

1. As noted above, he blurs together two texts in §74 that treat of two very different topics: an individual forging her future (SZ 385.31 = 437.25–26) and a social group shaping *its* future (SZ 384.29–32 = 436.14–18).<sup>49</sup>
2. Then he declares—falsely on the face of it—that the focus of §74 is only the community and not the individual at all.
3. His open letter tries to back up this false claim by quoting (see his citation above) only the *first half* of Heidegger’s German sentence while omitting the second half, which clarifies the whole sentence. Contra Faye, the *complete* sentence says that a community’s destiny (*Geschick*) is not worked out by cobbling together individual destinies (*Schicksalen*), any more than one’s intrinsic sociality (*Miteinandersein*) results from bundling together stand-alone subjects.<sup>50</sup>
4. Faye also omits from this German sentence the footnote in which Heidegger refers the reader back to SZ §26 (specifically SZ 118.25–41 =

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gestive of Nietzsche’s Übermensch” (ibid., 63.32–34). During the last session at the New York conference, I publicly pointed out to Wolin, who was chairing the session, that “sich seinen Helden wählen” was a commonly used quotation from Goethe, but he dismissed it out of hand (and without any discussion) as irrelevant.

48. “Letter,” lines 272–77: “il n’est plus vraiment question dans ces pages d’un *moi*, ni même d’un soi individuel: dans «l’être en commun» (*Miteinandersein*), dans «l’advenir de la communauté, du peuple» (*das Geschehen der Gemeinschaft, des Volkes*) dont il est question dans ce paragraphe 74, Heidegger précise que ce *Geschick* ‘ne repose plus sur des destins isolés réunis’ (*das Geschick setzt sich nicht aus einzelnen Schicksalen zusammen*)—p. 396. Il est difficile d’être plus explicite.”
49. Faye wrongly claims that SZ 385 is “[SZ] 397” and that SZ 384 is “[SZ] 396.” And yet ironically SZ 396.33–35 speaks of the *individual* choosing his or her *individual* fate.
50. Faye cites only “Das Geschick setzt sich nicht aus einzelnen Schicksalen zusammen” but omits what immediately follows: “sowenig als das Miteinandersein als ein Zusammenvorkommen mehrerer Subjekte begriffen werden kann” (SZ 384.33–34 = 436.19–20).

154.25–155.5), which further clarifies Heidegger’s distinction between the individual and the community.

5. And besides getting the page wrong (“p. 396”) Faye also mistranslates the first half of the German sentence that he cites. The German “*sich zusammensetzen aus*” is not, as Faye claims, the French “*reposer sur*” but rather “*se composer de*,” as in Emmanuel Martineau’s translation of SZ, *Être et temps*, 265.25.
6. Faye then concludes his demonstrably false argument with the glib “It is difficult to be more explicit.”

Such conjuring is typical of Faye’s *modus operandi* throughout his book. He already knows the outcome he wants—“*Being and Time* is a Nazi text”—and he tortures the evidence to fit that prior conclusion.

#### 6. FAYE ON *BEING AND TIME* §77: *BODEN* AND *BODENLOSIGKEIT*

Much of Faye’s attack on *Being and Time* rests on his grotesque misreading of “grounds” and “lack of grounds” (*Boden* and *Bodenlosigkeit*), both in Heidegger’s Kassel lectures and in *Being and Time* §77. If Faye gets it wrong in those two texts—and he does—much of his book collapses and, along with it, his recent edited collection *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race* (2014).<sup>51</sup>

Faye’s main charge here is that *Being and Time* §77 attacks the *Bodenlosigkeit* of the Jews, their alleged lack of “rootedness” (*enracinement*) in German “blood and soil.”<sup>52</sup> But his claim is based on demonstrably false readings.

1. Faye, who is not a native speaker of German, mistranslates *Bodenlosigkeit* as “absence of soil” (*absence de sol*).<sup>53</sup> But far from meaning that, *Bodenlosigkeit* refers to the “groundlessness” of an argument, its lack of any reasonable foundation. Heidegger uses the word *Bodenlosigkeit* nine times in *Being and Time*, and in each instance it refers to the unfoundedness of a philosophical position.

Professor Karsten Harries, who is a native speaker of German and who was a panelist at the New York conference, pointed out the meaning of *Bodenlosigkeit* to Faye on the evening of September 11, 2014, during a private conversation at which I was present. Harries demolished Faye’s claim about “absence of soil” on elementary philological grounds. Nonetheless, in his public lecture the following afternoon Faye continued to use his mistranslation and to press the false charges

51. See *Heidegger*, 25.7–26.3 = 12.6–29.

52. *Ibid.*, 65.14–15 = 37.11–12 with 253.18–19 = 154.11–12.

53. *Ibid.*, 25.23 = 12.19 et passim.

based on it.<sup>54</sup> He does the same thing in his 2014 edited collection on “soil, community, and race.”<sup>55</sup>

2. Moreover, the one time Heidegger uses the word *Bodenlosigkeit* in §77 he is not speaking in his own right but *is quoting Count Paul Yorck von Wartenburg*. How could Faye have missed that?<sup>56</sup>

3. More importantly, in that citation Yorck is not making an anti-Semitic remark and is not talking about Jews at all. Rather, Yorck, using the German word in its proper sense, is attacking the “groundlessness of thinking” (*die Bodenlosigkeit des Denkens*) of von-Ranke-like historians, who treat history as if it were a natural science. Yorck adds: “We must maintain an absolute distance from all such rubbish” (“*Von all dem Krimskrams . . . muß man sich ganz fernhalten*”).<sup>57</sup> Where, then, is Heidegger’s anti-Semitism in §77?

4. Faye claims that Heidegger owes “his concept of historicity and also his requirement for a soil (*Boden*) for philosophy” to Yorck.<sup>58</sup> By my own count Heidegger uses the word *Boden* fifty-four times in *SZ*, and not one of them has anything to do either with Yorck or with a “soil for philosophy.” Only once does *Boden* have a locative sense in *SZ*, in the phrase *am Boden*, “on the floor.”<sup>59</sup>

5. Yorck unquestionably was an anti-Semite, as is obvious from the following letter to Dilthey, dated February 18, 1884.

I thank you for all the particular cases in which you keep academic chairs away from the thin Jewish run-of-the-mill [*die dünne jüdische Routine*] who lack

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54. Faye, “Anti-Semitism and Extermination: Heidegger, the Collected Works, and the *Black Notebooks*,” lines 188, 196–97, 202, and note 11 keyed to line 241.

55. In his lecture “Anti-Semitism and Extermination,” note 11, Faye refers us to his edited volume *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race*, and to his graduate student Jaehoon Lee’s essay therein, “Heidegger en 1924: l’influence de Yorck von Wartenburg sur son interprétation de Descartes.” But in that essay Mr. Lee simply repeats the same mis-translation of *Boden* as “sol” (38.29, 41.26, etc.). Moreover, Lee astonishingly claims (*ibid.*, 39.4–5 and .15, with note 2) that at GA 18: 4.13–14 = 4.9 Heidegger declared his intention to trace the philosophical terms in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* Book V back to “Greek soil”!

56. *SZ* 400.37–401.4 = 452.24–31.

57. *SZ* 400.30–32 = 452.17–18.

58. *Heidegger*, 25.19–21 = 12.16–18. Faye gets the phrase “a *Boden* for philosophy” from GA 17: 277.3 = 212.37, but again he mistranslates. The correct translation in English would be a “basis” (not a “soil”) for philosophy.

59. *SZ* 103.19–20 = 136.36. The only possible exception I have found is at *SZ* 388.2 = 439.38, where Heidegger *metaphorically* calls the natural world “the ground and theater” of everyday activity.

consciousness of the responsibility of thought, just as the whole race [of Jews] lacks a feeling for psychic and physical groundedness [*Boden*].<sup>60</sup>

Faye comments:

It is difficult not to be reminded of these words of Count Yorck when Heidegger, in §77 of *Being and Time*, in turn attacks what he inelegantly calls ‘absence of soil’ (*Bodenlosigkeit*) and alludes positively on that occasion to the letters of Count Yorck.<sup>61</sup>

First of all, neither Heidegger nor Yorck uses *Bodenlosigkeit* to mean “absence of soil.” Faye alone owns this mistranslation.<sup>62</sup> And second, Heidegger does not cite that letter of Yorck’s, or any other anti-Semitic remark of his, either in §77 or in the whole of the *Gesamtausgabe*. It is Faye’s imagination alone that links Yorck’s use of *Boden* (1884) with the *absence* of that word in §77 (1927). Faye’s befuddled logic unfolds as follows: If Yorck was an anti-Semite and at least once used the word *Boden* in an anti-Semitic sense, then philology and dictionaries be damned: the word *Bodenlosigkeit* in §77 *has* to mean “absence of soil” rather than the “groundlessness” of an argument. And when Heidegger quotes Yorck’s use of that word (“*die Bodenlosigkeit des Denkens*”) with regard to certain historians, Heidegger *must* be attacking the Jews for not being grounded in German soil.<sup>63</sup>

60. *Briefwechsel zwischen Wilhelm Dilthey und dem Grafen Yorck*, 254.6–9. Faye cites it at Heidegger, 25.26–30 = 12.21–25. The word “Boden” in Yorck’s phrase “das Gefühl psychischen und physischen Bodens” is, in this context, better translated as “groundedness” rather than the French “sol” or the English “soil.”

61. Heidegger, 25.31–26.3 = 12.26–29.

62. Heidegger’s use of “Bodenlosigkeit” in SZ comes out in various translations as follows: “groundlessness” (English, both Macquarrie-Robinson and Stambaugh); “infondatezza” (Italian by Chiodi); “carencia de fundamento” (Spanish by Jorge Eduardo Rivera); “falta de base” (Spanish by José Gaos); “falta de solidez” (Portuguese by Maria Sá Cavalcante Schuback); adjective *ανεδαφικότητα*, “unrealistic” in the superlative (Greek by Γιάννη Τζαβάρρα); “lipsă de temelie” (“lacking a basis”: Romanian translation *Fiinta si timp* by Gabriel Liiceanu: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/14271237/m-heidegger-fiinta-si-timp>). None of these translations correspond to Faye’s rendering of *Bodenlosigkeit* as “absence de sol.” Only Martineau mistranslates it that way, but Faye claims that, because it is out of print, he did not use Martineau’s translation: “Nos citations [de SZ] sont donc traduites de l’allemand” by Faye himself: Heidegger, 30n29 = 337n21.

63. Later, in 1938–1939 (GA 95: 96.24–97.6), Heidegger did connect *Bodenlosigkeit* with the Jews, but in the sense of the lack of ontological groundedness (not “absence of soil”!), and there Heidegger’s anti-Semitism is clear.

(1) He declares that the *general* condition of the present age is groundlessness (“das Bodenlose” as “dem nur Seienden Verfallene und dem Seyn Entfremdete”: an

With Faye's flagrant misreading of §77 on full display, one might ask: Are these errors due simply to what William of Ockham called "*ignorantia crassa et supina*"—or are they part of a calculated strategy to trash *Being and Time* regardless of what the book actually says? When all that one has is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. However, once we confront Faye's charges with the actual German texts, this *marteau*-like strategy blows up in his face.<sup>64</sup>

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So far I have discussed Faye's most flagrant errors only in the first fifty pages of his *Heidegger*, but the same *modus operandi* persists throughout the book as well as in his "Letter." The examples are far too numerous to recount in detail, so I limit myself to only four of the most egregious.

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age that has fallen upon mere things and is alienated from being), and he claims that the so-called "struggles" of the present day are only caricatures of the *real* struggle (namely, for being).

(2) Then he defines "the greater groundlessness" as one's bondedness to nothing while making everything serviceable to oneself—and this he associates directly with Jewry: "die größere Bodenlosigkeit, die an nichts gebunden, alles sich dienstbar macht (das Judentum)."

(3) Finally he concludes that the dispensation of being ("Geschichte") will win out because das Bodenlose brings about its own exclusion ("sich selbst ausschließt") owing to the fact that it reckons only with things. I am grateful to Luca Di Blasi for this reference.

64. "Ignorantia crassa et supina": Ockham, *Dialogus*, I, 7, capitula 21, 51, 62, 65 (etc.); <https://www.britac.ac.uk/pubs/dialogus/t1d4b3.html>. In support of the supine-ignorance hypothesis one might mention two howlers that Faye pronounced during the final discussion at the New York conference, September 12, 2014: (1) that Heidegger's anti-Semitism is evidenced at SZ 214.31–36 = 257.32–35, where Heidegger traces the *inadequate* notion of truth as *adaequatio* back to Isaac Israel (ca. 832–932)—who (as Faye pointed out) *was a Jew!*—and further, (2) that Heidegger's anti-Semitism is also shown by the fact that *Being and Time* does not mention Einstein at all. But of course Heidegger *does* mention Einstein throughout his works—for example at GA 1: 423.2; GA 21: 17.4 and 290.9; GA 24: 328.29; GA 64: 109.5 and note 2; and so on.

Could these two statements of Faye's be material for a Woody Allen film? See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DaPBhxXhprg>.

## 7. FAYE ON HEIDEGGER'S "LETTER ON HUMANISM"

In his endnote to *Identität und Differenz* (1957; ET: *Identity and Difference*), Heidegger looked back to his earlier text, the "Letter on Humanism," published ten years earlier, and remarked that the earlier text had merely *hinted* at his key notion, *Ereignis*. Only with *Identity and Difference* did that central term of his later thought come to clear expression. In his 1957 endnote Heidegger writes:

Only in retrospect from [*Identity and Difference*] does the 1947 "Letter on Humanism"—which speaks [of *Ereignis*] throughout, but only by way of allusion—become a possible stimulus to a discussion of the thing itself.<sup>65</sup>

In a seminar held in 1962 Heidegger reiterated the same point: the "Letter on Humanism" does indeed speak of *Ereignis*, but "with a conscious ambiguity." He added: only in *Identity and Difference* is it discussed "most clearly."<sup>66</sup>

But Faye flagrantly misreads Heidegger's 1957 note and then uses his misreading to accuse Heidegger of concealing his Nazi intentions in the "Letter on Humanism." And then surprisingly, ten years after the "Letter on Humanism" Heidegger is supposed to have *admitted* that his 1947 text was really concealed Nazism! Faye's procedure:

1. Once again Faye fails to consult the original German text and relies instead on a French translation of the passage—which turns out to be a blatant *mistranslation*. Heidegger's endnote to *Identity and Difference* says that the "Letter on Humanism" speaks of *Ereignis* throughout, but "only by way of allusion" (*überall nur andeutend*). In other words, *Ereignis* was operative in the text but not fully thematized. However, the French "translation" that Faye uses has Heidegger saying that the "Letter on Humanism" "always speaks covertly" or "in veiled terms" (*ne parle jamais qu'à mots couverts*).<sup>67</sup> Faye accepts the French mistranslation of

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65. GA 11: 81.21–25 = 75.17–76.3; in the German Sonderdruck, 70.6–10: "Erst im Zurückdenken aus der vorliegenden Schrift und den hier angeführten Veröffentlichungen wird der *Brief über den Humanismus* (1947) [GA Bd. 9, S. 313–64], der überall nur andeutend spricht, ein möglicher Anstoß zu einer Auseinandersetzung der Sache des Denkens."

66. GA 14: 44.21 and 44.32 = 36.4 and 36.14. Respectively, "in einer bewußten Zweideutigkeit" and "Am deutlichsten."

67. The German is at GA 11: 81.23–24 = 75.17–76.3; the French is in Martin Heidegger, *Questions I*, 310.10. The French translator is not listed, but Faye's letter (line 116) claims it was Jean Beaufret, even though Beaufret's name appears nowhere in *Questions I*.

*andeutend* (“by way of allusion”) as *à mots couverts* (“in veiled terms”) at face value and announces that the “Letter on Humanism” is a disguised Nazi text.<sup>68</sup>

2. Note: Faye is claiming that Heidegger himself *admitted* in 1957 that the 1947 “Letter on Humanism” actually concealed his Nazism under the cloak of a supposedly “philosophical” text.—But really, could Heidegger have been so stupid as to “out” himself in 1957 by proclaiming that his widely read post-war text was really only crypto-Nazism?

Faye advertises himself as a “philosopher” who wants to attain “a sufficiently complete and objective overview of Heidegger’s work on the basis of the texts and documents now available.”<sup>69</sup> Bracket for a moment his claim to be a philosopher. If Faye were simply a diligent scholar, all he’d have to do to see the absurdity of his claim is to check the French “translation” against the readily available German text.

## 8. FAYE MISREADS AND REWRITES TWO TEXTS BY HEIDEGGER

As Faye lectures around the world on the strength of his book, he claims to have discovered even more texts in which Heidegger “introduces Nazism into philosophy.” But when we check the German texts that he cites, we find that Faye has actually *rewritten Heidegger’s sentences* to make them fit his a priori thesis. For example, in his open letter of September 20, 2014, Faye writes:

Thomas Sheehan takes me to task for the way I made a passing reference in my book to a phrase of Heidegger’s that Jean Beaufret reported in *Questions I*: “The Letter on Humanism speaks only covertly.” But he pays no attention to the well-documented analysis [*sic*] that I have since published about Heidegger’s use of “being” (*Sein*) as a “*mot couvert*,” a code word (*Deckname*) in a published letter to Kurt Bauch. This development figures prominently in the article I sent him from *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (2012).<sup>70</sup>

68. Faye makes this charge at *Heidegger*, at 399.5–6 = 246.9, and then repeats it in *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race*. But in that latter text, at 71.9–10 and 363.15–16, the phrase “*mot couvert*” (“a covert word”) gets transmogrified into the French translation of “*Deckname*” in Heidegger’s 1943 letter to Kurt Bauch. See below, notes 71 and 72.

69. *Heidegger*, 398.3–5 = 245.16–18. Re “philosopher”: Faye claims: “I myself am not a historian but a philosopher, and the textual critique I applied . . . could only be carried out by a philosopher”: “From *Polemos* to the Extermination of the Enemy,” 258a.5–12.

70. “Letter,” lines 118–21. Faye makes three minor mistakes in these three sentences: (1) Jean Beaufret did not “report” Heidegger’s phrase “*der überall nur andeutend spricht*” but instead—at least according to Faye—*translated* it into French. (2) However, contra what Faye claims, Beaufret did *not* translate the note. (3) Finally Faye misquotes the mistranslation: not “*ne parle qu’à mots couverts*” but “*ne parle jamais qu’à mots couverts*.” Minor mistakes to be sure, but typical of Faye’s sloppy scholarship.



There are two issues here: (1) Heidegger's letter to Kurt Bauch and (2) the word "being" as a code word for the Nazi Fatherland.

1. Kurt Bauch (1897–1975), a Nazi, was a professor of art history at Freiburg, and he and Heidegger exchanged letters on July 13 and August 1, 1943.<sup>71</sup> Their topic was the phrase *das Sein des Seienden* (the being of beings) and specifically the relation of τὸ ὄν (= *das Seiende*, beings) and εἶναι (= *das Sein*, the being of beings). Heidegger wrote to Bauch that the phrase *das Sein des Seienden* is a formula, one that Heidegger thinks hides something (*Formel, für mich oft ein Deckname*). He went on to explain what he meant:

Behind the formula, which contains a "differentiation," there is hidden something essential. The question and the task remains that of preparing—in thought and through the thinking word—a steadfast relation to it [i.e., to the essential issue hidden by the formula "the being of beings"].<sup>72</sup>

Here Heidegger is referring to three things: (1) *The formula contains a differentiation*. The phrase "*das Sein des Seienden*" is a formula that gives expression to the ontological difference between being and beings, a difference that metaphysics has always known about. (2) *The formula hides something essential*. But Heidegger's own topic—the "something essential" that he refers to—is the "clearing" (*die Lichtung*), which is what *makes possible* the being of beings. The clearing lies "behind" (is concealed by) the metaphysical-ontological difference. (3) *There are two kinds of difference*. When Heidegger uses the formula "the being of beings," he is referring to two distinct kinds of differentiation: (a) the metaphysical-ontological difference between beings and their being, and (b) *behind* that and *concealed* by that, the trans-metaphysical difference between beings-and-their-being on the one hand and the clearing on the other.<sup>73</sup>

There is not the least reference here to Nazism. But ignorant of these philosophical issues, Faye smells a conspiracy. He claims that "being itself" (note: Faye slips in this noun phrase in place of "the being of beings," which Heidegger is discussing) *must* be a secret code word "intended to suggest something entirely different, which must remain intentionally hidden, to be revealed exclusively at the chosen moment."<sup>74</sup> What could that hidden something be?

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71. Martin Heidegger/Kurt Bauch, *Briefwechsel* II/1: 91–93.

72. *Ibid.*, II/1: 92.24 and .28–31: "Hinter der Formel, die ja eine 'Unterscheidung' enthält, verbirgt sich etwas Wesentliches. Die Frage und die Aufgabe bleibt, den inständlichen Bezug dazu im Denken und durch das Denkende Wort vorzubereiten."

73. See Heidegger's statement cited in Max Müller, *Existenzphilosophie im geistigen Leben der Gegenwart*, 73–74, discussed in Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 198–201 and 222.

74. "...tout autre chose, qui doit demeurer volontairement occulté pour être uniquement dévoilé au moment choisi." Faye, "Être, histoire, technique et extermination dans

2. By trawling through Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* Faye thinks he has uncovered the key to deciphering Heidegger's fascist cryptography. Code breaker Faye has found a text in which *Heidegger himself admits* that "being itself" is a cipher standing for nothing less than the Nazi notion of the Fatherland.

As is often his wont, Faye provides no page reference for the text he is referring to, much less the context of the remark. In order to check out Faye's claim, the diligent reader has to go searching for the text, which is tucked away at GA 39: 121.22 = 109.28–29, where Heidegger is commenting on Hölderlin's use of the term "Vaterland" in the essay "*Das Werden im Vergehen*" ("Becoming in Dissolution," ca. 1800). And once we do locate the passage, we discover that Faye has *rearranged the citation in both the original German and his own French translation*. He radically alters the meaning of the passage by quietly shifting a set of scare quotes from where Heidegger placed them in the original German text. This switcheroo may seem like a trivial matter, but it hardly is, once Faye sets about interpreting the sentence.

**Heidegger's text** (italicized in the original German):

Das "Vaterland" [in Hölderlin's text] ist das Seyn selbst.

The "Fatherland" [in Hölderlin's text] is being itself.

(To paraphrase Heidegger:)

What Hölderlin expresses poetically as "the Fatherland" can be stated philosophically as "*das Seyn selbst*."

**Faye rewrites the text:**

La Patrie est "l'Être" même.<sup>75</sup>

The Fatherland is "being" itself.

(To paraphrase Faye:)

The Fatherland of Nazi ideology is what Heidegger *really* means by his philosophical code word "being."

Anyone who has studied Heidegger's Hölderlin interpretations knows two things: first, that *das Seyn selbst* is a name for the clearing; and second, that Heidegger finds that philosophical term articulated *poetically* by Hölderlin in a variety of ways: "*das Vaterland*," "*das Heilige*," "*die Natur*," "*Chaos*," "*die Allerschaffende*," "*das Ge-schick*" — the list goes on. But by shifting the quotation marks from *Vaterland* to *Seyn*, Faye radically changes the meaning of the passage: what Heidegger *really* meant by "being itself" was the Nazi notion of the Fatherland.

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l'oeuvre de Heidegger," 7.5–6; in English: "Being, History, Technology, and Extermination in the Work of Heidegger," 115.34–36; in Portuguese, at 620.21–23. See also his edited collection, where his disciples continue the *Deckname* scam at 238, note 1 and 270.1.

75. Faye, "Être, histoire, technique et extermination dans l'oeuvre de Heidegger," 7.9.

However, the truth will out. Faye blunders in his French citation of Heidegger by providing Heidegger's *original German phrase* in parentheses after the surreptitiously doctored French "translation," and by doing so, Faye exposes and discredits his own reading of the text.

"Surreptitiously"? I use the word advisedly because of the contortions Faye went through to save his blatant fabrication, as documented in the following footnote.<sup>76</sup>

Whether one agrees with Heidegger's interpretations of Hölderlin, or thinks (as I do) that they are often too idiosyncratic and contrived, one still has to understand what Heidegger is saying in the published German texts. This applies as well to letters that Heidegger writes to his Nazi friends. But Faye doesn't trouble himself with the kind of scholarship that requires understanding a text before passing judgment on it. He already knows what he wants to find and claims he *does* find it, even if that entails rewriting Heidegger's sentences.

### 9. FAYE REWRITES HEIDEGGER'S *DER SPIEGEL* INTERVIEW

On September 23, 1966, a few days before his seventy-seventh birthday, Heidegger gave an interview to *Der Spiegel*, which, as both parties agreed, would appear only after his death. (It was published on May 31, 1976, five days after Heidegger had died). When *Der Spiegel* asked Heidegger about his position on technology, he responded:

I see it as the task of [my] thinking, within its limits, to assist humanity in attaining for the first time an adequate relation to the essence of technicity.

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76. Faye's rewriting of Heidegger's text was carried out in two steps and in three languages.

(1) In the original French text of his lecture "Être, histoire, technique et extermination dans l'oeuvre de Heidegger," delivered in Brazil in April of 2011, Faye "quotes" Heidegger as saying: "La Patrie est 'l'être' même." (Notice Faye's relocation of Heidegger's scare quotes from "Fatherland" to "being.") But then he slipped up by providing the *correct* German sentence in parentheses: "(Das 'Vaterland' ist das Seyn selbst)." Thus at one and the same time Faye asserted his claim (Heidegger's "being" = the Nazi Fatherland) and undercut it.

(2) But a year later, when he published the lecture in Portuguese, Faye "corrected" his blunder by quietly shifting the quotation marks *in the German as well*—moving them from "Vaterland" to "Seyn"—so as to make the German line up with the Portuguese mistranslation at 620.27–28. The Portuguese text thus reads: "A Pátria é 'o ser' mesmo" [the Fatherland is "being" itself], followed in parentheses by the now fallaciously rewritten German text: "(Das Vaterland ist 'das Seyn' selbst)."

And all of this is carried out by a "philosopher" (see note 69 above) who endlessly rails against Heidegger's "deviousness" (see note 88 below).

And then, astonishingly, he volunteered:

National Socialism in fact went in that direction.<sup>77</sup>

In Heidegger's work the word *Technik*, which is usually and incorrectly translated as "technology," is a term of art that is best rendered as "technicity," which does not refer to modern machines and the now digital programs that run them. In Heidegger's idiosyncratic usage, "technicity" refers to (1) the modern age's implicit understanding of being (*Sein*) as the unbridled exploitability of nature for commodification, along with (2) the overlooking of the groundless "clearing" (*Lichtung*) that makes possible all forms of being, including this modern form of unbridled exploitability. Heidegger distinguishes between technicity and the *essence* of technicity; the latter is the *overlooked clearing* itself. Hence Heidegger's statement above is saying two things: first, that his philosophy was an attempt to help humanity establish an adequate relation to the clearing; and second, that in the 1930s he believed—incredibly—that Nazism went in that direction.

But Faye egregiously *rewrites* those two sentences. First of all, he stretches Heidegger's statement to make it refer not to his view of technicity under Nazism but rather to *the Nazi enterprise as a whole*. And then he fallaciously inserts into Heidegger's statement the word "satisfactory," which does not appear there at all. Hence according to Faye's re-edited version of the *Der Spiegel* interview

[Heidegger declared] that despite the intellectual indigence of its leaders, National Socialism went in the direction he calls "satisfactory."<sup>78</sup>

And lest we miss the point, Faye repeats it at the end of his book. Heidegger, he says, identified himself willingly with that enterprise [= Nazism as a whole] and affirmed the "inner truth," the "greatness," and the—in his view—"satisfactory" direction taken by the Nazi movement.<sup>79</sup>

In order to conjure up this fabrication, Faye has to rewrite Heidegger three times over.

1. As already noted, he begins by broadening Heidegger's statement far beyond the issue of technicity in order to make it refer to Nazism *as a whole*.

2. He then conspicuously mistranslates the German adjective *zureichend* ("adequate") as *satisfaisant* ("satisfying").

77. GA 16: 677.17–21 = 61.16–19: "Ich sehe gerade die Aufgabe des Denkens darin, in seinen Grenzen, mitzuhelfen, daß der Mensch überhaupt erst ein zureichendes Verhältnis zum Wesen der Technik erlangt. Der Nationalsozialismus ist zwar in die Richtung gegangen."

78. *Heidegger*, 459.5–7 = 284.17–19: "...le national-socialisme serait allé dans la direction jugée 'satisfaisante.'" Note: (1) Heidegger's German: "ist . . . gegangen" vs. (2) Faye's French translation: "serait allé." I follow Heidegger's text in the citation above.

79. *Heidegger*, 511.36–512.4 = 318.12–16.

3. Finally he *moves* the adjective *zureichend* from its original position in the German sentence, where it modifies *Verhältnis* (“an adequate relation”) and re-locates it to the following sentence, changes it from “adequate” to “satisfying,” and then makes it modify *not* the “relation to the essence of technicity” but National Socialism as a whole. The difference between Heidegger’s original statement and Faye’s rewrite of it is immense.

**Heidegger’s original German text:**

- He wanted to help humanity achieve “an adequate relation to [the clearing as] the essence of technicity” (“*ein zureichendes Verhältnis zum Wesen der Technik*”).
- He claimed that National Socialism went in that direction (“*Der Nationalsozialismus ist zwar in die Richtung gegangen*”).

**Faye’s rewritten French:**

- Heidegger judged the direction of Nazism as a whole to be satisfactory (“*le national-socialisme serait allé dans la direction jugée satisfaisante*”).

Was this complex rewriting of Heidegger merely a lapsus on Faye’s part, the honest mistake of a man in a hurry? Or is it part of a calculated strategy of bait-and-switch, one that relies on his readers not checking out the German text that he quietly rewrites? His shocking alteration of the present text was pointed out to Faye in considerable detail at the New York conference, but he remained unflappable. A few days later, in his open letter of September 20, he defended his rewriting of the passage. Beginning with his mistranslation of *zureichend* (“adequate”) as “satisfying,” he justified the obvious error, first, by hiding behind *someone else’s* mistranslation of *zureichend* as “satisfactory,” and, second, by claiming that *befriedigend* is a synonym of *zureichend*—which in fact it is not: *befriedigend* means “satisfying” or “satisfactory,” not “adequate.”<sup>80</sup>

Prior to the New York conference I had queried Faye (email of September 1, 2014) about his distortions of the *Der Spiegel* text. He responded:

In French, in paraphrasing the passage, one can say that National Socialism went in the direction (*Richtung*) of a “satisfying relation” (*zureichendes*

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80. “Letter,” lines 173–81. Every dictionary I have accessed at Stanford University translates “zureichend” as “adequate” or “sufficient,” but never as “satisfying.” *The Oxford Duden* (rev. ed., 1997) s.v. “zureichend” refers the reader to “zulänglich,” which it translates as “adequate.” Wildhagen and Héraucourt indicate “sufficient,” not “satisfying.” Other German-to-English dictionaries translate “zureichend” (synonyms: “hinlänglich,” “zulänglich”) either as “adequate,” “sufficient,” or “reasonable.” The Latin translation of “zureichend” is “sufficiens,” the ancient Greek is ἐπάρκτιος, “sufficient” (Modern Greek, επαρκής), and the Italian is “adeguato.” (The English mistranslation Faye refers to is by Richardson in *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*, 61.18.)

*Verhältnis*) to the essence of technology. In my book, in the two passages you cite, I propose a short-cut [*raccourci*], because “satisfying” does refer to the relation (*Verhältnis*) and not in the first place to the direction (*Richtung*), but the meaning of the passage is respected.<sup>81</sup>

If we unravel the tortured syntax of this paragraph, Faye is now saying:

1. He was only *paraphrasing* Heidegger, not quoting him—this, despite the quotation marks around *satisfaisante* (Heidegger, 452.7 = 284.19 and 512.3 = 318.16) and regardless of the fact that he intentionally made his mistranslation of *zureichend* as “*satisfaisante*” modify the wrong word.

2. He continues to insist on mistranslating *zureichend* by *satisfaisante*.

3. He indirectly admits to his editorial sleight of hand by acknowledging that *zureichendes* (his “*satisfaisante*”) actually and directly modifies *Verhältnis* and not *Richtung*, that is, it describes an “adequate relation” to the clearing—something that Heidegger himself wanted to achieve in his philosophy—not his judgment on the whole of National Socialism.

4. Nonetheless, Faye tries to excuse his rewriting of Heidegger as merely a “shortcut” (!) when in fact it is a radical inversion of the meaning of the passage.

5. He then glides over this egregious inversion of meaning by blithely claiming that “nonetheless the sense of the passage is respected” (*mais le sens du passage est respecté*).

6. Finally he admonishes me not to nit-pick (*pinaiter*) about his mistranslation of the text but instead to engage Heidegger’s disturbing remark in the interview.<sup>82</sup>

To that last remark one might respond: Until Faye *himself* starts “nit-picking” about Heidegger’s texts—that is, reading them closely, translating them correctly, and at least making an effort to understand them—how will he ever know what those texts actually mean, much less how to engage them? Since he claims to be a “philosopher” reading Heidegger (note 69 above), surely he would not want to justify the scrambled translations, the blatant inversions of meaning, and the

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81. Faye’s email, September 2, 2014: “En français, on peut dire en paraphrasant le passage, que le national-socialisme est allé dans la direction (*Richtung*) d’une ‘relation satisfaisante’ (*zureichendes Verhältnis*) à l’essence de la technique. Dans mon livre, aux deux passages que vous citez, je propose un raccourci car ‘satisfaisante’ se rapporte à la relation (*Verhältnis*) et non pas en premier lieu à la direction (*Richtung*), mais le sens du passage est respecté.”

82. “Letter,” lines 182–84: “Faut-il ajouter que le vrai problème n’est pas de pinailler sur la traduction d’un texte que je donne de toutes façons en allemand dans mon livre, mais de s’interroger sur cette déclaration inquiétante de Heidegger?”

absurd interpretations that he visits upon these texts, while blithely alleging that “nonetheless the sense is respected.”<sup>83</sup>

#### 10. FAYE SHIRKS RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS COUNTLESS ERRORS

A week after he was publicly confronted in New York with the distortions and misrepresentations he pulls off in his book, Faye defended himself by serving up a number of excuses. For example:

1. “I never claimed to provide an interpretation of the whole [of *Being and Time*].”<sup>84</sup>—Fair enough, but what about the wild distortions of those passages in *Being and Time* that he *did* interpret?

2. Faye describes his misinterpretations of Heidegger in the 1920s as “my brief remarks on a text and a period [i.e., *Being and Time* and the 1920s] that do not constitute the object of my book.”<sup>85</sup>—But his so-called “brief remarks” take up the first fifty pages of his book; and more importantly, Faye claims to find in *Being and Time* and other texts from the 1920s “the ideas that are at the very foundation of National Socialist doctrine.”<sup>86</sup>

3. Faye alludes to “the way I briefly [or quickly] mention in my book a phrase of Heidegger’s.”<sup>87</sup> (He is referring, of course, to the stunning mistranslation of “*überall nur andeutend*” as “*à mots couverts*.”)—A hurried mention *en passant*? Hardly. Faye repeats and emphasizes the mistranslated phrase in his book and bolsters it with a host of other accusations of Heidegger’s deviousness.<sup>88</sup>

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83. His email, September 2, 2014: “le sens du passage est respecté.” This, one must say, really takes (how to put it?) . . . guts.

84. “Letter,” lines 283–84: “je n’ai jamais prétendu proposer une interpretation d’ensemble.”

85. Ibid.: “mon évocation rapide d’un livre et d’une période qui ne constituent pas l’objet de mon ouvrage.”

86. *Heidegger*, 31.22–23 = 16.26: “les notions qui s’inscrivent aux fondements même de la doctrine du national-socialisme.”

87. “Letter,” line 120: “la façon dont j’évoque rapidement dans mon livre un mot de Heidegger.”

88. The constant refrain in Faye’s book is Heidegger’s “strategy of occultation and dissimulation” (22.4–5 = 10.8); “his feel for clandestine action and his taste for secrecy” (22.24–25 = 10.24); the “cryptic pillars of *Being and Time*” (32.8 = 16.39–40); Heidegger’s “dexterity and malice” (177.5–6 = 107.100); his “constant duplicity” (178.10 = 108.1); his “disguised and veiled [doctrine]” (272.20–21 = 166.16) that he “smuggled in” (the French is “travesti,” “in disguise”: 510.26 = 317.18) “beneath the cover of philosophical ‘greatness’” (517.24–25 = 322.20), and so on. But faced with Faye’s nimble-fingered “hermeneutics-by-legerdemain” (rewriting Heidegger’s



4. Regarding his misuse of *Deckname*: Faye reproves me, first, for criticizing what he now calls only a “pioneering” (*pionnière*) and underdeveloped interpretation of that word, and second, for neglecting his later treatment of Heidegger’s “encrypted terms,” for example, in his edited collection, *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race*.<sup>89</sup>—But when we search through that collection for further elucidations of “*Deckname*,” we find that in his edited collection Faye merely repeats—without any further development—the same false rewriting as in his earlier book, namely, “‘être’ comme d’un mot couvert ou prête-nom (*Deckname*).”<sup>90</sup> And when he refers the reader to two essays by other contributors in the collection, we find that they merely parrot the same mistranslation that Faye himself advanced nine years earlier in his book. Does Faye think that if he and his acolytes repeat the same misreadings enough times, *someone* might come to believe them?<sup>91</sup>

5. Faye dismisses my outing of his flagrant rewrite of Heidegger’s *Der Spiegel* interview: “He [Sheehan] refers to only two passages in the book, p. 452 and 512, where I make a very quick allusion to that text from *Der Spiegel*. But these are only quick reminders that follow an earlier *mise au point* in my book.”<sup>92</sup>—“Quick reminders”? Maybe, but they are still blatant falsehoods. And when we check out the “*mise au point*” that he claims to have made earlier in the book (*Heidegger*,

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words, rearranging his texts, mistranslating them—not to mention the loopy logic of his “arguments”) we might ask: Exactly who is being deceitful?

89. “Letter,” lines 124–28: “De sorte qu’il semble bien léger d’évoquer aujourd’hui l’usage heideggérien d’une écriture cryptée en se limitant à ce que j’avais pu en dire, de façon certes pionnière, mais non développée, il y a maintenant 10 ans, et sans tenir compte des recherches et analyses produites depuis sur ce thème capital (voir aussi les travaux actuels de Sidonie Kellerer sur la ‘guerre secrète,’ etc.)”

90. *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race*, 71.9–10.

91. François Rastier’s essay at 298.24–27 repeats the same false claims that Faye’s book had made about the Bauch letter. Gaëtan Pégny’s essay, at 238n1, reiterates the same misconstrual of *Deckname* in the letter to Bauch, while providing two additional references, both of them ludicrous: GA 36/37: 227.11 = 173.4–5; and Heidegger’s letter to Jaspers, November 10, 1928, 110.3–4. At his own note 87 in the collection, Faye references Sidonie Kellerer’s attempt to draw a straight line from a statement in a *NS-Reichskriegerbund* manual about an “invisible war” to the same phrase in a letter Heidegger wrote to Bauch’s wife. See Kellerer, “A quelle ‘guerre invisible’ Heidegger faisait-il référence?” at <http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/actualites/20140510.OBS6734/a-quelle-guerre-invisible-heidegger-faisait-il-reference.html>.

92. “Letter,” lines 139–42: “... il ne se réfère en effet qu’à deux passages du livre, p. 452 et 512, où je fais très rapidement allusion à ce texte du *Spiegel*. Mais il ne s’agit que de rapides rappels, qui font suite à une mise au point antérieure de mon ouvrage.”

393.28–394.5), we find no clarification at all, only the same mistranslation and the same rewriting of Heidegger's text. What kind of "*mise au point*" is that?

6. Finally, as mentioned above, Faye admonishes me not to "nit-pick" about his translation of the *Der Spiegel* interview (*pinaitter sur la traduction*), because in any case, he says, the book does provide the German phrase that he mistranslated(!).<sup>93</sup>—What to say about this absurd remark? What's the point of Faye's adding the German phrase when his French translation of it completely distorts the meaning?

In the face of all these excuses, the question is quite simply: Does Faye stand behind and accept responsibility for the rewrites, omissions, mistranslations, and switcheroos in his book, no matter how "*rapide/pionnière/non développée*" they might be, or how "*rapidement*" he may have made his "*évoations/allusions/rappels*"?

Or does he not?

\* \* \*

In this essay I have sought to provide detailed arguments supporting the conclusion that time after time Faye's interpretations of Heidegger are demonstrably false, if not intentional falsifications. We may end this dreary chronicle of Faye's "philosophical" readings of Heidegger by asking: Is Faye simply out of his philosophical depth when it comes to Heidegger? Or are his distortions of Heidegger's texts intentional?

As regards the first option, there is no doubt. When it comes to Heidegger's philosophy, Faye is in way over his head: he simply doesn't have a clue. What Jean-Paul Sartre wrote about Georg Lukács and the Marxists in the 1950s could well apply to Faye et Cie. today:

Yes, Lukács has the instruments to understand Heidegger, but he will not understand him; for Lukács would have to *read* him, to grasp the meaning of the sentences one by one. And to my knowledge there is no longer any Marxist who is still capable of doing this. They literally do not understand a word of what they read.<sup>94</sup>

Philosophically uninformed Faye certainly is. But is he deceitful? In 2011, commenting on the controversy that his book had stirred up, Faye wrote:

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93. "Letter," lines 182–84: "Faut-il ajouter que le vrai problème n'est pas de pinaitter sur la traduction d'un texte que je donne de toutes façons en allemand dans mon livre, mais de s'interroger sur cette déclaration inquiétante de Heidegger?"

94. Sartre, "Questions de Méthode," in *Critique de la raison dialectique*, 34–35, with 35n1 for the last sentence = *Search for a Method*, 38, with 39n3 for the last sentence.

The experience of the controversy has taught me that a debate can only be fruitful if the interlocutors share the same concern for *exactness and truth*, and agree upon the ways to achieve it.<sup>95</sup>

Of course Faye may be subjectively convinced that the claims he makes are both exact and true. But philosophy demands more than mere assertion of strongly held convictions without evidence to support them. And above all, philosophy demands intellectual honesty in advancing one's claims—and in *retracting* them after one has been shown in considerable detail why those claims are unsupported and unsupportable.

So again, the stark question: is Faye just philosophically out of his depth? or is he intentionally deceitful? On the one hand, the evidence of his recurrent distortions is so overwhelming that it's hard to imagine he didn't know what he was doing. But on the other hand, if he *did* intentionally set out to mistranslate, misinterpret, and rewrite Heidegger, the ways in which he did that are so glaringly obvious that it is hard to imagine he thought he could get away with it. I leave it to the reader to decide. Ignorance? Fraud? Perhaps a bit of both? In the end I'm not sure what to say. Hence the question mark in the title of the present essay.

But one thing I can say is that, in my own case, whenever I am out of my philosophical depth, I find it prudent to follow the sage advice of Mark Twain: "Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."

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