

BOOK REVIEW

Dominique Janicaud's

Heidegger in France

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Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger in France*.
Eds. and trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.
xv, 540 pp.

Heidegger In France is a translation of Dominique Janicaud's massive work *Heidegger en France*, which tracks the history of the role, played in various ways, of Heidegger's thought in French philosophy over the course of seven decades, from the late 1920s up to the year 2000.¹ As one might well expect from the author, the text is exceptionally careful, measured, judicious and thorough. One of the dimensions of this multi-dimensional study pertains to "the Heidegger controversy" or Heidegger controversies, in short, "l'affaire Heidegger" in France, and together with Janicaud's earlier *The Shadow of that Thought*,² *Heidegger in France* makes it manifest that his voice is indeed one of those sorely missed as students of Heidegger's writings must grapple with the most recent of said controversies.

Important dimensions of Janicaud's text also include the history of French translations of Heidegger's work and the issues associated with this, the role played by Heidegger's visits to France (in 1955 for the

Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual 7 (2017): 182–99.

conference at Cerisy, in 1958 for a lecture in Aix en Provence and in 1966, 1968, and 1969 to conduct the Le Thor seminars in Provence), Janicaud's philosophical assessments both of published studies of Heidegger's thought and original philosophical work taking Heidegger's work as point of departure, as well as the development or evolution of Dominique Janicaud's interaction with his mentor, Jean Beaufret, a pivotal figure where Heidegger in France is concerned. Developments in each dimension reverberate throughout the others. The French text is comprised of two volumes, the first of which is 594 pages in length, while the second, 291 pages in length, consists of eighteen interviews with people significantly involved in the history related by Janicaud in the first volume, and seven of these are included in the one volume translation. The translator's "Introduction" to *Heidegger in France* notes that in a 2002 review of the French text that appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, George Steiner wrote that Janicaud's is an "intellectual history of the first rank," and I would suggest that the philosophical sensitivity and perspicacity called for by the subject matter in this particular history, and provided by Dominique Janicaud, is integral to that particular judgment. The translators are to be congratulated indeed for seeing this project with its sizeable proportions through to its successful completion. As a mark of the success, at points where the meticulous judiciousness of Dominique Janicaud can risk leaving the reader suspended or stranded in mid-air, the translators manage to track the subtlety of the text, which can, by not resolving fully all the equivocal nuances, get us to the other side of the passage in question. I will illustrate briefly with a passage from the eighth chapter, which addresses the turmoil precipitated by the Víctor Farías book,³ and which is entitled: "The Return of the Repressed?" Janicaud is discussing a piece published in *Le Monde* of May 27, 1988 under the title "Heidegger: La parole á la défense" (with the accent in "la défense" missing on p. 220 of the translation), in which the author, Roger-Pol Droit reviewed a recently published text by François Fédier, *Heidegger: anatomie d'un scandale*,⁴ whose aim was the protection of "Heidegger's reputation" against the slander propagated by Farías and his followers. Here is the passage by Janicaud, in translation:

In his account of Fédier's book, Roger-Pol Droit tried to stick to the facts. We certainly cannot expect him to unconditionally support Fédier, the most resolute defender of "the accused." We have seen that this is not the case. But among the arguments that he gave to justify important reservations, the most decisive were not, in my view, the details that he cited (for example, the case of Abraham a Sancta Clara or that of the dedication to Eugen Fischer – points on which Fédier seemed, on the contrary, convincing): the most decisive were his reservations concerning what tended, paradoxically, to "weaken the very path of Heidegger." Indeed, the excellent defense of Heidegger's "reputation," of his dignity, of his motivation, of the extenuating circumstances that one must recognize, led Fédier to accord less attention to the very core of the thought that constitutes the unique originality of the Master. (222)

Regarding the question as to how to address the various dimensions of the work together, Janicaud explains his choices in his "Introduction" to the work and the straightforward account in terms of synchrony and diachrony warrants citing the short paragraph fully. Janicaud writes here:

The chief obstacle remains: how could we combine narrative and analysis to account for this enormous mass of facts, events, and thoughts, in order to untangle the most essential knots, to mark the necessity of divisions? A completely synchronic composition, working on the level of general themes, would drain all the life and even interest from this sequence of discoveries and episodes, which constitute veritable intrigue that is often fascinating and almost always unpredictable. Conversely, a purely chronological overview would miss the

coherence or incoherence of the positions that are under discussion. We have therefore chosen to respect the diachronic order, punctuating it with divisions that will in each case have to be justified. Each main chapter corresponds in principle to a decade but we have not applied this rule mechanically, which would have led to absurdities. (11)

In the first chapter, “First Crossings of the Rhine,” Janicaud points out, on the basis of reports and publications, how quickly after the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927, there was recognition “that a philosophical event had taken place in Germany” on the part of such distinguished professors as Léon Brunschwicq and Xavier Léon. Brunschwicq spoke of a “profound resonance” to Heidegger’s thought. In a volume containing the first translations by Henri Corbin, Alexandre Koyré wrote in his Introduction: “In Germany’s philosophical firmament, Martin Heidegger’s star shines with a brilliance of the highest order. Some would say it is not even a star: it is a new sun that rises” (25). Despite the astronomical bobble here, Koyré’s highly laudatory Introduction would certainly play a role in establishing Heidegger’s recognition.

At the close of the chapter entitled “First Crossings of the Rhine,” Janicaud writes:

Long before Jean Beaufret, and even before Sartre, brilliant minds and precursors whose perspicacity deserves to be commended produced pioneering works and interpretive advances that were for the most part remarkable. In different ways, Gurvitch, Koyré, Levinas, Wahl, Corbin and even Aron [Raymond Aron, who was reading both Husserl and Heidegger in the early 1930’s and was instrumental both in introducing Sartre to phenomenology and facilitating the publication of the Corbin volume] laid the foundations for an understanding of this thought and lit the first fires of a paradoxical

glory that Sartre, long after his time in Berlin [in 1933] would brilliantly establish. (31)

It is noteworthy, I think, that if one were to add to Janicaud's list here the names Brunschwicq and Léon, the two identified by Janicaud as exceptionally early in calling attention to Heidegger and his thought, and a hitherto unknown Rachel Bepaloff, who wrote a letter, later published in a journal, and addressed to Daniel Halévy, which Janicaud describes as one of the most beautiful texts ever inspired by Heidegger, eight of the total then of nine were Jews. The home discipline of the eighth, Henri Corbin, was the study of ancient Persian religiosity and Islam. In Janicaud's Introduction, he calls attention to the significant participation of Jews in the French reception of Heidegger's thought. The fact is not altogether unrelated to the statistically strong "over-representation" of Jewish students in his early courses going back to Marburg, a fact that Heidegger himself evidently found puzzling. The pertinent questions here eventually open on immeasurably larger questions. As we now know, towards the end of the period covered by this first chapter of Janicaud's text, Heidegger himself would touch on those issues briefly in his so-called "black notebooks," and what he ended up with there, I think it fair to say, hardly amounts to one of his particularly insightful analyses.

Janicaud's next chapter bears the title "The Sartre Bomb," which is also known as *Being and Nothingness*.⁵ Here we find ourselves on more widely familiar ground. Published in 1943, Sartre's text, Janicaud observes, is saturated with Heideggerian themes, but recast as they are in terms of a philosophy of consciousness, it is possible to say that the themes remain the same in name only. Given the exceptional scope of Janicaud's text, he at times resorts to condensations that are sometimes successful and sometimes are less than fully successful. To my mind, the condensation of how crucial features of *Being and Time* are transformed, so to speak, in *Being and Nothingness* is a case of the latter. I find that to be so particularly when Janicaud writes that in *Being and Nothingness*, the ontological difference becomes the difference between being-for-itself and being-in-itself. This could be suggestive provided one

thinks this within the context of what Merleau-Ponty will later characterize as Sartre's "truncated dialectic," but sooner rather than later, the old saying (apparently native to the state of Maine) does come to mind: "you can't get there from here." Janicaud, accurately, and fairly, points out that Sartre never did say that one of his aims had been faithfulness to Heidegger's meaning. Janicaud also makes what I consider a fair point to the effect that whatever one makes of Sartre's "appropriation" of Heidegger's thoughts, Sartre did come up with points that have had some philosophical staying power, including "bad faith" (which Janicaud associates suggestively with "das Man") and "being-for-the-other," points I consider well chosen.

Sartre would visit Heidegger in December of 1952 and lecture at Freiburg. Evidently, the visit was less than fruitful. From that point on, each would go his separate way, without mentioning the other in print. But we get a bit ahead of the action here. *Being and Nothingness* had catapulted the name Heidegger to the status of a "household word" designating the mysterious source, the father of existentialism, a figure whom philosophers needed to rediscover.

Janicaud's next chapter is called "Postwar Fascinations." Some details are provided concerning visits to Heidegger by Paris notables including Frédéric Towarnicki, Edgar Morin, Maurice de Gandillac, Jean Wahl, and last, but decidedly not least, Jean Beaufret, the author of the letter of questions to which Heidegger would respond with his "Letter on Humanism," and whose role in regard to Heidegger in France was now taking shape: "recognized as the privileged interlocutor, gradually he became a sort of personal representative of the Master [*le Maître, der Meister*] in France" (66).

It is in this chapter that Janicaud discusses Merleau-Ponty and his 1945 *Phenomenology of Perception*. Janicaud describes how Merleau-Ponty, like Sartre, situated his thinking with respect to both Husserl and Heidegger. It had been noted before that the crux of a type of back-and-forth analysis between the German phenomenologists lies in what Merleau-Ponty says in regard to temporality. At this point Janicaud writes: "what is not at all Heideggerian...is the apprehension of the

essence of time as subjectivity. ‘*We must understand time as the subject and the subject as time*’” (61). On my reading, that Merleau-Ponty does not simply say that we must understand time as the subject but also says that we must understand the subject as time is indicative of the fact that the intent there is not to re-introduce a self-contained Cartesian subject. While Janicaud observes later that Merleau-Ponty continued to be occupied with Heidegger’s thought after *Phenomenology of Perception*, unfortunately, Janicaud does not say anything in this volume about Merleau-Ponty’s unfinished text at the time of his death in 1961 and published soon after under the title *Le Visible et l’Invisible*.⁶ In one of the Working Notes published with the text, Merleau-Ponty wrote that it is necessary to understand as ontology what in *Phenomenology of Perception* may appear to be psychology.⁷ I take him to mean that it is, in fact, ontology, and when it is read that way, it is clear that Merleau-Ponty was quite aware of the ontological difference, which is rather an indispensable step when it comes to understanding Heidegger. Janicaud also does not say anything about the *Notes de Cours* from Merleau-Ponty’s lectures at the Collège de France shortly before Merleau-Ponty’s death, and published in 1996.⁸ Merleau-Ponty’s proposals, particularly in regard to Heidegger’s later thinking, before significant texts, such as *Contributions to Philosophy* (GA 65), were published, are a very strong indication that he was well prepared by his own earlier work for what came later from Heidegger.

All in all, I am inclined to think along the lines indicated in one of the interviews in Part II of Janicaud’s text, specifically the interview with Éliane Escoubas, when she says that “...the reception of Heidegger’s aesthetics [sic] as well as his ontology in France passes through Merleau-Ponty” (368). In a 2010 article on Derrida’s reading of Heidegger, Françoise Dastur (also one of those interviewed by Janicaud) made the provocative point that the legacy of Heidegger’s thought in France is to be found, paradoxically, in Merleau-Ponty’s work rather than Derrida’s, and the reason she gives is that Derrida remains too close to Sartre.⁹ Presumably, Dastur says “paradoxically” because of the centrality of perception in Merleau-Ponty’s analyses, whereas for

Heidegger, perception as long understood had long provided the model for the standard ontology. But it is precisely the long-standing model of perception that is de-structured in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. It is rather gratifying to find Merleau-Ponty thus viewed as a major contender when it comes to the path for Heidegger's legacy in France.

The following chapter, "Humanism in Turmoil," addresses Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism'", which serves, in effect, for a response to Jean-Paul Sartre's essay "Existentialism Is a Humanism,"¹⁰ in particular for Sartre's characterizations of Heidegger's thought, and the Letter provides a first look at features of Heidegger's later thought. Janicaud notes how readily Heidegger took the opportunity to respond at length to the question concerning humanism that Beaufret apparently thought needed refinement or development but sent nonetheless in the interests of an opportunity to visit the philosopher again. A comment here from Dominique Janicaud warrants attention. He writes:

We also have to recognize that the Master of Freiburg needed a certain boldness (or recklessness?) to shift the terms of the debate to a purely ontological – and thus dehumanized ground, only two years after the discovery of the Nazi crimes and the other horrors of the Second World War. One easily conceives that he may have wanted to remain above the political or national divisions, and for good reason! However, now that fifty years have elapsed, should we not recognize the troubling nature of his obstinate refusal to utter even one word, or acknowledge the suffering and distress of human beings, whoever they were? (80)

Something of a response will come in the course of Janicaud's interview, in Part II of this study, with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, who says: "He said nothing. . .: he did not want to. He did not want to say anything against Germany" (389).

Janicaud's next chapter is called "The Bright Spell of the '50s." As Janicaud puts it, although unavoidably somewhat ambiguous, and notwithstanding ongoing significant opposition by the university to the dissemination of Heidegger's thought, Heidegger's name and work grew in prestige even as this took different routes in different domains. The highlight was undoubtedly Heidegger in France, literally, for eight days devoted to his thought at Cerisy. Jean Beaufret carefully planned the whole trip with the collaboration of Kostas Axelos. Heidegger opened the first day with the lecture "Was ist das, die Philosophie?" (GA 11). It provided an opportunity for participants to witness first-hand how his thought proceeded. Almost without exception, the fifty participants found the week a success. All indications were that Heidegger agreed. Janicaud points out that Heidegger was in all probability exceptionally pleased by the reception by virtue of the fact that in Germany, after the fairly recent de-Nazification procedure and the prohibition of his teaching, his fortunes were at a relatively low ebb.

The visit marked the transition from Heidegger as father of existentialism to Heidegger as major interpreter of the metaphysical tradition of the West. Three more lectures followed, in 1956, 1957, and 1958 in Aix-en-Provence and Janicaud cites a description of Heidegger delivering that 1958 lecture, "Hegel and the Greeks," to a thousand people. Janicaud also notes that these years saw "a wave of translations." They included translations of *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* and *Kant und der Problem der Metaphysik* by Alphonse de Waelhens and Walter Biemel, *Der Brief über den Humanismus* by Roger Munier, *Vorträge und Aufsätze* by André Préau, and *Was heisst Denken?*² by Gérard Granel.

At the end of the chapter "The Bright Spell of the '50s," Janicaud includes the first of eight "Epilogues" at the ends of successive chapters. These "Epilogues" basically track the development of Janicaud's engagement with Heidegger's thought beginning in lycée and continuing with his relation with Beaufret (evidently a cousin), who became Janicaud's mentor for a thesis that actually addressed "Hegel and the Destiny of Greece."

In any event, the “bright spell” came to a close in the year 1961. The year was a watershed in a number of respects. There was the shock of the death of Merleau-Ponty at the age of 52. At the time, Merleau-Ponty was working on having Heidegger invited to lecture at the Collège de France. Lévi-Strauss, having just taken up a position at the Collège de France, installed structuralism firmly in the intellectual setting at the time. Michel Foucault published *A History of Madness in the Age of Reason*. Emmanuel Levinas published *Totality and Infinity*. At the same time, the Fifth Republic was being installed, and the Algerian war ended.

The polemics regarding the political topic returned when Jean-Pierre Faye discovered previously unknown texts in Freiburg, in which Heidegger, as Rector, expressed support for Hitler. At one point, Janicaud characterizes certain features of the polemics as “Byzantine,” and I take that as warrant not to try to sort out the twists and turns here or in regard to subsequent outbursts. In the interview with Jacques Derrida in Part II of the text, Derrida says at one point: “. . . I found myself, with others, in the situation of a nondevotee who, at the same time, cannot stand the anti-Heideggerians. We are caught in the cross-fire. . . I strive to find a path, a line, a place where one might continue to read Heidegger seriously, to question him without giving in either to political Heideggerianism or to its opposite. . . . There is nothing original in this: there are a few of us who respect this rule. I wanted to emphasize this” (345). It is a point I find quite understandable. Derrida will return shortly.

First, briefly, apropos Levinas, in his 1946–47 lectures he had already made known a dissatisfaction with “Mitsein” as discussed by Heidegger (and worth noting is that in those immediately post-war commentaries Levinas does not mention Heidegger’s early public endorsement of the National Socialist regime or the topic of the Shoah). Sartre too had taken exception on the topic of “Mitsein,” and in *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas’s unnamed interlocutor is, first of all, Sartre. Where Heidegger is concerned, first, on Levinas’s assessment, Heidegger’s “Mitsein” does not offer the alterity needed to respond successfully to Sartre. Beyond this, when it comes to Heidegger, I find

that Levinas's issue, so to speak, is largely a matter of disappointment when viewed perhaps particularly in regard to *Introduction to Metaphysics*, in that earlier he had lauded Heidegger's phenomenological break-through, so to speak, to the world in which we find ourselves, and now found Heidegger leaving this behind as he sought Being (a point that *Contributions to Philosophy* would appear to confirm later, depending on how one reads Heidegger's specification there of a necessity to think Being without beginning from beings). In Levinas's later *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, Heidegger, actually, is hardly in sight, the title notwithstanding. Janicaud does venture to say of *Totality and Infinity* that "...it required the exceptional lucidity of some particularly attentive minds such as Wahl, Ricoeur, Blanchot or Derrida to recognize that these stakes (i.e. those of *Totality and Infinity*) apart from any narrowly partisan position – were on par with the most far-reaching intuitions of the Master of Freiburg" (122).

Turning now to Derrida, I would venture to say that Janicaud's condensation here of how Derrida proceeds is one of the more successful of Janicaud's condensations. He describes how Derrida engages in an exceptionally close reading of Heidegger's text that brings out a type of instability where Derrida finds a "trace" of presence's withdrawal, and thereby marks, in effect, how the "literality" of the text is undermined. What lends itself to "deconstruction" in this way is left standing provided one reads it "under erasure," which is akin to how Heidegger in late work would cross out Being and leave it crossed out in the text (an indication, I would say, of Heidegger's own sensitivity to how "Being" has a tendency to lend itself to the type of metaphysical reading that concerned Levinas as well as others).

Janicaud quotes Derrida at one point to the effect that Derrida sometimes had the impression that Heidegger represents the single most profound defense of what Derrida would call into question. At the same time, Derrida characterizes his relation to Heidegger as one of admiration, of respect and recognition, and identifies Heidegger as the thinker who constantly "oversees" him, has him under surveillance (347). In his important piece on "Différance," Derrida says explicitly that what he wants

to attempt would not be possible without the opening of Heidegger's questions.¹¹

In the "Epilogue" to his chapter "Renewed Polemics, New Shift," Janicaud describes his own visits with Heidegger. In addition, he reports here on how he reached the point of deciding that he would have to put some distance between himself and Jean Beaufret, and specifies that a reason was Beaufret's repeated "unconditional" advocacy for Heidegger. In particular, such distance would become especially necessary when Janicaud prepared to write his *The Shadow of that Thought*, which would be published in 1990. Later in *Heidegger in France*, in recounting a dispute concerning translating, Janicaud asks whether it was necessary for Beaufret to charge that the "official university curriculum" categorically refused to address Heidegger, which was clearly not so.

The long-awaited book from Henri Birault, *Heidegger et l'expérience de la Pensée*,¹² would not appear until 1978, two years after Heidegger's death. But Birault is pertinent at this point because he taught at the Sorbonne for some years and his courses were exceptionally well attended, all of which is evidence that the complaint to the effect that the university was less than receptive to the teaching of Heidegger may indeed have been, as Janicaud suggested, somewhat exaggerated or distorted. During my own years in Paris in the early 1970s, I had the good fortune to hear everyone from Ricoeur to Levinas to Derrida to Lacan to Lévi-Strauss to Birault and the last named was decidedly one of the best lecturers. As it turns out, at the end of Birault's book, as Janicaud puts it, "he remained split between Nietzsche and Heidegger" (174). To this day, I've never understood why that book has not been translated, particularly given the extent to which interest in Nietzsche, and Nietzsche in comparison with Heidegger, has increased.

Janicaud's chapter "Dissemination or Reconstruction," begins with the following:

The years that led from the events of 1968 to the death of the Master in 1976 cannot be characterized in one way. On the contrary, the French reception of Heidegger split up into different, if not contradictory camps.

The appropriation of his thinking became dogmatic in each camp, each closing in upon itself; marginalizations, and indeed excommunications, proliferated. In acknowledging this dissemination, we are not forgetting what this allusion to the title of Jacques Derrida's book (which appeared in 1972) connotes: threads become woven with more specialized research and with Heidegger's most difficult, ambitious, and inapparent themes, one should neither sever them nor forget them.¹⁵ But did this "dissemination" foreshadow a reconstruction of the philosophical landscape? (141)

Regarding the events of '68, in effect, as Janicaud understands the matter, a tremor that was felt in a number of institutions, this was actually a time of decline for Heidegger's influence, in favor of structuralism, of linguistics, and of a renewed Marxism (due, no doubt, in good measure to Sartre's *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*¹⁴). Janicaud notes that "if Heidegger's thought is reintroduced into the ideological horizon of the time, it is rather through Marcusean protest – also relayed by Kostas Axelos – against the one-dimensionality of technology and the increasing tyranny of a society of production and consumption on the road to globalization, suffocating the message of thinkers and word of the poets" (145).

Heidegger, however, did return to France during this period. In Provence, as a guest of the poet René Char (whom Heidegger, at his own initiative, had met and conversed with when in Paris before the Cerisy conclave), Heidegger conducted a series of seminar sessions, first in 1966, and then in 1968 and 1969, on topics including a proximity between Heraclitus and Parmenides, Hegel's early *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, and Heidegger's own thinking in regard to the destiny of metaphysics since the Greeks.

The "reconstruction?" in "Dissemination or Reconstruction?" (the chapter's title) pertains largely to the publication of the first of three volumes of Jean Beaufret's *Dialogue avec Heidegger*.¹⁵

“Death and Transfiguration?” is the title of Janicaud’s next chapter. Heidegger dies in 1976. Janicaud writes that it would be naïve to expect a transfiguration, “all things being equal,” comparable to the apotheosis of Roman emperors. The responses in philosophical journals broke down between those that exhibited restraint or discretion and those of cautious homage. Janicaud identifies a text from Pierre Aubenque as a standout among the latter. Aubenque confesses his “painful and deep conviction that one of History’s few great thinkers in history had passed” (166). At the same time, Aubenque distanced himself from the “French Heideggerians.” He closed by addressing the political question in an apologetic mode that appealed to Heidegger’s difficult situation, and did so, Janicaud observes, somewhat naively.

Jean Beaufret will die in 1982. In a moment of tribute in his text, Janicaud mentions Beaufret’s inimitable style of joining what was important to the anecdotal by explaining them together, and notes how with this and other traits of originality, Heidegger’s inspiration takes on its own unforgettable life in the French language. With Beaufret’s death, six years after Heidegger’s death, there was an impression that an era was drawing to an end. Janicaud points to two publications from that period that do signal vitality. One is Reiner Schürmann’s *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, about which Janicaud notes that it contributed, from a progressive (left-leaning) perspective, to a resurgence of interest in Heidegger in the early eighties.¹⁶ The other is an edition of *Cahiers de l’Herne* in tribute to Heidegger. It was edited by Michel Haar, and Dominique Janicaud writes of “the care for quality [that] presided over the endeavor” (181). Janicaud identifies, as the guiding thread, the completion of metaphysics in the age of technology (at a point, one might add, when the “Gestell” was advancing on Paris).

In the title of Janicaud’s next chapter, “The Letter and the Spirit,” “the letter” refers to the French translation, or more precisely, two translations, of the full text of *Sein und Zeit*, which appeared in 1985 and 1986, the first by Emmanuel Martineau,¹⁷ and the second by François Vezin,¹⁸ just short of sixty years after *Sein und Zeit* first saw

the light of day. The “Spirit” in the chapter title “The Letter and the Spirit” is a reference to the Derrida text *De l’esprit: Heidegger et la Question*, published in 1987 and based on Derrida’s lecture at the Heidegger conference held at the Collège International de Philosophie.¹⁹ At the end of the chapter, Janicaud notes that Derrida’s text appeared only several months before the scandal provoked by the appearance of the Fariás text, *Heidegger and Nazism*, and then Janicaud writes: “With the ‘Heidegger affair’ we descend vertiginously in the quality of the discourse...” (205). There is one point from Janicaud’s observations with regard to “l’affaire Heidegger” that can shed additional light here and that concerns how it is that much of the intensity can be attributed to the extraordinarily divisive issue of French collaboration that still simmered in the background.

We come now to the final decade of the twentieth century. Janicaud’s chapter is called “Between Erudite Scholarship and Technoscience.” With respect to the “erudite scholarship,” Janicaud mentions in particular the “monumental study” from Jean Greisch, *Ontologie et Temporalité: Esquisse d’une interprétation intégrale de Sein und Zeit*.²⁰ Janicaud writes of this text that: “Greisch took a salutary distance from the French quarrels; and one can affirm without exaggerating that Greisch undeniably advanced research in France” (244). Janicaud addresses a number of studies involving Heidegger’s thoughts on science and technology, a topic broached several years earlier by Janicaud himself in *Powers of the Rational: Science, Technology, and the Future of Thought*.²¹

This brings us to the closing chapter, “At the Crossroads.” Janicaud writes: “There is no limit to the possible topics that would lead to a final dialogue between French interpreters and Heidegger’s thought. We have gathered the themes – in the contemporary context – that seemed the most significant with respect to which the debate is far from being closed...” (268). I will simply retain the list here, with a comment or two, and without details from Janicaud’s brief discussions of work ongoing. Janicaud lists: the question of phenomenology, the relation to the Hebraic tradition with its connections with the possibility of a new

ethics (with respect to which Janicaud notes the strong contribution made by Marlène Zarader), the role of hermeneutics, the theological debate, and the legacy of a complete rereading of metaphysics. Janicaud briefly addresses Paul Ricoeur's contributions in regard to several of these topics. I think it fair to say that Ricoeur, notwithstanding reservations he had in regard to Heidegger's thought, indeed, in all probability because of them, contributed, in one way or another, and to one extent or another, to the conversation in regard to each of them.

In the Conclusion that follows "At the Crossroads," Janicaud finds that the history he has tracked has confirmed what inspired the text, namely, the omnipresence of Heidegger's influence in France, directly or indirectly, during the major part of the twentieth century. Furthermore, this has been possible only by a diversification of that influence. Finally, and I would say crucially, all this required a two-way dynamic. Heidegger was attentive to his French audience, welcoming (both literally and figuratively), and grasped the opportunities and the invitations he received. Janicaud writes: "as for the French, it is clear that the 'reception' would have been infinitely less influential if it had not been sustained and stimulated by the brightest minds from Koyré to Levinas, from Beaufret to Birault, and from Merleau-Ponty to Derrida" (302).

With respect to the moment in time when Dominique Janicaud's work on these volumes was at an end, I will close with two comments from the Conclusion to *Heidegger in France*. Janicaud writes: "What has appeared incontestable to us is that the ideological and personalized fascination that marked the first decades of Heidegger's reception in France has faded" (320). And then: "If the intellectual landscape has changed completely, this transformation should not be limited to France. At least the awareness that an important page of philosophical history seemed to have been turned nourishes the hope that our historical research and analysis would not turn out to be fruitless. Each one will judge the result for him- or herself" (321).

NOTES

- 1 Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger en France* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel S.A., 2001); *Heidegger in France*, trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press 2015). All numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers of the book under review.
- 2 Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger and the Question of Politics*, trans. Michael Gendre (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996).
- 3 Victor Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).
- 4 François Fédier, *Heidegger: anatomie d'un scandale* (Paris: Lafont 1988).
- 5 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984).
- 6 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible: suivi de Notes de travail*, Édition de Claude Lefort (Paris: Gallimard, 1964); *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 1968).
- 7 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Routledge, 1962).
- 8 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Notes de cours; 1959–1961*, préface de Claude Lefort (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1996).
- 9 See Françoise Dastur, “The Reception and Non-reception of Heidegger’s Thought in France” in *French Interpretations Of Heidegger: An Exceptional Reception*, eds. David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008), 78–79.
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