Heidegger's Anti-Anthropocentrism

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Agriculture is today a motorized food industry, in essence the same as the manufacture of corpses in gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockade and starvation of countries, the same as the manufacture of atomic bombs.
(Ackerbau is jetzt motorisierte Ernährungsindustrie, im Wesen das Selbe wie die Fabrikation von Leichen in Gaskammern und Vernichtungslagern, das Selbe wie die Blockade und Aushungerung von Ländern, das Selbe wie die Fabrikation von Wasserstoffbomben.)
—Martin Heidegger

I. Introduction.

It is common to be encouraged to consider Heidegger as a source of wisdom regarding anti-anthropocentrism, especially because, it is alleged, Heidegger offers a compelling case against the tradition of Western anthropocentrism, he teaches us how to "think" properly, and he indicates how to dwell authentically on the earth.[1] The purpose of the present article is to argue that it is not worth the time and effort to become familiar with Heidegger's life and writings for the purpose of learning how to argue the case for anti-anthropocentrism. Heidegger does not succeed in developing a convincing case for his type of anti-anthropocentrism; indeed, I will argue that there is something odious about his critique of anthropocentrism. The interpreter of Heidegger with whom I will be primarily engaged is Michael Zimmerman, and this for two reasons. First, Zimmerman has made the most balanced and detailed case for Heidegger as an important theoretician regarding anti-anthropocentrism. Indeed, Heidegger's thought is kept alive largely through talented scholars like Zimmerman. Second, although a defender of Heidegger, Zimmerman is nonetheless willing to listen to criticisms of Heidegger's Nazism, unlike many dogmatic Heideggerians I have met.[2] Heidegger's Nazism, I will suggest, is related to his inability to be persuasive regarding anti-anthropocentrism. That is, I will avoid *ad hominem* arguments in that I will be claiming that Heidegger's anti-anthropocentrism interpenetrates with his intellectualized version of Nazism and is, as a consequence, inadequate for use by animal rightists.

In the following section of the article I will outline Heidegger's critique of anthropocentrism, especially as that critique changes from the early to the later Heidegger. My hope in section 2 is not so much to do original Heidegger research as to indicate in a

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preliminary way what some of the problems are with several of the best known ideas in Heidegger's work from the perspective of a version of anti-anthropocentrism quite different from Heidegger's, specifically an animal rights version of anti-anthropocentrism. In section 3 I will consider Zimmerman's criticisms of Heidegger's anti-anthropocentrism, criticisms which are noteworthy because Zimmerman has developed the most sophisticated defense of environmentalism on a Heideggarian basis. But I will also try to show in sections 3 and 4 that some of the defects in Heidegger's thought are found in Zimmerman's as well, even in the thought of the later Zimmerman, which is more critical of Heidegger than the thought of the early Zimmerman. My own criticisms of Heidegger, and to a lesser extent of Zimmerman, have to do with the failure to acknowledge (Heidegger) or to defend consistently (Zimmerman) the rights of sentient individuals. Heidegger's own hatred of individualism and of rights was a contributing factor in his becoming a fascist, but, more importantly for the purposes of this article, denigration of individual rights by deep ecologists—including Heideggerian deep ecologists like Zimmerman—runs the danger of environmental fascism if not of fascism per se.

2. Heidegger's Critique of Anthropocentrism.

Heidegger's fundamental insight in *Being and Time* is that there is a difference between Being and entities, (or beings). We are familiar with entities, like shoes or cows or numbers. But we have a hard time specifying what Being or is-ness means. On Heidegger's well-known view, Being is not an entity but refers to the self-manifesting, presencing, or revealing of entities. For an entity to be (i.e., to present or manifest itself), a corresponding absencing is needed, a clearing constituted by human existence. In effect, humans are both a kind of entity *and* the clearing in which entities can he manifest. In this regard there is a minimal and non-bothersome anthropocentrism in Heidegger's thought.

For the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, entities like animals in some sense would persist if no humans existed, but they would not "be" in Heidegger's sense of being manifest within the clearing of human existence. The anthropocentric tendencies of *Being and Time*, however, yield in Heidegger's later thought, according to Zimmerman, to a view which is consistent with most of the principles of deep (as opposed to supposedly superficial) ecology, with the thought of Aldo Leopold, and with "biocentric egalitarianism," an egalitarianism which, I will argue, is the most dreadful imaginable.[3] In *Being and Time*, at least, there is a certain degree of Kantianism in Heidegger's view of nature and of animals in that, despite the fact that we discover rather than create nature, including animals, we nonetheless discover it only within the historical world opened up by *Dasein*. Zimmerman puts the issue regarding Heidegger's minimal anthropocentrism this way:

> in *Being and Time* Heidegger fails to clarify the following puzzle: do natural entities show themselves either as instruments or as objects because these are the two major ontological dimensions of natural entities in and of themselves, *or* instead do natural entities show themselves as instruments or objects because these are the only two ways in which human existence is open for entities.[4]

Zimmerman thinks we should commend even the Heidegger of *Being and Time* for avoiding the ethically bothersome anthropocentrism of the animal rightist's nemesis, Descartes. Because human beings are finite, in Heidegger's view we cannot be open to entities in ways that exhaust what they are. But ever since the time of Plato, and especially since Descartes, we have tended to be open to them in extremely constricted, one-dimensional ways. For Heidegger, who originally defined human existence as care (*Sorge*), we fulfill our humanity when we exist in a way that lets entities be what they are instead of forcing them to serve our needs only. By allowing our understanding to be used solely for the purpose of dominating entities, we have left the material world in general and animals in particular as inert and without intrinsic purpose. To the extent that *Dasein* is the measurer in Heidegger's philosophy, it is important to notice that human temporality is such that as epochs change entities show themselves in different ways. Natural entities, including animals, in modern philosophy often appear as strictly material mechanisms, and this is largely due to Descartes. These mechanisms are seen primarily as instruments for socio-economic purposes or for scientific investigation. It is Heidegger's belief that it is only by reappropriating our philosophical tradition, by rethinking Plato and Descartes and almost everyone else between the presocratics and Heidegger himself, that this bothersome sort of anthropocentrism can be ameliorated.[5]

Heidegger's replacement for the bothersome sort of anthropocentrism seems to be what he calls "the fourfold" (*das Geviert*), a configuration of earth and sky, mortal beings and the gods, wherein the order of nature emerges not out of a divine or human plan but out of the capacity of individuals to behave in their own ways such that they nonetheless produce an overall harmony: individuals adjust themselves to other individuals.[6] The clearing of an open space in our culture so as to see animals largely reveals them as use values or as commodities; in a very real sense "primitive" peoples did not see the same sorts of chickens we see.[7] Chickens are put in a frame (*Gestell*) for us by science-technology. And it should be emphasized that there is no crucial distinction in Heidegger between science and technology, since science has in recent centuries been integrally connected to the will to power.

In his later philosophy, Heidegger did not attribute inauthenticity to a lack of personal resoluteness but to a cultural phenomenon (i. e., to anthropocentrism). Authentic human existence in his later philosophy consists in the realization that humans are but one element in the fourfold, and not necessarily the most important one. This realization was never lost by peasants, on Zimmerman's interpretation of Heidegger, even if it has been lost (or better, killed) by agribusinessmen on factory farms. Because we have an obligation, according to Heidegger, to let things be, it would *seem* to be worse if an animal were killed by some human deed than if the animal were killed naturally.

Several questions need to be asked here, however.

a. There is the question of whether the anti-anthropocentrism entailed in the fourfold is a variety of anti-humanism, as I will allege, or, as Zimmerman alleges, is a type of "higher humanism" or "beyond humanism"—Zimmerman cannot decide which to hold.[8]

b. What are we to make of Heidegger's claim that in technological culture moral distinctions lose their meaning? Is this claim actually a ruse for Heidegger's own inability in his philosophy to make moral distinctions?

c. Is it not the case that there is something a bit too convenient in the suggestion that, from a Heideggerian point of view, World War Two was due not to Hitler and the Nazis but to forgetfulness of being? And

d. Is it not also a bit too convenient to hold, if one was a dues-paying member of the Nazi Party from the early 1930s until the end of the war, as was Heidegger, that technological framing of nature and animals is a defect found especially in democratic or capitalist cultures as well as in socialist ones? That is, what are anti-anthropocentrists to make of Heidegger's belief that the Germans (under Hitler) were the only people capable of bringing about a new beginning for the West, an anti-anthropocentric one, in a way at least somewhat analogous to the Greek beginning two millennia before?[9]

Before moving to Zimmerman's criticisms of Heidegger and to my own responses to these questions, I would like briefly to examine Heidegger's approach to animals, in particular, as opposed to his stance(s) regarding anti-anthropocentrism in general. This examination will be crucial for what I have to say later on in section 4, when I will emphasize the importance of *individual* human beings and animals. Frederick Olafson is correct in noting that for Heidegger animals (or better, nonhuman animals) do not see entities *as* entities and that their vision is not informed by the categorical distinctions at work in human perception. Animals have "access" (*Zugang*) to entities, but, by way of contrast, human beings perceive entities as such. We are able to transcend entities toward their being *as* entities. Or again, animals are "world-poor" (*weltarm*) whereas inanimate things are "worldless" (*weltlos*).[10] There is a type of reciprocity in animals which is clearly not found in inanimate things, but it is less clear *how* inferior animals are to human beings. Animals are not worldbuilding (*weltbildend*) beings, but they do encircle themselves (*Sichumringen*) with stimuli in ways that make inadequate any behavioristic analysis of them. Their openness to entities nonetheless is not to entities *as* entities, and this is apparently because of their failure to possess language. Rather, their openness is merely for the purpose of the release of drives. Both behaviorism and the theory of evolution treat animals in abstraction from this partial openness, hence Heidegger holds that animals demand of us a specific mode of "transposedness" (*Versetztsein*).[11]

In *Being and Time* Heidegger makes it clear that animals can be seen merely as living beings, as can human beings, from certain points of view. But human beings can also be seen as rational animals, as living things which have reason. Such a view of human beings,

although not false, nonetheless covers up what is distinctive about *Dasein*. That is, the Latin *animal rationale* is not quite as accurate as the Greek *zoon logon* in that *logos* refers not only to reason but more importantly to discourse,[12] and it is discourse, it seems, which in a way makes a human being half godlike and hence only half animal:

> man understands his mortality as rootedness in an earth that is what it is *by contrast with* heaven or the heavens and that is what it is *in light of* the heavens. The contrast is between the light, clarity, and openness of the heavens and the darkness, solidity, and impenetrability of the earth. The earth is both literally and figuratively lighted by the heavens.[13]

Zimmerman himself puts the point in even stronger terms: because of human discourse humans in a way are not animals, for to view them as merely naturalistic animals is to offer the nihilistic version of Aristotle's theory of human beings as rational animals rather than Aristotle's own somewhat less problematic version.[14]

3. Zimmerman's Criticisms.

With this brief review of Heidegger's anti-anthropocentrism and of his view of animals as a background, I will now move to Zimmerman's criticisms. It should be noted that before 1987 Zimmerman's view of Heidegger corresponded to the "official version" of Heidegger's political views. His more recent criticisms of Heidegger, brought on by the work of Hugo Ott and Victor Farias,[15] constitute an admirable example of intellectual honesty and the use of critical reason on Zimmerman's part. In 1990, he called Heidegger to task on at least three points regarding his anti-anthropocentrism: (a) Zimmerman, as a self-proclaimed deep ecologist and radical environmentalist, thinks that there is a residual anthropocentrism in Heidegger's later thought. Even though the later Heidegger abandoned the idea that *Dasein* is essentially different from all other entities, he did not integrate humanity into the seamless web of life described by ecologists, and this largely because Heidegger was always a severe critic of naturalism. Closely related is (b), Zimmerman's critique of Heidegger's antipathy to science. It is true that the sciences which deal with ecological issues and with animals are often implicated in scientism, or the view that all entities are mere objects and that science is the basic (or the only reliable) source of information. Hence regarding these views Heidegger was correct, according to Zimmerman, to be distrustful. However, "insofar as Heidegger refused to take seriously the organic dimension of human existence, he may well be accused of having remained in a curious way tied to the human-centered, dualistic metaphysical tradition of which he was so critical."[16]

These criticisms are fine as far as they go, but regarding (c) Zimmerman only scratches the surface of what is bothersome about Heidegger's version of anti-anthropocentrism, a version which is, as Zimmerman notes, integrally connected to a reactionary critique not only of industrialism but also of the whole modern world, including its notions of rights and autonomy. Zimmerman's criticism here goes like this:

> deep ecologists must examine seriously the implications of Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism. His willingness to support an authoritarian regime to "solve" the problems posed by modernity and industrialism, the ease with which he abandoned the principles of respect of the rights of others, his talk about a mystical "union" between *Volk* and earth, and his hierarchical views about those "gifted" with insight about the meaning of history—all this must give pause to those deep ecologists, most of whom recognize that authoritarianism, hierarchism, and communitarianism without respect for individual freedom are by no means "solutions" to the environmental crisis.... Deep ecologists want to be able to speak about the organic relatedness of all life on earth *without* being accused of reverting to fascist mythologizing.[17]

I would like to make it clear at this point that I am not claiming, nor is Zimmerman claiming, that Heidegger's philosophy is worthless because, say, he never clearly assigned blame to Germany or to the Nazis or to himself for events between 1933 and 1945. Rather, I am only trying to advance the limited claim that there is a world of difference between, first, an anti-anthropo*centrism* which nonetheless acknowledges that *anthropoi* are worthy of respect and are possessors of rights and, secondly, an anti-anthropocentrism which

is perversely anti-human, to the point where, as the quotation at the beginning of this article indicates, there is no moral difference between machines that harvest wheat, those that milk cows, and the gas chambers. Heidegger is an example of the latter anti-anthropocentrism, whereas Isaac Bashevis Singer is an example of the former.[18]

When Singer suggests that animals are constantly in danger of being sent to a humanly imposed "Treblinka" or that we often act like Nazis toward animals, he nonetheless makes it abundantly clear that: (a) the real Treblinka was a morally evil place, and (b) the nine million people killed in the death camps—six million of whom were Jews—constitute a still greater evil than the very real evil of, say, nine million animals killed in slaughterhouses or laboratories. Heidegger, by way of contrast, never condemned Treblinka, leaving some people to wonder whether he, as a good Nazi to the end, perhaps approved of it. But even if he had condemned Treblinka, it is by no means clear that he would have, or even could have, done so in any terms stronger than he could have offered against the killing of nine million animals or nine million blades of grass. Even mowing the lawn violates the vague Heideggerian imperative to let things be (*Gelassenheit*). Admittedly, to let things be is not to be purely passive. It is (a) to open up a clearing in which things disclose themselves without undue interference and (b) to interact with things in respectful ways. But Heidegger is not helpful at all regarding what such respect means in our dealings with animals.

There is something instructive in the (speciesist) cliché that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. It is dangerous both to human and to other animal species to abandon rights in favor of the obscure notion that we should let things be. If Zimmerman is to be faulted, it is on two grounds. First, despite the fact that the later Zimmerman finds the quotation from Heidegger at the beginning of this article "astonishing," he thinks it has negative implications only regarding our evaluation of Heidegger's politics and not regarding his anti-anthropocentrism. And second, although Zimmerman has largely left behind his earlier (very Heideggerian) criticism of rights, he still shows traces of Heidegger's apparent stance that the Holocaust (and, we could add, mass extermination of animals)is more due to advanced technology than it is to a denigration of sentient individuals (whether pigs or Gypsies). When the later Zimmerman says that "Mass extermination in the Nazi camps was possible only because of developments within industrial technology," it should be noted that the crucial piece of technology needed for the Holocaust to occur was the railroad and precise rail scheduling, which had been in existence since the nineteenth century. The final solution was far more of a low-tech operation than Heideggerians like to admit. That is, it will not do to blame technology *simpliciter* for disrespect shown to sentient individuals.[19] The remainder of this article will consist of an attempt to expand on Zimmerman's rather mild criticisms of Heidegger regarding these two areas.

Several of the features of Heidegger's thought which some find appealing, such as the idealization of peasant life contained in his notion of the four-fold, are nonetheless bothersome both because they appear to suggest simply a rejection of modern science, rather than a critical engagement with it, and because they seem to be connected with a notion of tradition that entails a rather vicious version of nationalism. Indeed, Heidegger refers to a *new* appropriation of Western tradition by German language and philosophy, but this newness suggests that proper limits for human behavior toward other species cannot he established through current legal or moral forms but only by Being itself, whatever that means. As Zimmerman notes, the new *ethos* suggested by Heidegger only seems to make sense if Being is hypostasized and personalized into a divine agent, as in his well-known claim that only a God can save us now.[20] Even if Heidegger is correct in claiming that human beings go astray when they forget that they are not self-created, it is not clear that reminding us of that fact helps very much without an explicit statement of theistic belief on Heidegger's part: if Being is not to be divinized, why should we believe, along with Zimmerman, that we are "brought forth *so that* entities can manifest themselves "? (my emphasis)[21]

Zimmerman's earlier thought was very much in the spirit of Heidegger in the claim that the philosophical doctrine of human rights justifies exploitation of nonhuman as well as human beings, presumably because the doctrine of rights is necessarily tied to anthropocentrism and hence to exploitation in general.[22] Rights, it seems, get in the way of our "primary obligation": to be open to the Being of entities. But not even the early Zimmerman favors Heidegger when he attacks not only rights but the whole project of morality, as is evidenced in the following puzzling quotation from Heidegger:

> Every valuing, even where it values positively, is a subjectivizing. It does not let things be. Rather, valuing lets beings: be valid—solely as the object of its doing.[23]

It is not surprising that this "leveling gaze," as Richard Wolin calls it,[24] is more compatible with the deep ecological variety of anti-anthropocentrism than it is with the animal rights variety. Zimmerman, with John Rodman on his side,[25] does not think that human beings are in a position to extend rights to other beings if their own hold on them is questionable.[26]

Our supposed obligation to Being does in fact threaten the loss of hard-won rights. On early Zimmerman's Heideggerian view, political activism on behalf of animals itself is part of the problem in that it indicates a confidence that (frenetic) human activity can really improve things. Zimmerman admits that Heidegger's attitude toward animals is not consistent: at times he sees all entities as instances of *physis*, and at other times he concludes that human beings are radically different from animals and the rest of nature. Animals, on this latter alternative, lack openness to Being; hence, they cannot know that entities *are*. It is crucial to notice, however, that any attempt to gain consistency here would require an engagement with certain biological and psychological phenomena (like the central nervous system or the presence of pain), an engagement which is, according to Heideggerian reasoning, itself a type of activity and a type of *Technik* which leads us further into a forgetfulness of Being. As Heidegger continued to work his way out of subjectivism and anthropocentrism, he made it harder and harder to assess exactly where the similarities and differences are between human beings and animals and how these similarities and differences have an impact on ethical questions. It is decidedly not the case, as the early Zimmerman alleges, that those who wish to extend rights to animals can do so only by seeing them as lesser human beings. In fact, animal rightists who defend the argument from marginal cases are often criticized because of their belief that many animals deserve more respect than *some* human beings.[27]

The later Zimmerman shows at least some willingness to "make use of" available ethical theories, including theories defending rights, to prevent exploitation from occurring, but this is not his usual view, which rests foursquare on deep ecology's attachment to what Steve Sapontzis calls "total holism." Zimmerman thinks that somehow or other we will find adequate ways of dealing with inevitable conflicts among individuals and among species without utilitarianism and without rights theory. He hopes that somehow or other, by letting things be, these conflicts will sort themselves out.[28] But surely Zimmerman errs here by following Heidegger's vagaries. Ethical problems do not sort themselves out, nor do their resolutions shine forth with middle-voiced clarity. What is frustrating about Heidegger's thought is the inconsistent way in which he *does* implicitly make ethical distinctions. Despite the fact that he does not see any ethical distinction between mechanized agriculture and the Holocaust, he does see one between a dam on the Rhine and a Hölderlin poem about the Rhine: to equate *these* two is an example of "monstrousness."[29]

Both Max Scheler and Emmanuel Levinas have rightly criticized Heidegger for elevating Being over ethics. The later Zimmerman at least partially follows Scheler and Levinas in this regard:

> To some extent, Heidegger was following his predecessors Hegel and Nietzsche in claiming that the world-historical individual is "beyond good and evil." By portraying ethical matters as secondary considerations which arise within and which are limited to a particular historical world, however, Heidegger ran the risk of justifying whatever ethical form of life happened to emerge in a world "founded" by a new work of art. The demented "world" of National Socialism reveals what may be "justified" when artistic considerations are allowed to triumph over supposedly outmoded ethical ones. Heidegger's refusal to describe his behavior between 1933 and 1945 in terms of moral guilt stemmed from his belief that his "ontological calling" to found a new world removed him from the moral censure that pertained only to ordinary people. Of course, since the German people themselves were "extraordinary" in being called to the dangerous mission of founding a new world, since they risked so much in this noble venture, they too—in Heidegger's eyes—were not morally culpable.[30]

Ethics for Heidegger was part and parcel of the nihilistic modern age; hence, *a fortiori*, ethical concern

for animals is at best misplaced. The later Zimmerman puts the point as follows:

> Heidegger could never straightforwardly admit that by "deconstructing" what he regarded as the Enlightenment's insidious principles of universal economic and political rights, by declaring that traditional Judeo-Christian moral beliefs had been vacated by the death of God, by claiming that new historical worlds arise from a primal source that is "beyond good and evil," and by working to found such a world based on artistic-ontological, not moral considerations, he helped to make possible the triumph of a truly radical evil.[31]

Although the later Zimmerman at least claims to be opposed to Heidegger's denigration of ethics, his deep ecological principles lead him to a "biocentric egalitarianism" wherein we are supposed to "love and respect all things," and presumably to love and respect them equally, if Zimmerman is serious about his egalitarianism. In short, we are likely to be left with an analogous sort of leveling gaze in the later Zimmerman that we are left with in the later Heidegger. I would like to make it abundantly clear that Zimmerman is no fascist, even if he is open to Tom Regan's charge of "environmental fascism." But neither Heidegger nor Zimmerman get off their respective hooks by claiming that the death camps and factory farms alike are predictable outcomes of the reckless power impulse of the Enlightenment without also confronting, as Zimmerman to some extent does, the liberatory gains made possible by the Enlightenment, gains whose beneficiaries include peasants, slaves, blacks, women, and belatedly, animals. It is no accident that the most widely read book written by a philosopher on the topic of animal "rights" is titled "Animal *Liberation*."[32]

Heidegger's (inconsistently applied) strategy of avoidance of ethical distinctions is revelatory not only biographically but also philosophically, in that it is necessitated by his belief that "the world must be forced to collapse and the earth must be driven to desolation"[33] before primal truth can be recaptured. Hence, factory farms and crematoria may actually be welcomed by Heidegger, if they help to bring about a turning away from *Technik* and a turning toward authentic *techne* (as art). (In this regard, Heidegger looks like a latter day Emperor Claudius.) That is, technological nihilism engenders its opposite, as in the lines from Hölderlin of which Heidegger was fond: "Where the danger is, grows the saving power also." It is convenient not only for Heidegger the man but also for Heidegger the philosopher to say that events in the various slaughterhouses of Europe, in which all "cats" are grey, are not due to real life individuals but to *Seinsvergessenheit*. According to Wolin, one of the reasons why Heidegger did not deal adequately with real individuals was his fascination with the *abstraction* "concreteness" and the *abstraction* "historicity" at the expense of the concrete and historical:

> There is no small measure of irony that such short-comings must be attributed to a thinker whose claim to philosophical originality in the 1920s was based on an avowed revival of the dimension of existential concreteness that was otherwise so lacking in modern philosophy; a thinker whose great achievement was a purported reincorporation of "history"—via the category of "historicity"—into modern philosophical discourse. In truth, it is the essential facts of twentieth-century political life that Heidegger, time and again, shows himself incapable of comprehending.[34]

Jurgen Habermas also thinks that Heidegger's etherealness (which Heidegger's followers confuse with profundity) is part of the problem:

> Because Being withdraws itself from the assertive grasp of descriptive statements, because it can only be encircled in indirect discourse and "rendered silent," the destinings of Being remain undiscoverable. The propositionally contentless speech about Being has, nevertheless, the illocutionary sense of demanding resignation to fate. Its practical-political side consists in the perlocutionary effect of a diffuse readiness to obey in relation to an indeterminate authority.[35]

The eclipse of practical reason is no boon to human beings or animals or the natural environment. Wolin once again is perceptive regarding Heidegger's views in a quotation which is well worth the consideration of animal rightists:

> Rather than attempting to isolate the process whereby instrumental reason, as tied to the forces of the modern economy, has been elevated to the status of an end in itself at the expense of its practical corollary, his theoretical orientation seeks instead to promote a *rejection of rationality in toto*.[36]

Even if, as the argument from marginal cases indicates, there is no simple way of asserting that the value of every human life is superior to that of every animal, Wolin is nonetheless correct in suggesting that there is something worse than useless in a misology which culminates in an incapacity to distinguish among the slaughter of a rational human being, the slaughter of a nonrational yet sentient animal, and the felling of a tree or the damming of a river.[37]

4. Individual Animals.

The upshot of the previous section is that:

a. Zimmerman has done an excellent job of indicating what the implications of Heidegger's thought are for animals, in particular, and for the environment, in general;

b. the later Zimmerman makes at least some progress with respect to criticism of Heidegger's thought in this regard; but

c. even the later Zimmerman fails to emphasize, and this due to his commitment to deep ecology, the dangers involved in a denigration of rights and/or concern for sentient individuals.

That is, there are good reasons for defending the animal rights variety of anti-anthropocentrism, rather than the deep ecology version, especially when we find deep ecologists—but not Zimmerman—speaking favorably of Malthus or AIDS. Two quite different animal rightists can be used together to detail the defects in deep ecological anti-anthropocentrism, in general, and its Heideggerian variety, in particular: Tom Regan and Steve Sapontzis. Regan has ably shown, I think, that not all living things are subjects-of-a-life; hence, living things are not to be viewed as having the same moral status. It *may* be the case that there are individuals who are not subjects-of-a-life but who do have inherent value of some sort:

> the very possibility of developing a genuine ethic *of* the environment, as distinct from an ethic *for its use*, turns on the possibility of making the case that natural objects, though they do not meet the subject-of-a-life criterion, can nonetheless have inherent value.[38]

But those who try to establish the case for inherent value, he thinks, have their work cut out for them even if the task is not impossible. Although Heideggerians may be (unwittingly) correct, at least with respect to wild animals, to simply let them be, there is a considerable difficulty involved when trying to reconcile the individualistic nature of moral rights with the total holistic view of Heideggerian deep ecologists:

> It is difficult to see how the notion of the rights of the individual could find a home within a view that, emotive connotations to one side, might be fairly dubbed "environmental fascism." To use Leopold's telling phrase, man is *only* a member of the biotic team."[39]

Heidegger's own case indicates how close a connection there is between environmental fascism and fascism *per se*; hence, there is nothing histrionic in Regan's use of the term "fascism":

> If, to take an extreme, fanciful but, it is hoped, not unfair example, the situation we faced was either to kill a rare wildflower or a (plentiful) human being, and if the wildflower, as a 'team member," would contribute more to the

> integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community than the human, then presumably we would not be doing wrong if we killed the human and saved the wildflower. The rights view cannot abide this position...because it denies the propriety of deciding what should be done to individuals who have rights by appeal to aggregative considerations.... Environmental fascism and the rights view are like oil and water: they don't mix.[40]

Although Sapontzis' version of anti-anthropocentrism is very often at odds with Regan's, they complement each other in the effort to show the defects in deep ecological anti-anthropocentrism, particularly in its Heideggerian variety. Considering the long-term well-being of human beings and of animals includes a healthy supply of oxygen, rich soil, etc. Parking lots and plastic trees do not contribute to healthy animal life. Sapontzis is correct in claiming that there is a false dilemma between individualism and holism. Rights theory, utilitarianism, virtue-based ethics, and Sapontzis' own version of ethical scepticism are alike in being *partially* holistic. The *total* holism of (early and late) Zimmerman or of J. Baird Callicott, wherein the good of the biotic community is the ultimate measure of ethical value is, if not a type of fascism, at the very least a type of indifference to the suffering of animals and of human beings:

> The common moral goal of reducing the suffering in life and otherwise making life more enjoyable and fulfilling would not obviously be more effectively pursued by valuing individuals only as contributors to a community. Indeed, since it is individuals, not communities, that experience enjoyment, fulfillment, distress, and frustration, and since total holism proposes regarding individuals as disposable items in the pursuit of the integrity, stability, and beauty of the community, it seems reasonable to conclude that total holism would not provide as likely a path to this moral goal as our current, mixed morality, which directly values individuals and their quality of life.[41]

Jews and Poles and cows and deer suffer, not cowhood or an ecosystem or the *Heimat*. In addition, Callicott, like some Heideggerians, wistfully dreams of a return to premodern existence, wherein lies a more symbiotic relationship with the natural environment, a dream which might be taken more seriously if Callicott and Heidegger were not:

> fundamentally out of touch with contemporary morality, which emphasizes compassion for the injured, the sick, and the handicapped, tolerance for diverse ways of life, concern to expand the diversity of opportunities and experiences available to people, protecting the weak against the strong, and hope for progress.[42]

And this progress, on the animal rightist's version of anti-anthropocentrism, is more likely to occur if we were to:

> consider the case of the dog: even if no *other* sentient being values it (or could value it), the dog can still have feelings of well-being about itself and its condition and can, therefore, still be of value for itself. Thus, the dog can be valued not only by another, either as an instrument or for itself; the dog can also be valued by itself, and it is that latter possibility, and the moral significance of it, that is at issue in the debate over animal rights and that is completely lacking in the case of nonsentient entities.[43]

It is not the case, as Callicott and the early Zimmerman allege, that emphasis on individual rights and on only partial holism will necessarily mean destruction of the natural environment: nonsentient parts of nature have aesthetic and symbolic significance; they have life-support and economic and recreational value; they have scientific and historical and religious inspiration value; they help us to build character and to appreciate both the pretty and the sublime; etc. Consequently, carrying on the work of animal protection and reform does not require ascribing direct moral status to nonsentient entities.[44] That is, once we abandon the Heideggerian and deep ecological belief in "biocentric egalitarianism," as Zimmerman refers to it, we are not necessarily committed to the belief that nonsentient beings have value only as natural resources. It is not clear to me that Heidegger's "egalitarianism," if that is the word for the perverse position he defends, can help human beings or animals or, for that matter, nonsentient nature. If help is to be given, it is most likely

to come from the creative tension among the thoughts of rights theorists like Regan, utilitarians like Peter Singer,[45] virtue theorists like Stephen R. L. Clark,[46] metaphysicians like Charles Hartshorne, and moral sceptics like Sapontzis.

By failing to acknowledge Heidegger as a source of wisdom regarding anti-anthropocentrism, I am perhaps open to the charge that I am engaging in a logic of contamination: Heidegger's thought leads to fascism and deep ecology, therefore deep ecology is fascist. But this is not exactly my view. Rather, I am claiming that deep ecology is not *necessarily* fascist, even if it is a very real possibility that it degenerate into environmental (if not real) fascism. The strong connection between environmental and real fascism, on the one hand, and deep ecology, on the other, lies in the fact that they both commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, and they commit it in the same way. This fallacy consists in treating abstractions as if they were concrete particulars. *Both* fascists and deep ecologists have been found to say at one point or another that "The individual by himself counts for nothing," as when Heidegger claims that:

> Since the beginning of my installation, the initial principle and the authentic aim [of my Rektorat]...reside in the radical transformation of intellectual education into a function of the forces and demands of the National Socialist state.... One cannot presume [to know] what will remain of our transitory works.... The only certainty is that our fierce will, inclined toward the future, gives a meaning and brings support to our most simple effort. The individual by himself counts for nothing. It is the destiny of our nation incarnated by its state that matters.[47]

Heidegger also claims that "In truth, however, my works belong not to my person, but instead they serve the German future and belong to it."[48] Zimmerman is to be commended for the way in which he, in *his* later philosophy, at times speaks of the intrinsic worth of individual members of an ecosystem (but which?), and of individual freedoms (but whose?). It is when he speaks in this manner that he is justified in resenting the charge that deep ecologists are calling for fascist measures to sacrifice individuals for the sake of the larger cosmic whole.[49]

But there are still some areas even in the later Zimmerman that are likely to bother animal rightists and political liberals. There is perhaps good reason for Zimmerman to encourage not the destruction of but rather the surpassing of the ego as part of the "emancipation" of nature, but such an emancipation would have to occur *before* the need for rights is surpassed. For example, in the most recent Zimmerman we find him criticizing the radical deep ecologist Christopher Manes for abandoning rights, but only because Manes does so without a trace of irony, as if such an abandonment would be tolerable if done ironically. Zimmerman also implicitly denigrates rights when he repeatedly refers to his position as a biocentric egalitarianism: are we to assume that certain rocks or grasses are morally equal to cows and human beings? We are not told. And in the most recent Zimmerman, the word "rights" is still placed in scare quotes.[50] When a utilitarian does this I am bothered, but at least I understand why the utilitarian uses the scare quotes; when Heideggerians like Zimmerman do so. I develop a nervous twitch.[51] Perhaps in Zimmerman's future writings he will indicate:

a. a bit more clearly where he stands on the problem of the one and the many as it relates to anti-anthropocentrism issues and

b. whether I am correct in claiming that because of his Heideggerian deep ecology he is, at present, at best a lukewarm defender of the many sentient individuals about us.

Notes

[1] See, e.g., in chronological order: George Seidel, "Heidegger: Philosopher for Ecologists?," *Man and World* 4 (1971), pp. 93-99; Bruce Foltz, "On Heidegger and the Interpretation of Environmental Crisis," *Environmental Ethics* 6 (1984), pp. 323-338; Joseph Grange, "Being, Feeling, and Environment," *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985), pp. 351-364; Laura Westra, "Let It Be: Heidegger and Future Generations," *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985), pp. 341-350; Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Layton, Utah: Peregrine Smith Press, 1985); and LaDelle McWhorter, *Heidegger and the Earth* (Philadelphia: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1991).

[2] Michael Zimmerman's writings include the following, in chronological order: "Heidegger on Nihilism and Technique," *Man and World* 8 (1975), pp. 394-414; "Beyond Humanism: Heidegger's Understanding of Technology," *Listening* 12 (1977), pp. 74-83; "Heidegger and Marcuse: Technology as Ideology," in *Philosophy and Technology*,

vol. 2 (Greenwich, Conn.: Jai Press, 1978); "Marx and Heidegger on the Technological Domination of Nature," *Philosophy Today* 23 (1979), pp. 99-112; "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 5 (1983), pp. 99-131; "Implications of Heidegger's Thought for Deep Ecology," *The Modern Schoolman* 64 (1986), pp. 19-43; "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1987), pp. 21-43; "The Thorn in Heidegger's Side: The Question of National Socialism," *The Philosophical Forum* 20 (1989), pp. 326-365; *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990): and "Rethinking the Heidegger-Deep Ecology Relationship," forthcoming in *Environmental Ethics*.

[3] See "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," p. 123; and "Implications of Heidegger's Thought for Deep Ecology," pp. 21-24.

[4] "Implications of Heidegger's Thought for Deep Ecology," p. 28, also p. 23.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 22-25.

[6] Zimmerman often emphasizes the similarities between Heidegger and Whitehead with respect to their criticisms of the view that the cosmos is a rigidly defined machine and their desire to recur to pre-seventeenth century modes of thought. But there is a decisive difference in this recurrence: Whitehead was a liberal. See Randall Morris, *Process Philosophy and Political Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991). On the fourfold see, e.g., Heidegger's *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. by A. Hofstadter (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1971); and *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1954). Also see David Weinberger, "Earth, World, and Fourfold," *Tulane Studies in Philosophy* 32 (1984), pp. 103-109.

[7] In this article I am largely criticizing the ethical implications of Heidegger's metaphysics, but there are problems with his theory even on a purely metaphysical level. For example, the clearing opened by *Dasein* should not, indeed cannot, as Heidegger alleges, lead us to wonder why there is something rather than absolutely nothing *if* absolute nothingness is, as Plato and Bergson and Hartshorne and many others have argued, unintelligible. Zimmerman, however, sometimes speaks as though it is only recently that *das Nichts* has become a mere vapor. His view is that *das Nichts* for Heidegger is not a mere nothing, but the withdrawing of Being which necessarily leads to the destruction of the earth. See "Heidegger on Nihilism and Technique," pp. 404-405.

[8] See "Implications of Heidegger's Thought for Deep Ecology," p. 43. Also see "Beyond Humanism: Heidegger's Understanding of Technology" and "Rethinking the Heidegger-Deep Ecology Relationship," where Zimmerman returns to "higher humanism."

[9] "Beyond Humanism: Heidegger's Understanding of Technology," pp. 76-80. On the world wars being due to forgetfulness of Being, also see "Marx and Heidegger on the Technological Domination of Nature," p. 100, and regarding the dangers of capitalism and democracy—again, not fascism—see p. 103. It must be admitted that at times Heidegger suggests that the history of Being is a kind of play in which one mode of self-manifesting follows the next without any mode being more adequate than any other; at other times, Heidegger suggests that the current technological disclosure of the Being of entities is particularly restrictive. It is this latter tendency which is emphasized by Zimmerman. See "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," p. 103.

[10] See Frederick Olafson, *Heidegger and the Philosophy of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 68, 270. See Heidegger's *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik* (1929-1930) in vol. 29-30 of the *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), pp. 261-396; also see *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (1927) in vol. 24 of the *Gesamtausgabe* (1975), pp. 270-271—trans. by A. Hofstadter as *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 190-191, 319; and *Parmenides* (1942-1943) in vol. 53 of the *Gesamtausgabe* (1982), pp. 158-159. Finally, see *Basic Writings*, ed. by Krell (N. Y.: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 170.

[11] Olafson, pp. 192, 205, 236, 241-242. See Heidegger's *Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*, pp. 368, 375, 402.

[12] See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by Macquarrie and Robinson (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 47, 74, 100, 208, 290, 396.

[13] See Joseph Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 218-219. Also see pp. 213, 260, 265.

[14] See "Rethinking the Heidegger-Deep Ecology Relationship."

[15] See Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: Unterwegs zu seiner Biographie* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1988); and Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

[16] *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. 244.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 243. Zimmerman alerts us to the fact that one of the most influential writers on ecological issues, Murray Bookchin, has warned that Heidegger's thought is tainted with fascism and is thus a dubious source of wisdom regarding a closer tie to nature, if only because the Nazis themselves quite clearly exploited the earth as a symbol for their movement.

See Bookchin's "A Reply to My Critics," *Green Synthesis* 29 (1988), pp. 5-7. Also, on the relationship between reactionary German philosophy and environmentalism in the early part of the twentieth century, see Anna Bromwell, *Ecology in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

[18] For a convenient selection of quotations regarding animals from Isaac Bashevis Singer's writings, see Jon WynneTyson, *The Extended Circle* (London: Centaur Press, 1985), pp. 335-337.

[19] See *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. 43. Also see "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," pp. 102, 107.

[20] "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," pp. 116-119. This claim was made in the posthumously published interview in *Der Spiegel* (May 31, 1976).

[21] "Implications of Heidegger's Thought for Deep Ecology," p. 29.

[22] "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism, pp. 99, 102, 106-107. The close connection between the early Zimmerman and the official version of Heidegger's politics can be seen in Zimmerman's "The Critique of Natural Rights and the Search for a Non-Anthropocentric Basis for Moral Behavior," *Journal of Value Inquiry* 19 (1985), pp. 44, 47, 49, 50-51. Here Zimmerman seems to favor Heidegger's idea that ontology precedes ethics; he indicates that rights cannot be abandoned *at present*; he claims, if I understand him correctly, that it is rights, rather than fascist or communist ideology, that spawns totalitarianism; he identifies "service" as the true aim of life (but whom are we to serve?); and he views rights as "fictions"; etc. Because of these dangerous claims, I think it best to take this article with a grain of salt when Zimmerman also claims that learning to dwell appropriately on earth is the most pressing moral issue of the day.

[23] *Basic Writings*, p. 228.

[24] Richard Wolin, *The Politics of Being* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1990).

[25] John Rodman, The Liberation of Nature?," *Inquiry* 2O (1977), pp. 83-131.

[26] *Op. cit.*, note 22.

[27] "Toward a Heideggerian *Ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," pp. 117-118, 120-122.

[28] See "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 43. Zimmerman criticizes rights theorists for having a gender bias. Also see "Implications of Heidegger's Thought For Deep Ecology," pp. 21, 23.

[29] Quoted in *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. 129, from Heidegger's *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, I, 15-16.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 242, 255-256.

[33] Quoted in Wolin, p. 130; also see p. 133.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 143; also pp. 141-142.

[35] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 151, from *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. by F. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987).

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 163, 168. Obviously not everyone will agree with my or with Wolin's assessment of the quotation at the beginning of this article. Three apologists for Heidegger include Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Back from Syracuse?," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989): Karsten Harries, "Introduction" to *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism* (N.Y.: Paragon House, 1990); and James Watson, "Why Heidegger Wasn't Shocked by the Holocaust: Philosophy and Its Defense Systems," paper given at the American Philosophical Association convention in December of 1991. The majority of thinkers who have dealt with this quotation, however, have done so negatively. See especially Wolfgang Schirmacher (who unearthed and first published the quotation from a 1949 lecture of Heidegger's), *Technik und Gellasenheit* (Freiburg: Verlag Carl Alber,1983). Also see the following in alphabetical order:

a. Arnold Davidson, "Opening the Debate," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989), cites Stanley Cavell to the effect that the Nazis can be characterized as those who have lost the capacity for horror.
b. Also see an unnamed reviewer in the *Economist* (December 19, 1987).
c. Victor Farias, *op. cit.*, has written a far better book than his critics have claimed, and he has done valuable archival work regarding Heidegger's attempt to become something of a philosopher-king within the Third Reich.
d. Allen Lacy, "Comfortable with Hitler," *New York Times Book Review* (December 17, 1989), indicates that, far from committing the *argumentum ad hominem*, Heidegger's critics cannot help but see at least the partial fusion of his philosophy and his Nazism when it is noticed that even something as abstract as his approach to Parmenides was seen by Heidegger himself as having a connection to the supposed need to defeat the Russians at Stalingrad.
e. Emmanuel Levinas, "As If Consenting to Horror," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989), pp. 487-488, oxymoronically sees the quotation as both "beyond commentary" and diabolical.

f. Mark Lilla, "What Heidegger Wrought," *Commentary* (January, 1990), finds Heidegger's remark obscene and details the coverup engaged in by Heidegger and his epigoni so as to establish an official version of Heidegger's "brief" involvement with the Nazis, a version which would (deceptively) have us believe that the inner truth and greatness of Nazism which Heidegger refers to in 1953 has to do with the question of technology.

g. Thomas Sheehan says the following regarding the quotation at the beginning of this article, as well as two others from Heidegger: "All three texts are characterized by a rhetoric, a cadence, a point of view that are damning beyond commentary." See *New York Review of Books* (June 16, 1988), pp. 41-42.

h. Finally, see Zimmerman's review of *"L'affaire Heidegger"* in the *Times Literary Supplement* (October 7, 1988).

[38] Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 245. The phrase "for its use" in this quotation, however, does not necessarily mean "as an economic resource;" it could also refer to nonsentient nature being of aesthetic use for sentient beings, etc.

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 361-362; also p. 396.

[40] *Ibid.* The close connection between environmental fascism and fascism *per se* is illustrated in the recent turmoil among the Greens and other environmental groups in France and Germany, some of which have a decided leaning to the far right. The recent strength of fascism in Europe is at least in part due to its appeal regarding concern for dwelling properly in the *Heimat.* The later Zimmerman shows at least some awareness of the fascist, totalitarian tendencies in total holism, even if he does not adequately distance himself from either total holism or from biosystemic egalitarianism. See "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 37.

[41] S. F. Sapontzis, *Morals, Reason, and Animals* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), p. 263.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 264. Also see J. Baird Callicott, "Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair," *Environmental Ethics* 2 (1980), pp. 311-338.

[43] Sapontzis, p. 269. Sapontzis is also very good on how animal liberationists do not contradict themselves in claiming that animals could be sacrificed for the sake of humans *in extremis* and that in normal circumstances there is not sufficient reason to sacrifice animals in order for us to have meaningful lives. See pp. 79-80, 86.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 269. Here Sapontzis closes the door which Regan opened only slightly regarding the possibility of inherent value in nonsentient nature. My own view is somewhat different from those of Regan and Sapontzis. See my *Hartshorne and the Metaphysics of Animal Rights* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988) regarding at least three different sorts of sentiency. Also see my *The Philosophy of Vegetarianism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984) regarding the complexities of the Greek view of animals and of nature, *contra* Zimmerman's characterization of the Greeks. See *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. 242.

[45] Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (N.Y.: Avon Books, 1975).

[46] Stephen R.L. Clark; *The Moral Status of Animals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

[47] Ott, p. 229. Quoted in Zimmerman's "The Thorn in Heidegger's Side," p. 332.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 157. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 334.

[49] See "Rethinking the Heidegger-Deep Ecology Relationship." My own view is that the claim that there is a *necessary* connection between Heidegger's philosophy and environmental or real fascism is too strong and the claim that Heidegger merely failed to prevent environmental or real fascism is too weak.

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] Evidence to the effect that even in Zimmerman's later thought there are features which should be called into question from the perspective of animal rights or political liberalism can be found in "The Thorn in Heidegger's Side," "Rethinking the Heidegger-Deep Ecology Relationship," and *"L'affaire Heidegger."* Zimmerman goes out of his way to emphasize that Heidegger was only one of many professors who aligned themselves with the Nazis (as if this helps Heidegger's case), that Heidegger's writings are not *intrinsically* fascist (even if they involve *many* fascist tendencies), that Heidegger's Nazism did not have much to do with the historical movement which most of us commonly understand as Nazism (an especially questionable claim), that Sartre also supported totalitarianism (as if this helps Heidegger's case), that the key question is how *we* would have behaved if we had been Germans in 1933 (an interesting question but a *non sequitur*), that Farias *only* offers a few examples of Heidegger's anti-Semitism (i.e. Farias shows, *contra* the official story, that Heidegger was an antiSemite), that Heidegger's supporters are *understandably* outraged by Farias's dishonesty (but not by Heidegger's dishonesty regarding his 1950s redefinition of Nazism as an attempt to get technology under control?), that the quote at the beginning of this article regarding the equality of mechanized agriculture and the gas chambers is regarded by many (not by Zimmerman himself?) as insensitive, etc.