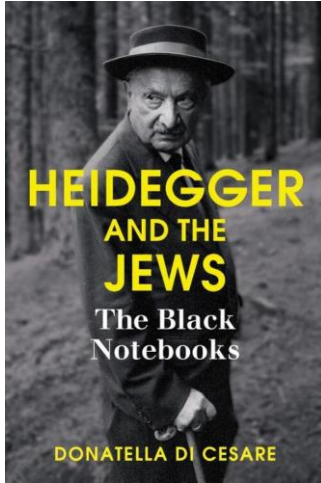


Heidegger and the Jews, The Black Notebooks

By Donatella Di Cesare



Philosophers have long struggled to reconcile Martin Heidegger's involvement in Nazism with his status as one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century. The recent publication of his Black Notebooks has reignited fierce debate on the subject. These thousand-odd pages of jotted observations profoundly challenge our image of the quiet philosopher's exile in the Black Forest, revealing the shocking extent of his anti-Semitism for the first time.

For much of the philosophical community, the Black Notebooks have been either used to discredit Heidegger or seen as a bibliographical detail irrelevant to his thought. Yet, in this new book, renowned philosopher Donatella Di Cesare argues that Heidegger's "metaphysical anti-Semitism" was a central part of his philosophical project. Within the context of the Nuremberg race laws, Heidegger felt compelled to define Jewishness and its relationship to his concept of Being. Di Cesare shows that Heidegger saw the Jews as the agents of a modernity that had disfigured the spirit of the West. In a deeply disturbing extrapolation, he presented the Holocaust as both a means for the purification of Being and the Jews' own "self-destruction": a process of death on an industrialized scale that was the logical conclusion of the acceleration in technology they themselves had brought about.

Situating Heidegger's anti-Semitism firmly within the context of his thought, this groundbreaking work will be essential reading for students and scholars of philosophy and history as well as the many readers interested in Heidegger's life, work, and legacy.

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