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### November 13, 2015: Heidegger's Judeo-Christian

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Title: Heidegger's Judeo-Christian

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11/13/2015—There have been complaints, for example in the book *The Unthought Debt: Heidegger and the Hebraic Heritage* by Marlène Zarader, that Heidegger's is silent about the Hebraic heritage that is said to influence him. There is even a hint in this line that the silence is willful and is evidence of antisemitism. Even someone sympathetic to Heidegger, like Allen Scult in *Being Jewish/Reading Heidegger* takes the allegation of silence seriously and tries to justify it by suggesting that one can only honor one tradition as a wellspring and for Heidegger, it was Greece. But all this overlooks the most obvious possibility—that Heidegger thought that Jewish thought and Christian thought shared essential attributes. Thus, in either discussing Christianity directly or in adopting Christian motifs, he was also dealing with Judaism. This would not be shocking. It is how I think of the tradition—as essentially one. And it would be the opposite of antisemitism. I had no evidence to support this surmise until I ran across the following quote in *Contributions to Philosophy*: "The last god has his own most unique uniqueness and stands outside of the calculative determination expressed in the labels 'mono-theism,' 'pan-theism,' and 'a-theism.' There has been 'monotheis," and every other sort of 'theism' only since the emergence of Judeo-Christian 'apologetics,' whose thinking presupposes 'metaphysics.' With the death of this God, all theisms wither away." Section 256, page 326. Now this is not too flattering of course. But it is a criticism of the place of Jewish thought and Christian thought within Western thought. Whatever Heidegger learned from the religious tradition of the West—and it was a great deal—he believed another beginning was necessary. It is not an unthought debt. And only one determined to criticize Heidegger could consider it hostile to Judaism.