

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT

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EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT - EKBAL

PREFACE

This thesis is a study of the concept of man in a recent philosophical trend, known as Existentialism. Existentialism is not a world philosophy and does not seem to have many adherents outside the countries of its exponents; and many do not consider it as a philosophy at all. It began in Denmark with Soren Kierkegaard, was introduced into Germany through the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, and finally, crossed over to France through its two exponents, Jean-Paul Sartre and Gabriel Marcel.

Man has been a subject of study for a very long time. The human being as such has been a great puzzle to philosophers and great thinkers of all ages. What he is has not yet been discovered, but many attempts have been made in this direction. The meaning of his life upon earth, as well as the best way in which he can use it are also questions that remain open. My interest lies in the most recent attempts made to solve these puzzles, and I hope that I may be able to reach certain conclusions regarding the contributions made towards a solution of these problems by the Existentialists. The life that the human race is leading seems distressing; it would appear that this is not the right path we are following, and if there is any purpose to our life, we are not fulfilling it. Whether there is a purpose or not, the kind of life we are now leading with its wars, pillages, hatreds, etc. does not seem to be the right kind. I may

be aspiring towards an imaginary Utopia; but the attempt to know something about ourselves might enable us to change our life, or at least to conclude that this is the right kind of life for us.

The first chapter is a short introduction to Existentialism, in which I shall take up the basic beliefs and ideas of this philosophy, both the Christian and the atheistic views. The succeeding chapters will deal with the concept of man according to each of the above six existentialist philosophers with critical remarks made wherever necessary in the course of the exposition or at the end of the chapter. In the last chapter I shall try to summarize the two divisions of Existentialism, comparing and contrasting them, and evaluating the movement as a whole.

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CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION TO EXISTENTIALISM

Existentialism, like every other philosophy, has its core and kernel round which it builds up itself. This solid kernel is nothing but man, the human being or the thinking animal. Man's subjective self is the starting point through which and in relation to which all else is explained. What is man, therefore, that so much importance is given to him? What is he and what role does he play in the universe?

In his book on Existentialism,¹ Paul Foulquie offers the following explanation. Man lies on the table before us, ready to be dissected and bisected, examined and cross-examined. Like everything else in the world, man's body is an en-soi, a thing in itself. Man opens his eyes to see himself in the world; he has not been created by himself nor by anyone outside himself. To be is to be in the world; and by what other means can man be in the world but by his body? Therefore, the human body is the means through which we can have consciousness of the world. It is consciousness itself; there is no distinction between them. The body is not something added to the human soul; it is an essential and necessary condition of man's being.

1. Foulquie, Paul, Existentialism, pp. 85-92.

Man is not only body, for as such he will only be 'en-soi' like everything else. He is 'pour-soi', a consciousness. Consciousness is "that by reason of which and by means of which there is a world".² In itself, consciousness is nothing: it has no content and it is not soul, for soul is utterly ignored by the atheistic existentialist; only in so far as it makes itself apparent can we say that it exists. The known is that being there; the knower is nothing in itself - he is only a cause whereby the known is a being-here. Without consciousness the known is neither present nor absent. The world is known through consciousness only; therefore, it may be said that without consciousness there would be no world. When a thing is known, it is known through consciousness: consciousness aids man to see that he is not his perception. Without beings out-there, there can be no consciousness; and all psychic entities are attitudes in relation to objects out-there, i.e. objects outside consciousness.

Consciousness not only gives knowledge of things out-there; it also gives man knowledge of himself. In order to have this knowledge, knower and known must be set apart; and, being the same, there results a split in the 'en-soi of the self'. According to Sartre, in this act lies a degradation of being. Why should consciousness be a misfortune? To Sartre it is because man's aim is ever to reach the stage of 'pour-soi - en-soi'; this stage is not so easy to reach: in reality it is impossible

2. Ibid., p. 85.

because consciousness is not free. As a result man is "condemned to a pursuit without end".³

Human reality is in its nature sick, because it arises into being as perpetually haunted by a totality that is powerless to be, precisely because it cannot attain to being-in-itself (en-soi) without losing itself as being-for-itself (pour-soi). Thus it is by nature unhappy consciousness, without any possible escape from the state of unhappiness."⁴

Harper, in his book on Existentialism,⁵ states that personal existence is extremely important to the individual; and by personal existence is meant the fact that the individual feels that he is, rather than the feeling that he is a man, a member of the human species. The meaning of existence lies in the fact that we can step outside everything in the world around us, even outside our own selves. How can we know our inner selves? The answer is through emotions that are "passageways to the inner self". That is why it is said that "The starting point of every existentialist is an intuition of the self which imprints an indelible certainty and direction of interest."⁶ There is nothing more true to the existentialist than Descartes' 'I think, therefore I am' because it is something available to all and can be attained by all; that is why it can be said to form the corner stone of their philosophy. This is the only notion that dignifies man and through it he is not reduced to a mere notion or a mere object. This means that man is not considered as an "ensemble of qualities" like that of a chair and a picture, only, but he is in

3. Ibid., p. 91.

4. Ibid.

5. Harper, Ralph, Existentialism, pp. 20-41.

6. Ibid., p. 41.

addition an "ensemble of values" different from the material surrounding. Therefore, by knowing himself as such, he also understands others as well. Sartre holds subjectivity to be the first and basic truth from which the existentialist departs; the cogito is held as the truth because there is nothing more certain, available to everyone at any time, than this knowledge. All other views outside this are not certain but probable. Here he disagrees with Materialism for reducing man to a mere object, i.e. explaining him in terms of qualities, of determined reactions applicable to other objects. He also disagrees with Descartes and Kant who believe that the cogito makes us aware of our being and consequently of the being of others; this awareness of others will make us understand ourselves. It is only in the presence of the other that I can know myself. That is others are the essential condition for my existence. Therefore I know what I am through others. Sartre holds that I cannot view myself in the same way as the others view me. I am what I become and what I make of myself; this is how I can understand myself.⁷

As it may be apparent, subjectivity is the corner-stone of Existentialism: "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself".⁸ He first is (exists) and then is what he is (essence). There is nothing before man; "Man is at the start a plan which is aware of itself; nothing exists prior to this plan; there is nothing in heaven; man will be what he will have planned to be."⁹ Before everything else, man exists and appears on the

7. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Existentialism, pp. 43-45.

8. Ibid., p. 18.

9. Ibid., p. 19.

scene in the world, and then he makes himself what he is. He is what he wills himself to be; he does not find himself ready made: he has to form his own essence. In this formation of essence, man pushes himself towards the future and so can form an image of himself in the future. At this point we can deduce the idea that man is responsible for what he is; besides he is responsible for all men. He must be made aware of both, his being and his responsibility.¹⁰ To sum up, "What man is to be is not predetermined; it is each one who determines that which he will be; his individual essence; we only truly are that which we become."¹¹ Since man is always in the making - becoming what he wills - he can never be an end; nor is there any general thing called mankind as such.¹²

What is the existential view on the question of freedom and choice? Man as given is universal essence - being man; he is only at liberty in making his individual essence - what man he is to be. He must be free in choosing himself - what he wishes to be. It is only in this free choice of what he wishes to be that man may be said to be existing; but if he becomes satisfied in reaching his aim and stops choosing to become, then he will cease to exist. The true meaning of existence is perpetual transcendence. The possibilities latent in the aims man chooses and reaches must be discovered as new impeti for further choices. Everything else in the world around is pre-determined; only man is free. This is why in

10. Ibid., pp. 18-21.

11. Foulquie, op.cit., p. 106.

12. Sartre, op.cit., p. 59.

him alone existence precedes essence. There are no sets of values or ethical norms that may be posited as ends for our choices; we are completely free to use our own norms and our own sets of values. Man makes his own ends for himself; but although these ends are interfused with his own self, he is free to discard them if he wants to. Passions and emotions that depend on what a person is are also free; everything in man's psychological make-up is free.

Sartre adds that our choices are made instinctively and not rationally. Decisions, as free actions, are made without any motive and without awareness. Thus, freedom in action, being beyond all reason, is absurd. The free act is instinctive and never rational. Being free in his act of choice, man is responsible for what he makes of himself; but this responsibility does not stop at this limit - it goes beyond the self to the external world and becomes responsibility for everyone else and everything else. Some of the existentialists have carried this responsibility so far as to feel personal responsibility for the declaration of the war.

"For Kierkegaard the free act is not that rational choice of which traditional philosophy speaks; it is more in the nature of a blind impulse, a leap in the dark." Freedom is a passionate 'bold venture' into the unknown infinite; and the passions alone give any conclusive or worthy results.¹⁴

It was said that there are no values or ethical norms: man chooses his own ends. In choosing a certain end, man gives it value at the same

13. Foulquie, op.cit., p. 104.

14. Ibid., pp. 50-104.

time. The act of choice and evaluation take place simultaneously. "To choose to be this or that is to affirm at the same time the value of what we choose, because we can never choose evil. We always choose the good, and nothing can be good for us without being good for all."¹⁵

Having not created himself, but having been thrown into the world, man is determined: he is determined to be free - to choose; so he is responsible for his acts. The act of choice is not choice out of nothing. Man is an "organized situation" and he has to make his choices in this situation. He remains the same, but the situations facing him vary.¹⁶

Is free choice a simple act by itself which entails nothing besides? No, it is the cause of the three famous existentialist feelings of anguish, despair and forlornness. The feeling of anguish or acute anxiety which is one of the key-words in existentialist literature, arises when man has to choose. Choice is free; man has to make up his own mind. There are no norms which he may follow, no principle for his choice. He does not know whether he has chosen right or wrong, for he has to give value to his choice. He feels that he has been thrown into the world in spite of himself, not of his own choosing, and he has been determined to make choices whose consequences are unknown to him. All these thoughts produce in him this feeling of anguish which, besides being painful, is challenging too, "for it places us once more in authentic existence".¹⁷ Moreover, if one

15. Sartre, op.cit., p. 20.

16. Ibid., pp. 20-52.

17. Foulque, op.cit., p. 59.

chose for himself alone, it would have been easy; but in choosing man chooses for the whole world - this in itself is enough as cause for anguish.¹⁸

The existentialist believes in life, his own, and consequently in other person's also. He cannot forget that life is short, slippery and totally responsible... One who feels himself at stake feels himself alive, and wins dignity and uniqueness in his own eyes. ... On the frontiers of his existence a man can view himself as he really is."¹⁹

In his book, Existentialism, Guido de Ruggiero gives another reason for anguish. He says that when loss of confidence in the collective order takes place, there is a feeling of acute anxiety to escape and save oneself.²⁰

Sartre says that anguish is recognition of responsibility in choosing other men. It is the very condition for action once we choose what we do. This means that in choosing man does not only choose for himself, but he chooses for all men. He has to face all possibilities alone, by himself, and make his choice. There is this feeling of responsibility present in all acts of choice, which results in anguish.²¹

Another feeling intimately connected with anguish is despair. A certain feeling of thrill, of urgency, "profound impatience and exasperation" accompanies despair. According to Sartre, despair means "that we shall confine ourselves to reckoning only with what depends upon our will, or on the ensemble of probabilities which make our action possible".²²

18. Ibid., pp. 55-98.

19. Harper, op.cit., p. 40.

20. Ruggiero, Guido de, Existentialism, p. 21.

21. Sartre, op.cit., pp. 24-25.

22. Ibid., p. 34.

He goes on to say, "Given that man is free and that there is no human nature for me to depend on, I can not count on men whom I do not know by relying on human goodness or man's concern for the good of society."²³

The following quotation makes these two feelings of anguish and despair clear:

In existentialism gone is all intrinsic differentiation of existence, gone all idea of ideal ends to be achieved; life is seen as a vain race to death, and all the self-consciousness which the individual can achieve is reduced to anticipating this idea and overcoming its anguish by the sense of its ineluctable necessity."²⁴

For the atheistic existentialist the sense of forlornness arises from the fact that God does not exist and man has to face all the consequences. Together with the nonexistence of God, values disappear from the realm of ideas because there is no infinite consciousness to perceive them and to think them. Man is not excused for what he does, there is nothing he can attach himself to and everything will be permissible. As a result, he is forlorn. He is left without any aid or support.²⁵ "Whatever a man may be, there is a future to be forged, a virgin future before him, then we are forlorn."²⁶

At this point it would be relevant to mention some differences between the atheistic and Christian existentialists on some of the above points. The atheists find a contradiction in the notion of a being who is his own cause; everything existing is contingent, so if God were to exist,

23. Ibid., p. 36.

24. Ruggiero, op.cit., p. 50.

25. Sartre, op.cit., pp. 25-28.

26. Ibid., p. 28.

He would also be a contingent being. Moreover, being is devoid of reason and everything passes away accidentally - no plan, no necessity.²⁷ To the Christian existentialists God is an existent being and through His incarnation, He has made it possible for men to relive His life. Like the atheist, the Christian is always on the go to attain further perfection. That is, the whole aim of the atheist is to attain that state of being in which he is both *pour-soi* and *en-soi*. As mentioned above this is impossible; nevertheless, the existentialist has to form his own essence perpetually. He must not be satisfied once he reaches a perspective aim, but he must find there an impetus for further pursuit and self-development. The Christian, likewise, struggles ever to reach these godly perfections. Naturally, this too is impossible, for then he would become God. His whole life is spent in continuous struggles towards perfecting his character and coming as near the highest perfection as possible. The Christian lives in terms of projects like all existentialists. Here, anguish arises with the idea of man's sinfulness; only the elect go to Heaven by the grace of God - this is an echo of the Augustinian doctrine of salvation. Later on, Catholicism gave some hope by stressing good works; but, nevertheless, God chooses whom he pleases, and this act of God is beyond all reason and so it cannot be understood. This is exactly like Sartre's notion of the absurdity of reality. Sartre believed that reality is irrational, it is beyond all reason and that is why it is absurd; so is the free act. In the same manner many Christian doctrines are beyond reason, that is, they

27. Foulque, op.cit., pp. 93-95.

cannot be explained rationally. Such doctrines have to be accepted by faith only. Both parties, the atheists and the Christians believe that being is irrational; but the atheists attribute this to being itself as having no cause and no explanation, while the Christians say that the ways of God cannot be understood through man's reason.²⁸

Kierkegaard finds refuge in faith; there is something to cling to; consequently this feeling of forlornness can be overcome. He holds that man should not try to prove God as he does an idea; he should try to live in relation to God.²⁹

The world in which man finds himself thrown is, in itself, an 'en-soi' says Sartre; it is as it is, solid with no vacuum; it is absolutely contingent and absurd, without any reason. The world is in a chaos before consciousness comes into the scene. Chaos itself is irrational and this perpetual irrationality and absurdity causes nausea. Once human consciousness comes in, the world acquires significance and becomes knowable phenomena. Every man has his own world as made by his own consciousness; significance of the world varies with human minds, races and periods. Therefore, the objects in the world exist only for those conscious of them.

What about other people? Like everything else in the world, others exist only in so far as one is conscious of them. For me, people are instruments for my projects; at the same time I know that they have consciousness and so can use me as an instrument for their own ends. This

28. Ibid., pp. 96-104.

29. Ibid., p. 104.

feeling of shame that results from the knowledge that I am used as a thing by others is the original fall of man. Original fall and original sin are not explained as Adam's fall and sin; they are man's entrance into a world in which other people are besides himself.³⁰

To exist is not to be; the first is active, the second passive. Existence which precedes essence in man is a dynamic urge towards an ever fuller becoming.³¹

In general we may summarize the existentialist as an impatient fellow, whose emotions are not divorced from his powers of understanding; a man nostalgic for the bedrock of things, persons, values and feelings. He cannot forget that he too is a little incarnation, spirit in flesh and bone, here and now, himself and no one else. He cannot forget because he feels himself and thereby both understands and evaluates his existence. His existence is being consumed without recovery - he knows this if only through feeling his body's tempo of subsistence. He feels, and thereby knows that everyone dies in his own way.³²

30. Ibid., pp. 74-83.

31. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

32. Harper, op.cit., p. 29.

CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN KIERKEGAARD

Soren Aabye Kierkegaard, the great Danish philosopher, was born in Denmark in the year 1813. In physique he was deformed and he suffered from attacks which left him in a pitiable state. He was the last child born into a large family and at an early age, after the death of his mother, sisters and some of his brothers, he became his father's only companion. This companionship had a great effect on his later life and ideas; it made of him an ironical assailant. He did not feel at home in the world for several reasons: first, he was sent to school dressed unlike all his companions - a fact that attracted more attention to his appearance and made him a subject of ridicule; second, his deformed body and his fits made of him a queer boy; third, he was brought up in a very rigid protestant atmosphere and was introduced first and foremost to what he calls "authentic Christianity" - Christ crucified to save men from their sins. His long walks in the room with his father and the conversation that went on between them developed in him the power of imagination to a great extent.

As he became older, his new experiences disturbed him more than ever. What had a great and impressive effect upon him was his engagement to Regina Olsen and his sudden decision to break it off. This was such a trying experience that it disturbed him for a life-time. Fear and

Trembling and Repetition are two of the works written after this incident which convey plainly his disturbed conscience.

Being a solitary, deformed, deep-thinking fellow, he used all his wit to counterbalance this part of his nature. In his early youth he went to extremes in life and pleasure to make up for what he lacked; but suddenly in 1838 he was transformed into a religious man. In this too, he did not fit in with his society and with people in general. Christianity for him was something different from the established Christianity of Christendom; so he began his attacks on the established religion - not the Christianity of the Bible, but the Christianity of the church and the state.

"Existence is after all infinitely profound, and its guiding power knows how to intrigue one better than all the poets rolled into one."¹

"Existence, and especially Christian existence, unites contradictories. The existent being lives in a stake where the extreme points of opposition are always given together, given in their very opposition. It is thus that the existent being reaches the summit of existence, by the effect of the extreme tension which the paradox produces in him."²

Defined thus, existence must be lived through. What is man to live it through and how can it best be lived through?

Man is body, spirit, feeling and passion. The body is that by means of which he is in the world. (Kierkegaard does not take pains to dwell much on this subject). In Concluding Unscientific Postscript,³

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1. Kierkegaard, Soren, Repetition, p. 89.
 2. Jolivet, Regis, Introduction to Kierkegaard, p. 103.
 3. Kierkegaard, Soren, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 33.

spirit is identified with inwardness, inwardness with subjectivity, subjectivity with passion; therefore, spirit can be said to be passion. It is that which gives life through death. Contrary to the world which is finite and chaotic, the world of the spirit is guided by "a divine and eternal order: here the rain does not fall on the just and the unjust alike: here the sun does not shine on good and evil alike."⁴ This is the immortal world after death whose presence in man must be cared for and developed as a preparation.

Passion is the greatest power in man, for Kierkegaard says, "In passion the existing subject is rendered infinite in the eternity of the imaginative representation, and yet he is at the same time most definitely himself."⁵ Moreover, passion is the only condition for faith and for freedom. This shall be made clear later on. Understanding existence stirs up passion; passion in turn helps the leap into action. With the denial of passion comes the denial of "oneself as an existing being" and the denial of choice which is the corner-stone of existence. As soon as passion is eliminated from subjectivity it means that there is no more an infinite interest present and therefore there can be no decision in general.

Going back to existence, it is found to be in a process of becoming. Everything existing is also in such a process of becoming, including the existing individual himself. As an existing thing, man always tries to become what he is not; his aim is the infinite and he heads towards that.

4. Kierkegaard, Soren, Fear and Trembling, p. 23.

5. Kierkegaard, Soren, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 176.

In other words, he projects himself into the future, that which he is not, trying to reach it and make it the present, that which he is. The meaning of existence lies in the strife towards the infinite. This strife is both pathetic and comic: pathetic, because it can never be attained; and comic because there is a self-contradiction involved in the notion of such a strife. After all the pains he has taken, the individual is confronted with failure. This is what makes the whole human situation tragic. On the other hand, the human situation is comic, because, from the very beginning, this strife towards the infinite is self-contradictory; there can never really be a strife towards the infinite, yet everybody joins in and tries hard.

The outside world is very imperfect. Things in the world belong to those who happen to possess them. There is a sense of indifference attached to the objects in it. The objects in the world are neutral, they have no value and no meaning in themselves. They are neither good nor bad, neither a help to the individual nor an obstacle. It is only when the individual uses them in one way or the other that he gives them meaning and value; and the meaning and value given to objects differ with the individuals and with the same individual at different times. What may be a help to me may not be so to you, nor to myself at some other time from another point of view.

Man finds himself existing in the world. He is not thrown from nowhere; he is created by God. Because he comes into existence, he joins in the process of becoming; but he is different from other existent things

in that he partakes of the infinite and the finite. "The subject is an existing infinite spirit. The infinite and the eternal is the only certainty, but as being in the subject it is in existence."⁶ Being both finite and infinite he has to become one of them existentially. Although he may strive to attain both but this is impossible; for he cannot be eternal - i.e. removed from existence - and at the same time existing and becoming. In this surrounding man has to act in order to do so, he must turn inwardly and look into himself.

Why is it necessary to become subjective? One of the first important reasons is to examine and discover all talents latent in oneself in order that one may act at one's best. In Concluding Unscientific Postscript⁷ Kierkegaard presents the following argument. Objective thought is found to be indifferent to the individual and to his existence; so the individual turns inwardly into himself to exist in his own thoughts. These thoughts, being individual and subjective, are incommunicable. Subjective thinking gives the individual an inward reflection which in turn is a double reflection: the object of his thought is universal, but it becomes subjective when thought by him in his inwardness. The subjective thinker, bearing the infinite in his soul, acquires a negative form. This negative form is present in all existence too, since all existence is becoming. By his inward reflection he will realize this negative element - the infinite - within himself and in existence, and thus becomes positive, by

6. Ibid., p. 75.

7. Ibid., pp. 67-86.

continually becoming aware of the negative. How will this knowledge help man? It will help to form a very essential trait in his character, and that is he will always be ready to learn, will never stop learning to become a teacher, and will ever go on striving. This is the existential man. As soon as he feels that he knows enough and there is nothing more for him to learn, he will stop existing at all.

"He strives infinitely, is constantly in process of becoming... This process of becoming is the thinker's own existence; from which it is indeed possible to make abstraction, but only thoughtlessly, in order to become objective.... As long as he is an existing individual, he is in process of becoming."⁸

In another place, Kierkegaard emphasizes the same idea, saying:

"An existing individual cannot find, and dare not give himself, the calm need to become fantastic; for as long as he is in existence he will never become eternal. In existence the watchword is always forward; and so long as the watchword is forward, it is man's task to exercise himself in making the absolute distinction, in attaining facility in making the distinction more and more easily, and in cultivating a good consciousness with himself."⁹

Although created by God, man is free; his freedom was given to him by God Himself. This freedom is bound up to necessity: freedom is liberty to choose directly connected with the necessity of the choice. Man cannot choose not to choose; here too he is choosing something which is 'not to choose'. In Repetition Kierkegaard says that man is aware of his life to be as "frail as the life of a flower and soon fades, but that

8. Ibid., p. 84.

9. Ibid., p. 368.

nevertheless in the possession of freedom he is great, and has a consciousness of his freedom which God Himself cannot take away from him, though it was He that gave it."¹⁰ Choice is never rational; it is always passionate and therefore absurd. This is why passion is very important; because man is existing and as such he has to choose. There is no other way to choose but passionately. Choices are never thought of or deliberated upon. To make the best choices, passion must be cultivated and developed.

The word necessity, since it has been mentioned above, deserves some elaboration. Kierkegaard introduces this notion in the Philosophical Fragments¹¹ in relation to God. It is not the necessary that comes into being, for to come into being means to suffer and that which is necessary cannot suffer. The necessary is; it does not become; becoming is only from possibility to actuality. It should not be said that the actual is more necessary than the possible for necessity is essentially something by itself, different from both. It is never necessary for a thing to become; it becomes only freely, through an act of freedom.

"All becoming takes place with freedom, not by necessity. Nothing that comes into being does so by virtue of a logical ground, but only through the operation of a cause. Every cause terminates in a freely operating cause."¹²

Kierkegaard conceived man as distributed into three stages.¹³

It is man's task to find out in which stage he is. These stages are closed up within themselves and although they follow upwards by degrees, they are

10. Kierkegaard, Soren, Repetition, p. 127.

11. Kierkegaard, Soren, Philosophical Fragments, pp. 60-61.

12. Ibid., p. 61.

13. Jolivet, op.cit., pp. 110-193.

not related one to the other. One stage does not develop into the other. Man can leave one stage and enter the other by a leap and not by mediation. A complete transition must take place within the individual so that he may pass from one stage to the other. The leap is an absolute choice. The norm followed for this notion of stages is the perfection of the highest in man. This 'highest in man' is nothing but passion; for Kierkegaard humanity in its purest form means passion and not reason. The highest passion in man is faith put into experience.

The aesthetic stage is noted for the primacy of pleasure, both sensual and intellectual. The aesthete demands continual change so that he may have freshness. He holds that the moment is everything, whereas it is only a superficial passing thrill. The element of eternity is absent from the moment, at least the aesthete does not account for it, and this is why he is always desperate, suffering and unhappy. He wants something more lasting, but he is confronted at most with the rush of the moment. In his despair he yearns for death. His life is all sin and illusion; it is empty and valueless because he has shut out the eternal from his moments.

In the ethical stage morality is the chief principle and duty is the aim. In doing his duty man synthesizes within himself the universal and the particular. In itself, duty is universal; it is absolute. In performing it man does the particular - what he as an individual can perform -; he does not do duty as such, but he does his duty. Here man has gone a step further towards perfection. Although this stage deals with

general categories and will seem to be the same for everyone and for the same person, yet it has its own freshness and change in the form of repetition. Every individual has to act these categories in his own way; he has to make the universal particular. Repetition itself embodies novelty and change. In Fear and Trembling ethics is defined in the following manner:

"Ethics is as such the universal, and as the universal it is valid for all, which may be expressed in another way by saying that it is valid at every moment. It rests immanent in itself, having nothing outside itself which is its end, being itself the end of everything outside itself."¹⁴

If his ethical action does not result in happiness, then the ethical thinker despairs. He expects happiness to be the result of doing his duty. This is one objection to this stage. Another one is the fact that being made of general laws or duties, it demands of man to lose himself in this generality, and so by devoting himself to the performance of his duties, man may lose himself as an individual. Moreover, its judgments are more of the aesthetic; they are not truly moral. Still a third objection is that ethics does not solve exceptional problems; it solves problems according to a general norm, but whatever has a special significance cannot be thus resolved. What results here is death and despair. The notion of despair is discussed in Concluding Unscientific Postscript: "The ethicist has despaired; in this despair he has chosen himself; in and by his choice he reveals himself."¹⁵ A few pages after this Kierkegaard explains what

14. Kierkegaard, Soren, Fear and Trembling, p. 66.

15. Kierkegaard, Soren, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 227.

he means by 'chosen himself' and 'reveals himself'. He writes:

"When I despair, I use myself to despair, and therefore I can indeed by myself despair of everything; but when I do this, I cannot by myself come back. In this moment of decision it is that the individual needs divine assistance, while it is quite right to say that one must first have understood the existential relationship between the aesthetic and the ethical in order to be at this point; that is to say, by being there in passion and inwardness one will doubtless become aware of the religious - and of the leap."¹⁶

There are three kinds of despair: weakness-despair, conscious despair and defiance-despair. Weakness-despair is that state of despair which arises from man's ignorance of his 'self' and of his destiny. He does not know that he is a spirit, an eternal self that must always strive towards the absolute. He is unaware of what he is and where he will end up. This is why he is desperate.

The second kind of despair, conscious-despair, is both a conscious and an active state. Here the individual attaches a great deal of importance to temporal things. In his despair he does not turn to faith, but tries to get out of it by himself; so he sinks deeper in despair. He is conscious of his despair and tries to overcome it, but not following the right path, he is lost and more deeply involved in what he tried to get rid of. This state is active, unlike the first which was passive, because the individual was unaware of his despair and consequently did nothing to get rid of it.

16. Ibid., pp. 230-231.

Defiance-despair is an acute kind of despair. The individual abuses the eternal quality inherent in himself in order that he may be himself. To be significant and to prove himself; the individual refuses to accept any help in any way.

The third stage in which some men are found is the religious stage, and this is the highest stage of all which everyone should endeavour to attain. The ethical categories will still hold in this stage but in a more developed manner. It is worthy of note that Kierkegaard does not say that the qualities of each stage must be completely discarded whenever there is a leap into a higher stage; no, they will hold on but in a more developed way. Every higher stage embodies everything high and noble in the previous stage, perfecting them and fulfilling that which the previous stage could not fulfill alone. Religion cannot be reduced to morality, because it has to do with the infinite and it cannot be attained by reason: it is absurd because it is beyond and above all reason. It has to be reached by a leap into the absurd, without understanding, but with faith. The leap comes by despairing, when man gives up himself completely to God.

In becoming religious, man holds an absolute relationship with God (this is only valid in the case of the Christian religion; in other religions the relationship is only relative). At this point, there is an essential concept introduced, the concept of sin. What is sin and why is it important to this relationship? In the Philosophical Fragments Kierkegaard writes: "Sin is being in error by reason of one's own guilt."¹⁷

17. Kierkegaard, Soren, Philosophical Fragments, p. 10.

This definition is somehow elaborated in Jolivet's Introduction to Kierkegaard. The concept of sin begins with the "consciousness of the self". This consciousness is of different degrees. There is the man who is desperately worldly, not the least concerned or aware of the infinite within himself. He lives in the world and for the world, believing that this is all that there is to life and that everything is fulfilled here. Contrary to this kind of man, is the one who is aware of the infinite and of the eternal in himself; he is ready to enter the religious realm only if he knows how to "be before God in the right way". The desperate man "before God" has to choose one of two ways; he has to decide: either not to be himself or to be himself. If he chooses the former, he denies the eternal in himself; if he chooses the latter, he stresses the human, ignoring the eternal part. In both cases he sins.

What is the nature of sin? Sin is not in itself, but in relation to God. This means that he who is before God has refused to accept the eternal in himself. He reduces God to his own measure. At the same time that being before God makes the self infinite (for this is the only occasion for the self to become the infinite self), it also hurls man into sin, because he denies infinity. This concept of sin bears upon the whole of mankind from the time of Adam; everyone is a sinner in this manner and in no other manner. God is man's measure embodied in Christ; man has to endeavour towards God and Christ, but he should not pull down God to his measures. Anyone who refuses Christ as his measure sins against God. Kierkegaard believes this to be the basic teaching of Christianity which

makes it the supreme religion - the stress laid upon the concept of sin and its importance to man.

To counterbalance sin, man must have faith. Faith is strongly stressed by Kierkegaard in nearly all his works. Here are some of the definitions of faith taken from some of the works:

"Faith is adherence to a paradox, a leap into absurdity. It is an anxiety, an uneasiness, a doubt."¹⁸

"Faith is the death of reason."¹⁹

"Faith begins where thought leaves off."²⁰

"Faith is the highest passion in mankind."²¹

"Faith is not an aesthetic impulse, but something far higher, precisely because it presupposes resignation; it is not the immediate instinct of the heart, but the paradox of existence."²²

All these quotations show the irrational and absurd nature of faith, a resignation to the will of God without any attempt on man's part to understand.

"In infinite resignation there is peace and rest; for it is only in infinite resignation that I become conscious of my eternal worth, and it is only then that there can be any question of grasping existence by virtue of faith."²³

18. Kierkegaard, Soren, For Self-Examination and Judge for Yourselves, pp. 42, 44.

19. Ibid., p. 101.

20. Kierkegaard, Soren, Fear and Trembling, p. 65.

21. Ibid., p. 196.

22. Ibid., p. 55.

23. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

Fear and Trembling shows clearly the importance of resignation and of faith. Abraham did not ask questions about any of God's commands. He was commanded to sacrifice his son; he did it in complete resignation and in utter faith. He made of an act of murder a holy act. He never thought about what he was doing; he obeyed the command with all his heart. This is how he achieved the highest form of existence man can ever reach. This conveys Kierkegaard's belief that whatever comes from God is just and good, though it may not seem so to human judgment. With this belief at heart, man must accept anything and everything without reasoning and without measuring.

Let it not be thought that once man attains the religious stage, he is happy and peaceful. The religious life is a life of suffering, of dread, of fear and trembling and of anguish. Anguish arises from the consciousness of sin and the uncertainty of salvation, for man is saved by grace only. How is he to choose what is right but by fear and trembling which help him along on the way to freedom? The religious life is not a life of ease; it is a life of tension and suffering; but all this will lead to peace and happiness in the eternal life. "Eternal happiness is essentially relevant to an essentially existing individual, not related by an aesthetic dialectic to a romantically wishful individual."²⁴

In Attack upon 'Christendom', Kierkegaard stressed first and foremost all through the book, the importance of suffering. He attacks

24. Kierkegaard, Soren, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 351.

the priests and the church for no reason than the fact that they are the last to suffer in this life. Therefore, they do not understand the true spirit of Christianity and so must not be called "witnesses to the truth". Man must spend his life in suffering; he must apply every word of the Bible to himself and suffer for that. He should not think of himself as the good Samaritan but as the Pharisee. He should all the time think of himself as the betraying Judas. In this manner, and in this alone, can he 'purify himself. Suffering is to man what fire is to the gold; both purify their objects.

The following is a synthesized picture of man as he should be. The religiously Christian is the aim. As a supreme religion Christianity stresses subjectivity on which its whole truth is based. The aim of Christianity is to perfect and intensify passion; passion is subjective and never objective. Christ is the Pattern to be followed. In His life on this earth, He served only one Master; and so should man. Through His Death, He has saved man and covered up all his sins; therefore man must live in Him. The most perfect and best gifts come from God who has created this world in His omnipotence. He has remained invisible in His creation and He can change it at His desire, Himself remaining unchanged. Although invisible, God is omnipresent; this is what man should always bear in mind. Man must endeavour to come so close to his inner self and understand it to such an extent that he might be before God. This deep and clear self-knowledge must lead to action, for religion is action and not words. Kierkegaard believes that every man has a talent and his

knowledge far exceeds what is expressed in his life. True self-knowledge and understanding will help him put his knowledge and talents into action and ever strive to develop them to the greatest extent possible. The reason for this disproportion between our talents and our actions Kierkegaard finds in this: man is educated, reared, directed according to "man's conception of what it is to be a man"²⁵ and not to the divine conception. Divinity or exaltation is what we lack today. This is why man acts in the moment and he waits for his reward impatiently in the moment. Not having it, he becomes unhappy and despairs.

Life is not an empty, fruitless passing away of generations. It is not pushed on by dark passions; it is not a bottomless void. There is an eternal consciousness immanent in life which makes it meaningful. There are sacred bonds that tie mankind together. Every act done is taken care of: "Not one shall be forgotten who was great in the world; but each was great in his own way, according to the greatness of the thing he loved."²⁶ He who loves God is the greatest of all men.

What kind of an individual is he who loves God and has faith? Such an individual would be one who gives up everything in infinite resignation. He is always moving towards infinity; his movement is so precise and sure that he does not doubt anything, not for one moment. There is never a feeling in him to be someone else; he knows what he is and always remembers that. This remembrance tortures him and is painful to him, but

25. Kierkegaard, Self-Examination, p. 105.

26. Kierkegaard, Soren, Fear and Trembling, p. 11.

he bears it patiently, knowing that in infinite resignation there lies a reconciliation with existence. He is the one who comes out of his hiddenness after turning inward and manifests himself in the universal. He proves himself as an individual and asserts his individuality. Turning inwards, he becomes conscious of his immortality, a consciousness which belongs to him alone and which is conceived at the moment of absolute subjectivity.

The man of faith lives in suspense; he is not certain of his salvation for he must wait for God's grace. He spends his life in suffering, both physical and spiritual, renouncing everything worldly and holding to everything other worldly. His finite mind cannot rationalize the absurd - the fact that God has become: was born, grew up, etc., like any other individual; so he must accept it in faith. Being aware of his freedom, he chooses for himself and by himself. He has to choose, and how to choose the right is the question. Fear and trembling aid him in making the right choice. We can see him intent upon reading God's word, looking at himself there as if at a mirror and judging himself; for every man has his own preacher within him and so cannot escape from knowing his sins. He can determine for himself his relation to an eternal happiness. What he needs to do is to "submit his entire immediacy with all its yearnings and desires to the inspection of resignation." If any point of resistance is found in this submission, then he is far from eternal happiness. He is the man of action, not of words, for he knows that truth is not abstract reasoning, but the life and action of the individual holding it. He would

have for his motto the following quotation: "It is human to cry out and human to weep among those who are weeping, but it is a greater thing to believe, a more blessed thing to contemplate the believer."²⁷

From all this one can clearly see the great effect of Kierkegaard's personal life on his philosophy; it is the true mirror of his inner self. Such a tortured and suffering individual, I believe, could not have produced anything but a philosophy of suffering as he has done. He has well stressed the importance of an individual self-knowledge, faith as action, and the importance of turning towards the Infinite. Nevertheless, I would like to make some comments on his philosophy, giving my main objections.

As a Christian existentialist, Kierkegaard believed in God as the cause of the universe and all therein. In one of his works²⁸ he mentions clearly that God has created the world in His omnipotence, He Himself remaining invisible but omnipresent. Then, when writing about the man of faith, he says that the man of faith must resign completely to God and to His ways, for whatever comes from God is just and good. Having made these things clear, we read in his Philosophical Fragments²⁹ that there is no logical ground for anything that becomes - everything that exists has become from actuality into possibility. There is no necessity for this becoming; it takes place through a cause operating freely. Does

27. Ibid., p. 13.

28. Kierkegaard, Soren, For Self-Examination and Judge for Yourselfes.

29. Kierkegaard, Soren, Philosophical Fragments, p. 61 (quoted on p. 19 of this chapter).

this mean that God created the world in an act of freedom, absolutely illogically? If so, how can infinite consciousness rule the world now and how can it be said that everything which comes from God is just and good? It cannot be conceived that the world, which is now governed by thought and understanding, had an illogical creation.

Closely tied up with this notion of the good and the just, the notion of sin seems hard to grasp. If everything that comes from God is good and just, how can we account for sin and evil? Kierkegaard's notion of sin as the denial of the infinite in man, makes man extremely hopeless. He does not leave a way open for hope and reconciliation. When man is before God he sins automatically (and being before God is the highest aim). He must live all his life in suffering and suspense. Has God planned a dead end for his creation? Is there any evidence that God has meant all this torture for man? Moreover, if all life is suffering and despair, what is the aim? Is it only the attainment of eternal peace and happiness? If we say that everything which comes from God is just and good, then we cannot speak of sin and evil in this way.

Then comes the leap which is itself absurd and which carries man into the absurd which is the religious stage. The leap itself comes about by despair. In the religious stage, when man stands before God, he sins. Man is born in sin and he remains sinful wherever he is found. Since this is the case, why then go through all this self-knowledge to reach the highest stage which is the religious stage? Kierkegaard does not give hope; he cuts everything sharply by the edge. No matter how man may live,

no matter in which direction he may turn, be it to God himself, he sins. Kierkegaard was desperate himself, and he left man in despair, forgetting that this will soon kill him. He seems to have left mankind a warrant for early death.

CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN NIETZCHE

I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man?

All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man?

What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock, a thing of shame. And just the same shall man be to the Superman: a laughing-stock, a thing of shame.

Ye have made your way from the worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once were ye apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes.

Even the wisest among you is only a disharmony and hybrid of plant and phantom. But do I bid you become phantoms or plants?

Lo, I teach you the Superman.

The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth.¹

Is the author the above lines classified as an existentialist?

Friedrich Nietzsche was an existentialist in a way. He does not seem to have tried to build a system or a school of philosophy. He did not pour over books, dig through systems and old schools of philosophy,

1. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Prologue, p. 3.

either to revive a whole philosophy or part of one, or to formulate his own thoughts following a special trend. His works have been the outcome of his own experiences; his philosophy is his life lived, with all its inconsistencies, drawbacks, losses and gains, elevations and frustrations, and sweet dreams and bitter realities. Sometimes, the reader cannot understand what he reads, simply because it is a special person's experience translated into words. It is only living for the one who has experienced the thing, but completely dark to the masses. Nietzsche's philosophy is an embodiment of his experiences, ideas and imaginations, dynamic and vivid.

It seems to me that any proper study of any philosophy should begin with the philosopher himself. Man cannot have his ideas suddenly and from nowhere; his ideas take shape and solidify as years go by, beginning with his very early experiences. Some consciously admit the effect of their childhood upon their later life; and for some the impression has been left, although the impressing force has long been forgotten. Therefore psychology seems to be a great help to the better understanding of philosophy.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born in October 15, 1844, on a happy sunny day of national festivities, for it was the King's birthday. He was born into a proud and religious family - proud of its lineage and ancestry and very religious, his father being Pastor. There had been his grand-mother, his two aunts, his father and his mother, all strong-headed, somehow stiff people around him. His father had the tendency of losing

himself often in his own thoughts and has been described as a "proud, lonely gentleman". One can sense the strictly German discipline reigning in this house.

One of the very early events that had a great bearing on Nietzsche's thinking was the death of his father when he was only a child of four. It happened that Nietzsche was awake, looking out of the window on a moonlit night, when his father came into the yard. Approaching the stairs on the terrace, a small pet dog ran between his feet and he stumbled and fell down, his head hitting hard against the cold stone. This caused brain hemorrhage and ended in death after some time. What Nietzsche remembered later on and seems to have experienced many times during his life, was the cold and dreary night with the moon shining bright, and a dog howling in the silence. His theory of Eternal Recurrence is mainly based on this experience which is repeated in his works.

After his father's death, he was cared for and brought up by four women, with the utmost discipline. He was sent to a democratic school, but it was not a success with his highly disciplined nature, so that he felt lonely and solitary those very early years. It is not very certain whether his sister was his companion, as some tend to believe, or she was a dominant influence on Nietzsche. In any case, there was his sister whose presence influenced him in one way or the other. As he himself writes in his preface to The Genealogy of Morals, his philosophical thoughts began at an age of thirteen.

"Indeed, at the boyish age of thirteen the problem of the origin of Evil already haunted me: at an age 'when games and God divide one's heart', I devoted to that problem my first childish attempt at the literary game, my first philosophic essay - and as regard my infantile solution of the problem, well, I gave quite properly the honor to God, and made him the father of of evil."²

Love of music carried him into a fast and strong relationship with the master of music, Richard Wagner and into love with his wife, Cosima Wagner. The first part of the relationship did not hold to the end; but the second part did, to the very last days of his life, though it remained visionary and unsatisfied. Here is an account of his insanity, in spite of which he held his love for Cosima.

"When he awoke, it seemed that he had left the world of man behind. He ran to the post office and the railway station and accosted people, announcing to them that he was God in disguise. He wrote to his friends and signed himself, 'Dionysos,' The 'Crucified', and 'The Atichrist'. To Strindberg he wrote calling himself 'Nietzsche-Caesar'. The last tragic note of all went to Cosima Wagner:

'Ariadne, I love thee.

Dionysos.'

And in the joy of his apotheosis he sat at the piano, as he had sat that last day at Tribschen with Cosima, and improvised the songs which are sung in Heaven by Dionysus to his bride."³

During the course of his life, Nietzsche made many friendships which fell to pieces after some time, leaving him greatly disturbed. Aches and pains were his never failing companions that were tied to him closer and closer through the years, until he became mad.

2. Nietzsche, Friedrich, The Genealogy of Morals, Preface, p. 3.

3. O'Brien, Edward J., Son of the Morning, pp. 277-8.

This is a short summary of Nietzsche's life; but it is enough to show Nietzsche as basically a suffering individual, both physically and emotionally. This repressed, piled up suffering first burst out in his books and then in his insanity. He wanted to do away with established rule, idea, system, philosophy, etc., etc. Such a feeling arises only when one feels pressure upon him from all sides: pressure upon his body through pain and pressure upon his soul when no one feels and understands. He could not keep pace with his mind and heart. Although he was influenced by Schopenhauer, Greek philosophy and Romanticism, yet his philosophy bears mainly his own trade-mark.

In his book, Six Existentialist Thinkers, Blackham writes:

"He posed and lived a problem he could not himself solve. The problem was to overcome scepticism, and nihilism; after the undermining of all certainty in respect of knowledge, the lapse of all impulse and goal in respect of will, the extinction of all emotion, to recover intellectual assurance, emotional response, and commanding aims, that was for him the problem of philosophy - joyful wisdom."³

As an existentialist, Nietzsche believes that man is a process; his ego is not at rest but is in motion. There is no 'thing-in-itself' or essence or nature; everything is known according to the interpretation given to it by different individuals. "And what ye have called the world shall but be created by you: your reason, your likeness, your will, your

3. Blackham, H.J., Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 24.

love, shall it itself become."⁴ "There is nothing which is good, beautiful, sublime or evil in itself; but rather that there are conditions of soul which lead us to attribute such qualities to things outside ourselves and in us."⁵ As long as the individual neglects himself and does not examine and understand his own inner self, he is far from being real. If he does examine what he is and try to understand the possibilities latent within himself, he will acquire an individuality which will set him apart from other individuals and thus will assert his reality and his existence. This is not the result of a sudden 'act of thought,' a sudden idea, but is the outcome of a series of 'thoughtful acts'. The reality manifested in all appearances is their blind striving. Consciousness is described as "The proud knowledge of responsibility, the consciousness of freedom, power over himself and over fate."⁶ This idea of 'power over himself' is what made Nietzsche a desperately lonely man and blew off at last in insanity.

What is man? Nietzsche does not explicitly answer this question; but he seems to be dissatisfied with man so that he calls for the Superman, who is whatever man is not, who can do whatever man cannot do.

Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure. Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that sea; in him can your great contempt be submerged.⁷

Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman - a rope over an abyss.⁸

6. Blackham, *loc. cit.*, pp. 26-7.

7. Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue, s 3.

8. *Ibid*, § 4. s

To Nietzsche man is not an end in himself; he is not an aim or goal to be reached; he is only a bridge and that, most probably, to the Superman. Although man is basically a 'polluted stream' yet there are some to be preferred to others. Who is that man who is to be preferred? To Nietzsche he is the one who has the following characteristics:

- (1)- He despises everything, longing for the other shore.
- (2)- He sacrifices himself to earth so that the Superman may arrive.
- (3)- He lives to know so that in his knowledge the Superman might live.
- (4)- He loves his virtue which is the 'will to down-going', becoming its spirit and making it his inclination and destiny.
- (5)- He always gives and never keeps.
- (6)- He is always ready to succumb.
- (7)- He does more than he promises.
- (8)- By chastening his God, he yields to the wrath of his God.
- (9)- Having a deep soul, he will give up through a small matter.
- (10)- His soul makes him forget everything even himself.
- (11)- He possesses a free spirit and a free heart.⁹

Looking at these points that differentiate a man to be preferred and one to be shunned, one finds that the characteristics of the Nietzschean man do not differ from those stressed by great thinkers, especially

9. Ibid.

religious reformers. They are all embodied in the definition of a good man in any of the great religions with one difference. Whereas Nietzsche wants all this for the advent of the Superman, the religions want it for the advent of God. Can Nietzsche mean by the Supermen those who live when the Kingdom of God is established on earth? He says that the Supermen will not be created in his life-time, nor in his children's; and do not the different religions claim of the Day of Judgment, when God's Kingdom will be established on earth? Could it not be that man as he is, is not worthy of the glory at that time, and there should be Supermen instead? It seems that Nietzsche had taken over the idea of the Superman from religion, although he completely denied religion and its bearing upon his life. One cannot help but think that Nietzsche's idea of the Supermen has a religious tinge to it.

The feeling of being fettered, being imprisoned, being bound is clearly seen tormenting Nietzsche when he says through Zarathustra:

"The more he seeketh to rise into the height, the more vigorously do his roots struggle earthward, downward, into the dark and deep - into evil."¹⁰

Man is a creator. In order to maintain himself he created values and assigned them to things, giving them his own significance. Existence would be empty without valuation; and valuation is impossible without a valuator, man.

A very significant idea, which gives the core of existentialism,

10. Ibid., Chapter 8.

is introduced here. Speaking to his disciples, Zarathustra says that both man and his world lie still undiscovered. Man has not found himself but he finds a master to believe in; of what account is such a belief? Only when man has found himself will the master return. Men hold onto beliefs without knowing why and without first knowing themselves before or in the light of their beliefs. They try to run away from themselves and hold onto something outside themselves without any question.

The great "noon-tide" is the time when man is in his course towards the Superman; he is midway between the animal and the Superman. At this burning stage he is the happiest, knowing that evening will soon come, followed by a new morning - the dawn of the Superman. He calls forth with all his strength: "Dead are all the Gods: now do we desire the Superman to live."¹¹ Who is God, and why is he dead?

"God is a conjecture: but I do not wish your conjecturing to reach beyond your creating will.
 Could ye create a God? - Then, I pray you, be silent about all gods. But ye could well create a Superman.
 If there were gods, how could I endure it to be no God.
Therefore there are no gods."¹²

Here Nietzsche seems to deny absolutely God's existence. God is reduced to a thought in man's mind. In another chapter God is dealt with as an existing being and, more than that, as the creator of the world.

"Thus spake the devil unto me, once on a time: "Even God hath his hell: it is his love for man."
 And lately, did I hear him say these words: "God is dead: of his pity for man hath God died." ¹³

11. Ibid., Chapter 22 § 3.

12. Ibid., Chapter 24.

13. Ibid., Chapter 25.

From these two quotations it is explicit that there was once a God, but he is now no more. He must have been the traditional God of religion, above man and more powerful and sensitive than him, since he has died of love and pity for man. These two ideas seem irreconcilable. Is the latter the remnant of the religious atmosphere in which he was brought up and of his early study of theology? Did he really believe deep within himself that there was a God, but trying to get rid of him, he killed him? There seems to be a confusion here in Nietzsche's mind itself. The same confusion appears when he thinks about the origin of the world. In one place he says that the creator, wishing to look away from himself, created the world. On the other hand, he addresses men as the creators of the world:

"And what ye have called the world shall be created by you: your reason, your likeness, your will, your love, shall it itself become. And verily, for your bliss, ye discerning ones."¹⁴

If every man is a creator, then who is the creator? Does he mean by the creator the individual man? It may be, but it is not very clear as to what is really meant. In creating there is a salvation from suffering; but there must be much suffering and dying so that there might be creation. As one reads on, one understands Nietzsche to limit creation to the Superman or Supermen. He does not really say so, but from what he says, it is not very wrong to suppose that he does. He believes that man has sinned since the beginning of humanity - here we can understand Nietzsche to mean that

14. Ibid., Chapter 24.

there was a time when humanity was not -; and his sin was simply the fact that he did not enjoy himself enough. If he had, then he would not have given pain to his fellow-men, nor contrived pain. Men are not equal and never shall be; wars and inequalities shall ever be present. Man is compared to a disease; and a disease is always harmful and causes pain no matter how simple it may be. *

"The earth, said he, hath a skin; and this skin hath diseases. One of these diseases, for example, is called 'man'."15

The following quotation will support my above supposition that Nietzsche limits creation to the Supermen.

"No one yet knoweth what is good and bad: - unless it be the creating one!

It is he, however, who createth man's goal, and giveth to the earth its meaning and its future: he only effecteth it that aught is good or bad."16

Although we are not dealing with the good and bad, but it seems from the above extract that by the creator he might have meant the Superman.

To go back to the idea of sin, is there any possibility of redemption? There is redemption, but it is not so easy to attain. Redemption comes through creation - the future must be created. A typical existential ideal is forwarded here:

"The past of man to redeem, and every "It was" to transform, until the will saith: "But so did I will it! So shall I will it -" 17

15. Ibid., Chapter 40.
 16. Ibid., Chapter 56, § 2.
 17. Ibid., § 3.

Man must create his future and once he has attained that future, he must create a new future, never stopping, never becoming satisfied.

Nietzsche is disgusted with man and he is disgusted with existence. His reason for this disgust is the eternal recurrence. Speaking through Zarathustra, he says that he has seen both the greatest man and the smallest man naked; both of them were alike: they both were "too human", and too small; this is why he is disgusted with them, and so with man. Then he saw that event the smallest man returned eternally; so he was disgusted with existence. He then turns to man and exclaims:

"Surpass, ye higher men, the petty virtues, the petty policy, the sand-grain considerableness, the ant-hill trumpery, the pitiable comfortableness, the "happiness of the greater number"-!

And rather despair than submit yourselves. And, verily, I love you, because ye know not today how to live, ye higher men! For thus do ye live - best!"¹⁸

He who knows fear and vanquishes it has really got a heart. By fear Nietzsche means something different from the existential meaning. Existentialism identifies fear with anguish and despair; to Nietzsche it means distrust in man. Kaufmann in his book on Nietzsche¹⁹ explains the concept of fear in the following way. For every psychological phenomena there can be found an explanation in two concepts: fear and power. When man is deprived of his power, two different feelings arise in him: the feeling of fear and that of the will to power. Fear is a negative feeling which makes us avoid doing a certain thing; the will to power helps us

18. Ibid., Chapter 75, § 3.

19. Kaufmann, Walter A., Nietzsche, pp. 160-63.

strive towards and for something. Through fear, although it is a negative reaction, we can get positive results; and the best is our knowledge of man. We cannot understand man through love, because love does not show us his true nature; it always hides and covers him up. Fear makes us pull him down to pieces and go deep into his self to unriddle his nature. In this way alone can we understand man.

Evil, Nietzsche finds very necessary as the best force that can help man. "Man must become better and eviler,"²⁰ he says, for this is the best for the Superman. A little further he says, "I, however, rejoice in great sin as my great consolation."²¹ He also advises men not to will anything beyond their power; it is better to make towards what lies within one's power and scope of reach. Being men we must head towards the kingdom of earth; we should want it and live for it. What do we know about the kingdom of heaven? Away with it then and concentrate on earth.

So far, the exposition has been about man preparing himself for and actually creating the Superman. What is man in reality? Man's reality is his body, and everything else is included in the body. The traditional separation of soul and body is denied. The soul is not a divine element or part in man; it is only a name given to a part of the body, to something within the body. Together with mind, the soul does not possess any faculty to produce special feelings or special thoughts. It does not survive after the death of the body; it even dies before the body at death. This

20. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Chapter 73, § 5.

21. Ibid.

means that there is no immortality. The only immortality that Nietzsche can think of is begetting children. He says about himself in many places that he is his father. People live in their children and that is their only immortality. With this he denies heaven and hell and even the devil.

"I conjure you, my brethren, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak unto you of supernatural hopes! Poisoners are they whither they know it or not."²²

The body, on the other hand, is conceived as something complex in structure, with all the parts related one to the other. This manifold complexity is in a flux; it is not stable at all. One of these parts is reason.

"Thought or reason is 'a relatedness of diverse passions and cravings'; 'every passion contains its quantum of reason'; feelings are implicit judgments; will includes feeling and thought."²³

Since will has been mentioned, it is relevant to ask what is meant by it.²⁴ Will is described as feeling, thought and passion. In the first place, it is a plurality of feeling; in the second place, one can discern a leading thought in every act of will; thirdly, there is a passion for command involved in the acting will. Intellect, will, sensations and values are dynamic factors which lead to the will to power and which eventually make up the self. Passion is the only strong mover of human nature. Reason is only an instrument of passion and not a power by itself, independent and controlling. The body is what man is entirely: it is the Self. The

22. Ibid., Prologue, § 3.

23. Morgan, George Allen, What Nietzsche Means, p. 91.

24. Ibid., p. 92.

senses and the spirit are the instruments of the body with which it sees and hears things and consequently seeks them. The Self seeks for ever.

"Ever hearkeneth the Self and seeketh; it compareth, mastereth, conquereth, and destroyeth. It ruleth, and is also the ego's ruler.

The creating Self created for itself esteeming and despising, it created for itself joy and woe. The creating body created for itself spirit, as a hand to its will."²⁵

In the human body we have different urges, each of which desires to rule. This desire stirs up rivalry among the different urges and their opposites, which will eventually lead to activity. Normally, any impulse that is not given the chance to be manifested outwardly, turns inwards and acts upon the self. Morgan²⁶ believes that Nietzsche did not consider all checking of impulses as harmful; he even stood for temporary asceticism for purifying, intensifying and spiritualizing the passions. Here I would like to make a comment. What is meant by "spiritualizing the passion"? Since Nietzsche does not believe in spirit as traditional religion does - spirit is only an instrument of the body, - can an instrument be something better than that for which it is an instrument? Could this be explained as a remnant of underlying religiosity, if Nietzsche really meant this? Moreover, Nietzsche holds that there is a dominant instinct in every person which makes him basically what he is. Now, he should try to know this and then try to build up his other impulses around this one and so grow up and become. Nearly all this takes place unconsciously.

Not much importance is attributed to the mind and consciousness

25. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Chapter 4.

26. Morgan, op.cit., p. 98.

as it had formerly been. As Morgan explains in his book,²⁷ consciousness has evolved as a result of communication with the outside world. It is observed that consciousness is transferred through language which is a subtle example of the need for communication. What consciousness does is that it makes us aware only of our nature which we have in common with men in general, not our individual, unique selves; and this is why it is superficial. Moreover, it supplies one with generalities only, general characteristics of the environment around.

What is to be the measure of the value of human conduct? To this question Nietzsche would answer: self-overcoming. To be powerful or to possess power means to overcome oneself. Life in its crude form and nature as a whole are ever moving; they are not stable but dialectical. Therefore, if we are to live in accordance with nature, we must try and overcome nature - nature being itself a process of "self-differentiation and self-overcoming". The mass of the people remain on the animal level because they are unphilosophic and their impulses unrefined. Only he who overcomes himself, "sublimating his impulses, consecrating his passions, and giving style to his character, becomes truly human" and as was said before - superhuman. In order to realize himself, in order to become truly human, in order to fulfill his human nature, man has only to cultivate his nature; but usually he does not succeed, and so we find the majority of men short of this self-realization. Nietzsche holds that as given, the

27. Ibid., pp. 106-111.

passions are in a chaos and the character styleless. The most powerful men organize their passions and give their character a well-ordered style, besides refining and sublimating their impulses. Once man has disciplined his character, he acquires a typical kind of experience which will often recur. A great man is not great because of the strength of his sentiments, but because of their duration. When the ideal is attained, it must immediately be surpassed; there should never be a halt; man must ever strive forward.

In Beyond Good and Evil Nietzsche exposes his idea of a kind of predetermination.

"Learning alters us, it does what all nourishment does that does not merely "conserve" - as the physiologist knows. But at the bottom of our souls, quite "down below", there is certainly something unteachable, a granite of spiritual fate, of predetermined decision and answer to predetermined, chosen question. In each cardinal problem there speaks an unchangeable "I am this"; a thinker cannot learn anew about man and woman, for instance, but can only learn full - he can only follow to the end what is "fixed" about them in himself. Occasionally we find certain solutions of problems which make strong beliefs for us; perhaps they are henceforth called "convictions". Later on - one sees in them only footsteps to self-knowledge, guide-posts to the problem which we ourselves are - or more correctly to the great stupidity which we embody, our spiritual fate, the unteachable in us, quite 'down below'."28

By freedom, Nietzsche means acting in such a way as to realize oneself. Freedom is not getting rid of something; it is over-powering and mastering oneself. What gives pleasure is not independence but power. "The instinct

28. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Beyond Good and Evil, § 231.

to freedom" is identified with the will to power, which is basically an overcoming and a mastering of the self. The highest instrument that the will to power makes use of in attaining its goal is reason; therefore, it follows that through rationality only can we acquire freedom. Nietzsche denied freedom of the will, teleology and a moral world-order as completely out of the question. He says about man,

"Man, a complex, mendacious, artful and inscrutable animal, uncanny to the other animals by his artifice and sagacity, rather than by his strength, has invented the good conscience in order finally to enjoy his soul as something simple; and the whole of morality is a long, audacious falsification by virtue of which generally enjoyment at the sight of the soul becomes possible."²⁹

In the Dawn of Day³⁰ he repeats that there is no purpose in nature and that reason came into the world by accident in an irrational manner.

Nietzsche finds human life dark and meaningless. He finds humanity a prejudice from which the animals are free. He believes that "Life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of peculiar forms, incorporation, and at the least, putting it mildest, exploitation."³¹ Man is all the time deceiving himself: he is at all busy arranging his qualities according to what others attribute to him, concealing some and putting some in the foreground. He is in error about his descent, his individuality, his mission so that he feels that he is too good and great for this world. These errors have caused all the misery and suffering in the world as well

29. Ibid., § 291.

30. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Dawn of Day, § 122, 123.

31. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Beyond Good and Evil, § 259.

as individual misery. Because of his morals man has turned out to be a suffering creature, believing that by his suffering he can surpass himself in this world where he has a transitory existence. Knowledge and faith do not help us towards action. "Then, I say, let us first and foremost have works! and this means practice! practice! practice ! The necessary faith will come later - be certain of that!"³²

Happiness can be found in the feeling of power. It is the result of the equilibrium in the realizing activities of the urges and desires. These two quotations will further clarify the meaning of happiness:

"Why everyone has the good fortune to discover the conception of existence which will enable him to realize his greatest share of happiness, though this will not necessarily prevent his life from being miserable and not worth envying."³³

"The first effect of happiness is the feeling of power, and this feeling longs to manifest itself, whether towards ourselves or other men, or towards ideas and imaginary beings. Its most common modes of manifestation are making presents, derision and destruction - all three being due to a common fundamental instinct."³⁴

Before ending this chapter, there are certain points which I would like to comment on. In enumerating the qualities of a 'good' man, or he who has to be preferred, we said that he is a man who longs for the other shore. ~~What~~ other shore is this? It is very ambiguous to find in Nietzsche such a sentence, knowing that he does not believe in immortality and consequently not in the other world. Being unable to explain it in any other

32. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Dawn of Day, § 22.

33. Ibid., § 345.

34. Ibid., § 356.

way, I found the following explanation for it which I have explained twice before: I believe that the early religious upbringing and his study of theology have influenced Nietzsche and have left some marks upon his thinking; and these sentences and phrases one finds here and there must be the result of this influence. He was being prepared by his family for the ministry to carry on the family tradition. Naturally, for such a preparation, he needed to be religiously educated. Besides, he often thought of God and had some experiences at an early age, when he was twelve years old, as O'Brien says in his life of Nietzsche.³⁵ He experienced "God in his glory" and I am sure that such experiences must have left some impression upon him.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra, Chapter 24, Nietzsche writes: "If there were gods, how could I endure to be no God! Therefore there are no gods." The first part of the quotation, the condition, could be explained as Nietzsche's love for perfection. Knowing that there is something higher than himself, man must strive and attain that height or else come as near to it as possible - this is natural in the case of the zealous, adventurous man. As to the second part, the conclusion, I do not think that it follows at all from the premiss. Man's ignorance of something higher than himself does not prove the non-existence of that thing. For example, taking the world of nature, we find it composed of inanimate objects, plants, animals and man. Are the inanimate objects, say stones, aware of the plants, the plants of the animals, the animals of man? In the case of the latter we

35. O'Brien, op.cit., pp. 27-8.

might say that the animals are conscious of man, but not of his thinking, being and other things that make him up. Now, does this unawareness, or unconsciousness, or ignorance disprove the existence of that which is not known? Taking another example, years ago man was ignorant about the roundness of the earth and supposed it to be flat. Would this mean that the earth was really flat because man supposed it to be so? Or, if he ignored many of the diseases, did it mean that they did not exist as such? I think that the answer to all these questions would be in the plain negative; and such is the case with our problem here. It does not follow at all that God does not exist simply because I do not know of him or I am not a God myself. Here I would like to ask Nietzsche about his Superman. Who is he? Is he existing? He is not existing, but man should try and create him. Since he is still in the realm of possibility and has not become an actuality, if I may be permitted to use the Aristotelian terms, then what makes us sure that we can actually create him, or live up ourselves to his standards in order to become one? Both God and the Superman are invisible beings towards whom man must strive; and I can see no difference in striving for the one or for the other, as long as we are striving for that which we are not. It is perfection that Nietzsche is after and that is the important thing. Did he believe himself to be a Superman? If he did not, how could he endure it?

Since we are dealing with perfection, it would be appropriate to ask the following question; perfection according to what standard? There is an actual stress in Nietzsche's writings that man should refine and subli-

mate his impulses. On the other hand, evil is believed to be a necessity in the world. How can evil be reconciled with refinement and sublimation? How can we explain the statement: "Man must become better and eviler"?³⁶ It is confusing to predicate both the goodness and the evil of man, for each indicates the absence of the other; how can they both be present? All morals and codes of morality have served to make man "mediocre"; their only task was to make the animal brutality in man milder. This is what Nietzsche understands by what has been done by these codes and laws so far; therefore, they should all be shunned, for man has to be natural. What is to take their place? The will to power, I presume. Does this will to power give any meaning to man, any end to strive for, any purpose for life? Nietzsche believes that it seems better to will nothingness rather not to will at all.

In conclusion, much destruction is done by Nietzsche and his works, with everything eventually shattered, but very little is built up to replace the damage. Man is stripped off his old being and is given the Will to Power to guide him. Evil and power are the two sign-posts to the way of the Nietzschean life. Man has to know himself, but before that he must know things other than himself, because they are his boundaries.³⁷ Everything has to be submitted to the body, for everything else in man is only part of his body. Here is man waiting at the crossroads as ever, ready or preparing himself for the creation of the Superman. Will he succeed? Let us wait and see.

36. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Chapter 73, § 5.
 37. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Dawn of Day, § 48.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN HEIDEGGER

Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the two fervent and forceful rebels, revolted against everything: man, established religion, established social rules, ideas, concepts, etc. Both believed in the motto, "Know Thyself", but for different purposes; the former to reach a clear and correct knowledge of God and of religion, and the latter to create the Superman. As one reads their books, one feels the extreme subjective element of their writing and the heat and force of their revolutionary spirits which was directly the outcome of their own personal experiences, their environment and their age - the beginning of the Romantic Period. They both suffered physically and spiritually, and this suffering was enough to produce this pungent, violent writing.

In contrast to the extremely subjective nature of the two foregoing chapters, the chapters on Heidegger and Jaspers are more scientific. They are not rebels against anything; in fact, they display more the scientific spirit of reporting data in their writings than passionate subjectivism. Heidegger insists on dissociating himself from existentialist philosophy, explaining that his concern is Being and not human existence and life as such.

Although some knowledge of the personal lives of the existential

philosophers will help in the understanding of their philosophies, yet this does not seem very necessary for these two chapters. The reason for this is that whereas Kierkegaard's and Nietzsche's philosophies were mirrors of their own experiences and an outcome of their own personal trials, the philosophy of man in Heidegger and Jaspers is only a step towards another final question; it is not the final question.

Martin Heidegger's main question is; What is Being? To answer this question he had to proceed by steps, beginning with man as a 'privileged case' of being, as Rossi says in his book, A Plea for Man.¹ In probing into man's existence and being, he might ultimately reach Being written in capital letters. We are not and cannot be outside Being and for this reason we cannot have the same relation to it as we have to an object of thought. Since 'Being' is actually our quest, we have to proceed by the examination of particular manifestations of Being, man being the most privileged one. Therefore, our first task is to dissect man and understand the structure of his existence.

'Dasein' simply means being-there: this is the way the human being exists. Man is simply there in the world and this 'Being-in-the-world' is the essence of his existence. We cannot define human reality because man as such is only a possibility with the power to be. In order to exist he has to choose the possibilities accessible to him which are never final, leaving his existence indeterminate. In spite of this indetermination,

1. Rossi, Mario M., A Plea for Man, p. 111.

there is a mode of human existence which is none other than being-in-the-world. This means that the human being is inseparably related to the things and other persons around him. The manner of my existence utterly depends upon my preoccupations, cares, concerns, etc., etc. I can free myself from this or that preoccupation, but not from preoccupation of a certain kind. These preoccupations, cares and concerns make up the immediate world present to me.

Since we have been talking about the world and being-in-the-world as the essential structure of human existence, it would be relevant to know what the world is and of what it is made. In Existence and Being, we find the following definition: "The world indicates the "state", the "how" in which the beings are in the whole. World is that whereto Dasein transcends so as to be what it is."² Now this place wherein Dasein "transcends" is full of other non-human things which are-there, not without meaning, but ready for human handling. Every non-human thing has its own importance and meaning, but not until man gives meaning to it. They are serviceable tools ready to be handled by Dasein, and therefore are called (Zuhandenheit); they are related to one another and to Dasein inseparably, in the same way that Dasein is related to other things and other persons around. In order to constitute an intelligible world, man can use the things that-are in ways to suit his aims; he can modify, enlarge, annihilate so that he may reach his possibilities. He has to make that-which-is be and in so doing, he gives it meaning and significance. This relation with objects and his shaping them and using them for the attainment of his aims

2. Heidegger, Martin, Existence and Being, p. 41.

and projects involves also his social relations, i.e. relations with other human beings. As man must be preoccupied with things in one way or the other, he has to be socially dependent upon others; he cannot cut off his social relations altogether. What he can do is free himself and cut his relations with certain people, but not with all people at once.

My interest in the world is never final because I can never achieve myself and overcome and fulfil my own situation and life fully. As I exist for myself, I have to understand and interpret the world about me. Dasein is always possibility and remains so; its existence depends on its projections and interpretations of what is around. This understanding of the world comes along with two notions. The first notion is that of being cast into the world, and the second is the recognition of the meaning of my existence and the existence of the things about me. I can understand the world by first knowing that I am thrown into it; then from my possibilities I can know the reason for my existence and the meaning of everything around me in so far as these things help me in fulfilling my possibilities. "The meaning of human existence is elaborated in the possibilities of action of Dasein. I give sense to what is about me by making use of it."³ Through its actions and by its projects, Dasein gives meaning to the wild, unintelligible world; it creates truth by ordering what is otherwise in chaos and, in so doing, it "uncovers what is there, allows the existent to manifest itself, to come into the world, to show what it is".⁴ In short, the

3. Blackham, John, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 92.

4. Ibid., p. 93.

world is not a dream world, nor is it given as finished and ordered. It is just a chaotic, brute existence, acted upon by personal human existence and thus ordered and made intelligible in order that it may fulfil human possibilities. Not only the world and things gain significance through the action of my dominant aim and purpose, but this significance and meaning is given to other "Beings-in-the-world", other Daseins, other persons as well.

Let us now turn to Dasein and discuss it more fully. In Existence and Being the following definition is given: "Dasein is structurally: Already - Being-in-the-world, in-advance-of-itself, as the Being-concerned-with-beings-encountered-in-the-world."⁵ This means that Dasein is in the world and it finds itself in the world; it cannot be anywhere else, if there is anywhere else. To be Dasein, the first condition is to be in the world. Once the first condition is fulfilled, there is the second one which is that Dasein has always possibilities ahead of itself which it must fulfil. The fulfilment of these possibilities makes the third condition necessary, namely, that Dasein is to be concerned with and interested in the things and other Daseins which it meets in the world. In his book, The Existentialists, Collins writes:

"Da-sein does not signify the absurd and irrevocable fact that man is there, hurled up on the beach of that-which-is. In its primary sense it means that man is the there of being, the point of insertion of being as such amidst the things that are. Man is the focus of the relationship of being to the totality of

5. Heidegger, op.cit., p. 65.

that-which-is, the temple where being can make a clearing shelter for itself. The truth of being can be realized in man because his mind can establish a relation with overtness of being. Hence for man to exist is to be the place of the truth of being. Dasein is not identical with the truth of being and does not exhaust it. Being can be without that-which-is, including man, even though that-which-is cannot be without being. But man cannot enjoy his proper mode of being, his existence, unless his fundamental project be to open himself in true, essential thought to the manifestation of being. Dasein is man's self-presence or essence, in the sense that he is most truly and distinctively a man when he relates his essential thought to the openness of being, recognizing his own contingency and that of the world in respect to participation in being. Man's essence is the realization of the truth about the proximity of being. His care is not a self-centered worry or nihilistic obsession but a solicitude to realize this essence and so to become truly human."⁶

Although Dasein has been so far understood to be the essence of man, yet it seems that Heidegger did not believe that every man is a Dasein by nature, as the following quotation signifies:

"Man, by his nature, is not yet "Da-sein". He only may enter into "Da-sein". And he enters into it, not so much when he performs his activity, unaware of what he is doing, but rather when he realizes the full significance of being there amidst a multitude of other beings and of truth as the second newer realm which has opened up for man during the last three milleniums."⁷

Among all the things-that-are only man can understand and become aware of that deep reality, termed 'Being' which is beyond, though enfolding, all that-is. In realizing the meaning of 'Being' as the underlying foundation of that-which-is, man can understand the world and feel at home in it. He is not left alone amidst chaos; he is supported by

6. Collins, James, The Existentialists, p. 180-181.

7. Heidegger, op.cit., p. 167-168.

being in which he can engage in his thought in order to arrange the chaos into an intelligible world. Man should know that his reality or essence lies in his participation in being. "Human existence is the place that is cleared for the advent of being, and yet being itself is the clearing."⁸ 'Being' is manifested in the world of beings through human existence and human thought. For this reason, man must do his utmost to preserve the truth of being, sacrificing his interests for that if need be. At this point we meet with a danger: man is free to choose between two alternatives, either to preserve and guard being, or to lose himself in the concerns and demands of that-which-is. Instead of choosing his 'homecoming to Being', he may prefer 'homelessness' in the world. The danger lies in man's freedom and that is why "the fundamental attitude of existence is an attitude of anxiety".⁹ Worry constitutes the basis of existence, because man is in a never-ending agitation and fear of losing himself in the things of the world. It is as if existence is afraid of losing itself and so tries to preserve itself on every side. This perpetual worry gives rise to succession and time which will be discussed later on in the chapter.

According to Marjorie Grene in her book entitled Martin Heidegger, Heidegger believes that human beings have the following three characteristics: facticity, existentiality, and forfeiture. Facticity means "being always already in-a-world".¹⁰ Man finds himself in the world, one being among others which he can use for his own ends and by which he is determined.

8. Collins, op.cit., p. 172.

9. Rossi, op.cit., p. 112.

10. Grene, Marjorie, Martin Heidegger, p. 26.

He did not will to be in the world, but he is cast there in spite of himself. This world in which he is thrown, is his world; it could not be a world without him, nor could he be himself without it. "Man finds himself surrounded by materials, tools and opportunities. Facticity is the condition of having been thrown, cast into a world not of my making: though mine to appropriate and assimilate, freely, yet within the inescapable limits of contingency."¹¹

Existentiality, the second fundamental human characteristic, means "being always in advance of itself in essential relation to its own possibilities".¹² Existentiality does not apply to the way in which things exist in the world; it stands for the "inner personal existence".¹³ Man anticipates his own possibilities and always lives ahead of himself in the sense that he comprehends his situation and tries to become. He aims at what is not yet - at the future. In anticipating himself, man anticipates likewise his world and thus understands it.

The third characteristic which is forfeiture is "the distraction by the insistent claims of every day moods and every day companions".¹⁴ In transcending himself, man becomes himself, and fulfilling his reality as man, he understands the world. He is in the world, arranges and orders the world and, in so doing, he loses his right to the world. This means that man will be so much taken up by the cares and concerns of particular

11. Ibid., p. 22.

12. Ibid., p. 26.

13. Ibid., p. 22.

14. Ibid., p. 26.

things that he forgets Being. He sacrifices his forward drive to everyday cares. He leads a public life with others and for others. "Though my existence is my own, from my birth to death, nothing in its humdrum course is truly, properly, authentically, exclusively mine: it is yours, theirs, anybody's."¹⁵

Heidegger's philosophy, especially his philosophy of man, centers around the existential concepts of death, dread and fear, and care. Care or (Sorge) is man's nature as made up of the three characteristics of facticity, existentiality, and forfeiture. These three aspects form a whole unit structure; they are not separate characteristics. As was said before, Dasein finds itself in the world in a state of becoming. In front of it lies an open future which it tries to reach, and around it are other beings that bind it. Out of this state of Dasein arises the concept of Care or Sorge. This concept of Care consists of three elements:

(1) The future lies open to the personal existence which projects itself to become what it will be, not stay what it is. It is not a complete, already formed existence, but must complete and form itself. This personal concern for that which it is not and that which it tries to be is revealed in the term Care, which designates the human being as always ahead of himself.

(2) Moreover, Care includes every individual being, my being as well, as found in the world in which it has to realize its existence.

15. Ibid.

(3) Finally, Care represents the human being in the grasp of particular preoccupations and concerns in the world.

In short, "Care is the structure of the mode of existence of one who exists by anticipating what he will be in a world in which he is found and to which he is bound."¹⁶ This means that as long as the individual is concerned to make himself what he is not, as long as he plans to be this or that which he is not, he cares. He is not sure of the open future that lies before him; in fact, he knows nothing about it. He tries to reach it but finds himself bound by others in the world. This ignorance of the future and binding by others causes man to care; it puts him in a state of uneasiness and despondency.

There is a difference between fear and dread. The former has an object, while the latter has none. "Fear is a special mode of the 'Befindlichkeit', of 'in-Being'"¹⁷ and it has three aspects. First, what is feared is in the world; it is either a thing or a Dasein. Second, fear gives way to threat which in turn takes care of that which is feared and thereby discovers it. Third, in fear Dasein proves its dependence upon itself. It reveals itself to itself in its perilous state. Unlike fear, dread has no object in the world; its object is unknown and indefinite. The object of dread is nothing particular; it is the whole idea of "Being-in-the-world". "Dread is the one basic 'mood' which brings the individual face to face with 'nothingness', thereby revealing to him its nature."¹⁸

16. Blackham, op.cit., p. 95.

17. Heidegger, op.cit., p. 59.

18. Ibid., p. 226.

When I perceive my being-in-the-world in its totality, away from my particular preoccupations, I feel dread. This feeling of dread carries me away from my concerns into solitude where I face myself in my reality and choose between two ways: either to be myself authentically, or to live in the world inauthentically. "It is a pitiless pointing to my original situation, an awful anticipation of my personal choice, a fear of being already in the world and a fear for my authenticity in living in the world."¹⁹ Man is faced with Dasein, the essence of his existence, and is given his situation in clear notes. Dread is that mood which overtakes man when he ponders on the contingency of the world, himself included. He sees the great distance between that-which-is, human beings included, and Being. This is why when he sees that Being, which is the fundamental basis of that-which-is, is at the same time different from the whole of these other beings, he senses a kind of nothingness. Nothingness produces dread and awe in the individual.

"Dread is of life as a whole: that is, of death as an end and ground and boundary of life. For life in its entirety is life facing death. Dread and dread only of all moods and passions brings this knowledge, lifts human being out of its scurrying self-forgetfulness to the vision of its wholeness: to the knowledge of itself as 'das Sein zum Tode', being-to-death. Dread and dread only brings to human being its proper freedom, liberates from the bonds of forfeiture, transforms the alien absurdities of stubborn fact into its essential possibility of being itself: set free from the illusions of the "they", in passionate, self-assured, anxious freedom to death."²⁰

19. Blackham, op.cit., p. 95.

20. Grene, op.cit., p. 29-30.

Here we come to the most important existential notion, and one of the very important notions in Heidegger, the concept of death. I am here in this world, never what I am but always what I will be. I look around and deliberate the contingency of things that are around me, feeling my own contingency at the same time. I can never achieve my existence totally, and when death comes my possibilities cease but they are not exhausted. Moreover, being in the world, I cannot be independent and free by myself: my life is for this and that person and depends on this and that thing. In death alone can I be free and for myself. Death is not an accident which may happen to me suddenly; it is one of my possibilities which I nourish from the very beginning of my life. It is "the 'end' of Dasein whereby it becomes a 'whole'".²¹ In thinking of death and nourishing its idea as a possibility among the other possibilities that have to be achieved, I find my existence hanging between nothingness and nothingness; it begins in nothingness and ends in nothingness. In the light of nothingness everything else seems absurd; it alone is the reality. Dread makes me come to the conclusion that I have been thrown into the world to die there. To conclude,

"Death is the clue to authentic living, the eventual and omnipresent possibility which binds together and stabilizes my existence. I anticipate death not by suicide but by living in the presence of death as always immediately possible and as undermining everything. This full-blooded acceptance of death, lived out, is authentic personal existence. One may choose either acceptance or distraction."²²

21. Heidegger, op.cit., p. 69.

22. Blakham, op.cit., p. 96.

In order to direct the self from its everyday and public interests to the personal and individual concerns, there is a "call" of the conscience. This call is similar to speech, but it is silent. It speaks about Dasein itself concretely and correctly; it appeals to the individual self as a form of Being in the world; it silently speaks to the possible existence of Being in the self. Similarly, conscience awakens the self from its lost state in the 'manyness' of the world. Although the call of conscience comes from within the self to the self, yet it is not planned and mostly it is not wanted. Through conscience man becomes aware of his guilt, that of losing himself in the things of the world, and so tries to win himself back and live authentically. Dread itself awakens the voice of conscience within me, which, in turn, evokes in me my relation to death. "The task of conscience is to prescribe for us the substantive duties of our lives' honesty, loyalty, tolerance."²³ Conscience bids the self transcend itself, transcend what it is to what it will become.

"Conscience challenges human being to escape from enslavement into freedom, and by the same act to transform historical necessity into resolution. This tension is on each side a lack. Human being in its very life is not - not what it made itself, not what it strives to be, not what it ought to be. And yet, the very recognition of this debt, of this not is its resolve to become itself. For in recognizing itself as essentially in debt it knows itself, not in triviality and distraction, but in its inmost capability. It knows itself as guilty."²⁴

23. Grene, op.cit., p. 32.

24. Ibid., p. 33.

"Conscience, then, calls human being out of uneasy self-loss in the 'they' to the single, self-concentrated resolve to choose itself; and this choice follows on, or even consists in, the recognition of its own debt to itself. This is how human being becomes authentic."²⁵

What is individual authentic existence? Authentic existence is that existence which listens to the call of conscience, sees clearly death as an end and accepts it and lives for it, knows that it is itself nothing, but does not try to overcome this nothingness, accepting its guilt upon himself. Such an existence has understood its possibilities and has resolved to live in their anticipation. By understanding itself clearly, this authentic existence can understand the world. It does not live in the light of its possibilities only, but in the understanding and acceptance of heredity, past actions and social bonds. "Authentic personal existence is a synthesis of the imposed and the willed, and the synthesis is achieved by taking up the imposed into the willed."²⁶ Adherence to existence in the world for death gives unity to personal existence; otherwise, one cannot speak of the unity and totality of the self.

To come to the notion of freedom in Heidegger, we find it defined as the concern of men for things as they are. Animals cannot handle things as they are. Freedom is the "'ex-position' into the 'uncovering' of what is".²⁷ This 'exposition' of man into truth is related to all humanity and makes history possible.

25. Ibid., p. 36.

26. Blackham, op.cit., pp. 98-9.

27. Heidegger, op.cit., p. 168.

"Freedom is the foundation of all explanation and truth, in the peculiar sense that man must freely assure the attitude of letting things become present to him in their overtness. Man's freedom to stand open to that-which-is and to conform to its demands is the ground of truth and the binding force at work in every instance of a search for truth."²⁸

Everything else and everybody else is a means to my freedom. I am made in such a way that I can separate myself from what I am and question my being. No other existence can do that.

Time plays an important role in Heidegger's philosophy; but here I shall only mention its relation to man. "My time is the span of my life. Time in this sense is the 'ontological' ground of human being: this is what human being most truly is."²⁹ "Time is the 'place' in which existence exists. Man is a historical being, lives in history, his world is history."³⁰ Man is living in time; he is living in an unending succession. The future is the tense for the existentialist. From the future he recedes into the present and then into the past. Man continuously lives in the future, never in the present or in the past. He wants to become, is never satisfied with what he is or what he was. Being time, which is finite, I am a being to death. In considering myself as time, I can see my conscience, freedom and guilt in death which is to come, and my guilt is a disagreement between what was given in the past and what I should be in the future which I can never achieve. Man's existence in time makes history. "I am myself temporal, not a being who exists in time."³¹ Personal existence as a

28. Collins, op.cit., p. 179.

29. Grene, op.cit., p. 36.

30. Rossi, op.cit., p. 113.

31. Blackham, op.cit., p. 100.

temporal process is historical and makes history. History is thus only objective in being subjective; it is a specific product of a man oriented towards the future."³²

Closely connected with the notion of time is that of destiny.

"My destiny: to play freely, in my time, and for my time, the role into which, by no choice of mine, I have been cast - to play for no audience and no applause, but solely for the sake of the performance itself which I am - and beyond which I am nothing. Destiny is possible only when in the Being of a being death, guilt, conscience, freedom and finitude dwell together at its very source."³³

Man himself creates his own destiny, as he does his own conscience. Conscience calls him to be himself; if he accepts then he comes to his destiny. Not every man has a destiny. Only he who listens to the call of his conscience, who leaves himself to be carried by dread to the presence of his nothingness, and then builds up his life in accordance with this encounter, has destiny. The man of destiny is none the less struck by circumstances and by chance; but his destiny is a form of authentic, genuine existence. "To live in the mode of destiny is to live historically. Destiny is synonymous with 'proper historicity'."³⁴

Does Heidegger believe in the existence of God or does he not?

As a philosopher, Heidegger leaves this question to religion, because he holds that philosophy can only deal with 'Being' and with that-which-is. Since God is neither Being nor that which-is, then he cannot be a subject

32. Ibid., p. 101.

33. Grene, op.cit., p. 38.

34. Ibid., p. 39.

of discussion in philosophy, and must be handed over to religion to deal with. In the following paragraph I shall give a short explanation about 'Being', since it constitutes the pivot of Heidegger's philosophy.³⁵

One might have formed the idea, by now, that "Being" is something very intricate and mysterious, which requires a very special skill to discover. It requires nothing but simplicity. Being is something very simple, too simple to be grasped by our intricate modern minds. Only simple souls and minds can understand it and live in its light; but although Being seems to them to be very near, it is in reality very far. It would be interesting to note that Being is essentially temporal; temporality belongs to it and it is in time. Besides these two foregoing aspects of Being, namely simplicity and temporality, Being is also objective. This means that it is outside man - objective, not subjective. This is where Heidegger parts ways with the other existentialists. Man has to take care of Being, but he does not create it. He is responsible for it because without him Being cannot confirm itself.

There seems to be a tinge of mysticism in the way Heidegger explains our knowledge of Being. Such kind of knowledge is subjective and personal. It cannot be experienced by the greater number of people or by all people. Being subjective, it is incommunicable, and so can neither be defined nor verified. Therefore, it cannot be established as a universal truth, or a basis of knowledge.

35. Gray, Glenn J., "Heidegger's 'Being'," Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 49, pp. 415-22, 1952.

"Though man finds himself in Being and does not create it, nevertheless Being is not properly grasped by the categories of Nature (which is also a part of Being). The substance of man is neither reason nor animality. It is his capacity to stand out from Being. Man's essence is found in his existence."³⁶

The best way to discover Being is through language. By listening to the language of thinkers, philosophers and poets, one can understand Being. Therefore language has an important work to do; it brings out the fundamental characteristics at the base of that-which-is into the open and "preserves it in potential form for later generations".³⁷

The task of the philosopher is to guide men to Being and to advise them. He has to point out to them that in this world they are mere wanderers "in search of a homecoming to the truth of being".³⁸ Being throws man into the world and then makes him return back to it: it destines him to this return. Heidegger accepts the existential notion that all things besides man are, only man exists. Man is responsible for what he is, for his nature; he has to accept this responsibility and develop himself into a mature individual, if he wants to become truly human. "Man lives in the world not under a ban, but with an importunate summons to enter into free relationship with being and thus to give recognition to the presence of being in that-which-is."³⁹

Everything else besides man is, only man exists. What is the meaning of Existence?

36. Ibid., p. 416.

37. Ibid., p. 417.

38. Collins, op.cit., p. 174.

39. Ibid., p. 181.

"Existence is the tendency of human Dasein in a forward direction as constituting the basic temporal mode, the future. The various modes of time (past, present and future) are ec-stacies of Dasein, its historical projections in the world. The basic ec-stacy or outward striving of man is toward being itself. In its authentic mode, existence is ec-static first of all in the direction of being. To ex-sist is to open a sheltering clearing for being and to express this vocation in carefully chosen words and deeds. Ex-sistence "leaps" into being by engaging in a pure finding of being, a finding of that which is already present as a gift to us and a demand upon us."⁴⁰

For the first time in existential literature we come across the word nausea, which has been so much used by Sartre in his literary works. Meditating upon existence as a whole, one feels nauseated.

"The brute existence which my activities and projects constitute an intelligible world remains in itself impenetrable, a night, out of which I came, to which I return, and which I taste with nausea if ever I lose the intelligibility and value which personal existence alone can give to brute existence in constituting a world. The experience of nausea, of worthlessness, of absurdity, which sometimes takes me unawares simply proves that it is personal existence which constitutes meanings and an intelligible world, and bears witness to the impenetrable otherness of brute existence which subtends the construction of the intelligible world."⁴¹

There are certain points in Heidegger which are not very clear, although, on the whole, his philosophy of man is consistent in its parts. The first question is about time and its relation to man and to Being. Heidegger seems to mean the following by time: Time is the outcome of care which is the result of the forward drive in man. In other words,

40. Collins, op.cit., pp. 181-2.

41. Blackham, op.cit., p. 102.

man always lives in anticipation. This anticipation is naturally of something which is not now but which will be. The mere use of the word anticipation suggests immediately the future tense as something different from the present and the past. Therefore, time is an outcome of this anticipation made by man. How can man be time itself? He cannot be the anticipation, nor can he be the care; he can only live in anticipation or in care and, consequently, in time, Heidegger has not made his stand very clear on this point, whether he believes man to be time or in time. When Heidegger says that man is a series of successions which are unending, these successions being time, he means that man is time. Man's essential characteristic is his living in the future, being that future itself, a being that is finite because it is time. Time is meant to be one and the same thing with man. Then, Heidegger says, "Time is the 'place' in which existence exists."⁴² This means that time is not a characteristic of the human being only, but of all existence. It is not man; it is something in which man is. These two explanations of time do not seem complementary.

As for the relation of Being to time, he says that Being is in time. Here, too, there is some vagueness. How can Being be in time? What is Being to be in time? Time seems to belong only to that which has the power of anticipating. Man has this power, and, therefore, time exists for him alone. Being has been defined as the fundamental structure of all that-which-is, enfolding everything. Does Being anticipate? Does it care? If

42. Rossi, op.cit., p. 113.

time belongs only and solely to man, the being who anticipates and cares, we cannot say that being is either time or is in time; because as far as we know, Being neither anticipates nor cares. On the other hand, if we consider time as a 'place' of existence and not as a belonging to man, we can equally not say that Being is either time or in time. The reason for this second denial is that Being has been defined to be that which is and "can be without that-which-is, including man, even though that-which-is cannot be without being".⁴³ Therefore if Being is in time or is time, it follows that it is finite and it will pass into nothingness. From the above reasons given the two notions of man in time or as time and Being in time are left ambiguous in Heidegger.

Another point related to Being is man's ability to step outside it. Since it was said that Being enfolds everything, how can man, who is part of that-which-is, step outside Being? Man remains as that-which-is except if he lives authentically; then he can transcend it. Nevertheless, in transcendence he remains in Being. Heidegger says that man's essence is not his reason or his animality, but his ability to stand *outside* Being. One can conceive of man standing outside Being through his reason, in the sense that he can look at himself as an object and discover his underlying structure, which is Being. He can step out of Being only in thought, but not otherwise, if Being is the foundation of all that-which-is.

43. Collins, op.cit., p. 180.

CHAPTER V

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN JASPERS

Karl Jaspers, who was born in 1883, has been greatly influenced by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. He believes that through these two philosophers man has been awakened to his condition and to his being and existence. He has made use of Kierkegaard's and Nietzsche's intuitions in the formation of his own philosophy and has tried to live according to his own reflections thereon.

Jaspers' philosophy starts with the three forms of Being: being-there, being-oneself, being-in-itself. Each of these realms of Being is separate from the others and has its own method of investigation and approach. The true philosopher and he who lives authentically can participate in the three realms. To Jaspers, philosophy must investigate each of these forms and strengthen the method of approach to each. I shall take them up one by one and then conclude how according to Jaspers an individual can live authentically, participating in all the aspects of Being.

Our first concern is Being itself. What is Being? "We call the being that is neither only subject nor only object, that is rather on both sides of the subject-object split, das Umgreifende, the Comprehensive."¹

1. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 9.

As it is apparent from this definition, Being is that which we are and that which we are not: what Jaspers calls the Comprehensive is what surrounds us and which we are not, i.e. the world, and that which we are, i.e. dasein, consciousness and spirit. By being-that-we-are, Jaspers means our consciousness, spirit, existence - dasein. On the other hand, the being-that-surrounds-us means two things: the world and transcendence.

"The Being that surrounds us: This being that is, even if we are not, and that surrounds us, but that is not ourselves, is of twofold nature:- it is the world: the being of which one aspect of our essence constitutes an infinitesimal part, if the world be considered as something that is not ourselves and in which we are immersed; it is transcendence: the being that is intrinsically different from us, in which we have no part, but in which we are rooted and to which we stand in a certain relation."²

The first aspect of Being is Being-there which is the objective world. We can know the world by observation and experimentation, in other words through science. Scientific knowledge plays an important part in introducing the world to us, and, therefore, science must be strengthened and well equipped to give us precise and accurate knowledge. The world is a given external world in which man, as a thinker, has a firm foundation. This external world is full of objects that can be experienced and whose representations can be communicated through science. Furthermore, this world is objective, since everything knowable about it can be universally understood and accepted. The task of science is to relate an intelligible world to human understanding. The world is that which science

2. Ibid., p. 12.

discovers; there is no other world besides. This objective world, that is given, has an empirical being for its reality. It is not Being; it is the appearance of Being - a phenomenal world. What we can know through science is only what we find in the world - the appearance; we cannot get to the truth of Being with science. Here in this notion, we find, as Collins says,³ the Kantian influence on Jaspers. The objects in the world are not Being-in-themselves, they are mere phenomena. This empirical and phenomenal aspect of the world provides the basis for philosophical thought. Insight of the world cannot be achieved by science; it has to be an act of transcendence. "The world as a whole does not become an object for us. Every object is in the world, none is the world."⁴ What we know is that which is in the world; we can never know the world. "The world as a whole is not an object, but an idea."⁵

The idea of the world and our knowledge of it seems confusing. When, in the above cited quotations, Jaspers says, "Every object is in the world, none is the world", he implies that the world is something different from the objects that it contains. For example, it may be compared to a casket of jewels. The casket is different from the jewels it contains; we may know the structure and kind of jewels but not the casket. Is the world the same as the casket? Can the world be without the objects that are in it? The casket can very easily be, without containing jewels.

3. Collins, James, The Existentialists, p. 92.

4. Jaspers, op.cit., p. 35.

5. Ibid., p. 12.

Is it the same with the world? To these questions Jaspers does not have definite answers. What he says is, "The world is not considered as something in itself, but as that in which Existenz is, and toward which Existenz may be oriented."⁶ From this it appears that the world is nothing but the ensemble of its objects. If so, then this definition does not agree with the previous one, mentioned above. Jaspers gives another definition of the world:

"The world has no independent existence, in it is manifested the speech of God. The world is the meeting point of that which is eternal and that which manifests itself in time. The study of the world is our only road to knowledge, self-realization in the world is the only road to existential self-realization. If we are lost to the world, we are also lost to ourselves."⁷

This last quotation does little but further the confusion. We have to know the world and at the same time, we cannot know it. Through science, says Jaspers, we can know the world and then reach a knowledge of ourselves. What world is meant here? Is it the world as an ensemble of objects or the world as different from its objects?

The second aspect of Being is Being-oneself. Being-oneself is "the personal existence of one who is awakened to his liberty and assumes his historicity and affirms himself in decision and choice".⁸ In order to be myself, I must ask and answer myself the question: What am I? When I really know what I am and what relations I have to Being-there and Being-in-itself, then I can be-myself. Let us find out what man is.

6. Jaspers, Karl, Reason and Existenz, p. 12 (introduction).

7. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 36.

8. Blackham, John, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 58.

After considering and understanding the external, objective world which is public to all, man, i.e. the philosopher or the man whose aim is authentic existence, turns to consider his private, personal being. In himself he discovers a being who is not a mere object, but a being that has to decide and act and choose in situations that are given to him. He has to will to become that which he is not and he has to make a choice from the situations facing him; and this willing and this choice are to be continuous as long as he lives. When I really and earnestly look into myself, I find out that I am not to be identified with my body, or my actions, or my place in society, or any of the aspects of my character. Basically, I am freedom: freedom which is the foundation of my possibilities, of the choice of my own being. To exist is to choose myself in liberty. If I do not turn to myself, do not will to become, do not acknowledge liberty or freedom as my characteristic, then my being will be only a Being-there, an object, which is determined. Once I view myself as Being-oneself, I feel that every action about me separates me from the realm of Being-there and carries me into a flight. This is precisely what is called 'the consciousness of my essence', namely, the knowledge that I am not an object, what I am, but a possibility, what I shall be, to which I must always return if I want to keep myself on the level of Being-oneself. Before choosing myself, a choice which is purely original, I am an actual self in body and temperament, occupying a place in history, a self being-there. This self, which is at the level of Being-there, I cannot choose. It is given as such, and what I can do with it is to identify

it as my own. In this identification, I acknowledge all that is part of my body: all the impulses of my body, all the demands of nature, all the situations that limit my ends; but these things should not subdue me. I should transcend them as conditions for my liberty, if I have the ability and the skill. Nevertheless, I have to keep in mind that my transcendence and flight into freedom can never be successful.

In the introduction to Jaspers' book, Reason and Existenz, William Earle writes:

"Not only is the world and being itself an Encompassing, but man himself is an Encompassing. Man himself is always more than what he can know himself to be. In principle, he is never exhaustible by any conceptual or scientific knowledge. The theoretical identification of man with what man knows himself to be has the inner effect of destroying precisely that freedom and authenticity which is the essence of man. He loses himself in the picture he has formed of himself. It is the sense of this always impending loss which lends to Jaspers' thought its moral earnestness."⁹

Man has no essence as such. His essence is his freedom and his authenticity. He finds himself as a gift to himself, and he thus knows that he has to achieve his liberty in his determined situation and head towards transcendence. Choice has its source in the individual self from which it springs and to which it returns after making man become what he is. However, although original and free, this choice has to follow a certain law and obey a certain duty. Man appeals to ethical laws, but he is under no law. He is concerned for value in his decisions, and his appeal to a

9. Jaspers, Karl, Reason and Existenz, p. 10 (introduction).

law proves his freedom. I have to choose myself, I have to decide what I will be. Besides this freedom that, as a human being, I enjoy, lies a determination that I cannot escape. There are inherent limitations that have to be considered and skillfully transcended, such as death, suffering, conflict and error. Man should take these limitations into account, and take them upon himself as he goes forward with the hope of transcendence. If he detaches himself from the limits of the world he cannot become himself. If he engages in the world blindly, living for the world without this forward drive, he will be a mere object, a being-there.¹⁰

What is the origin of man? Although he is not an atheistic existentialist, yet Jaspers seems to believe that God has not created man. In his own words he says:

"Man has always existed, he lived in various animal forms, yet was entirely different from the morphologically related animal forms, from the fish, the reptile, etc. Man has always been the authentic form of life, and all other life is a degeneration from man; in the last analysis, it was not man that developed from ape, but ape from man."¹¹

Another quotation from the same book and on the same subject reads:

"Man as an individual in existence achieves his freedom in the world through being created by God, and only by virtue of this bond, is he independent of the world."¹²

These two statements contradict each other. When we say that man has been created by God, we mean that there was a time when there was no man. This

10. Blackham, *op.cit.*, pp. 48-56.

11. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 58.

12. Ibid., p. 39.

contradicts at once the statement, "Man has always existed". Jaspers must have been more careful in expounding his idea on this subject and in the same book. Did he mean to side with both, the religious and the atheistic existentialists? If so, then he has weakened his own position and has involved himself in contradiction.

Man is first and foremost at the base of all things; he is not derived from anything else. In looking into himself, man finds something there which is not found in all the world: something that cannot be known and demonstrated, not even scientifically, for it is never an object. This something is his freedom that leads him towards transcendence. Man is finite and he knows that by comparing himself to the absolute, the infinite. He is finite for three reasons, or in three ways:

1. Man depends upon his environment, upon his senses and their demands; he is acted upon by natural processes: he has to die.

2. Man cannot live by himself; he depends upon others and lives in a world of human collectivity. He notices other 'unconditioned selves' like himself with whom he seeks communication. His uniqueness and individuality depend on others, or else they cannot be thought of. Unless he is compared with other similar beings he cannot be himself, unique and different from others. As he cannot have real liberty if he does not choose, so he cannot be on the level of Being-oneself without communicating with others. At this stage all conventions and reserves have to be put aside, and man has to reveal himself to the other in his nakedness, as he truly is. Communication takes place between persons who share the same

world order and work together to humanize it. This does not mean that communication is restricted to contemporaries or to those living in the same environment; not at all, for it might as well be held with individuals not present, either dead or not in my environment, but who, nevertheless, move me to become myself. "We are what we are only through the community of mutually conscious understandings. There can be no man for himself alone, as a mere individual."¹³

3. Finally, man can know nothing outside experience. "My intellect can apprehend nothing but the matter of direct perception that fills in my concept."¹⁴

What is this absolute and infinite in comparison to which man is finite?

"The infinite is touched, though not apprehended, first in the idea of infinity, then in the conception of a divine knowledge essentially different from man's finite knowledge, finally in thoughts of immortality. Entering into man's consciousness, it causes him to transcend his finiteness by becoming aware of it."¹⁵

Through the presence of this idea of the infinite and the absolute in him, man sees his finiteness, and consequently, breaks through it to transcend it. In the idea of the finite and the infinite lies a spiritual concept. Man cannot be himself by himself alone. To keep his inner integrity, to become himself, he needs a transcendental help which comes in the form of "an intangible hand, extended to him from transcendence, a hand whose

13. Jaspers, Karl, Reason and Existenz, p. 77.

14. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 63.

15. Ibid., p. 64.

presence he can feel only in his freedom".¹⁶ Although finite like everything in the world, yet he is the only being that is involved in history, and tries to fulfill his possibilities, and he alone of all creatures knows that he is finite, simply because he cannot achieve his being on the level of Being-oneself in his existence. This launches him in a desperate situation which, nevertheless, arouses in him a strong urge to overcome his situation and become free. He knows that he is bound and at the same time knows that he is free to break through this bondage. To escape from his wretched situation, man posits for himself an ideal which he can aim at in his freedom. There are no ideals, says Jaspers, there are only ideas. He can have an idea of what he wants to be, but this can never be an ideal. "Ideals can only stimulate man's desire to rise above himself."¹⁷

It has been said that man is limited by death, error, conflict and suffering. Let us take each by itself now and see how they limit man. Taking up error or fault first, since it has some relation to the ideal which man posits for himself, we find that it is inherent in man's finiteness and imperfection. How is this so? Jaspers believes that ideals are impossible because man's possibilities and potentialities are infinite. He can never reach perfection. As a result, the true value of man lies in himself as an individual, historical being who cannot be substituted whatsoever, not even by the type or species which he represents. In the second place, the notion that all men are equal does not hold psychologically,

16. Ibid., p. 65.

17. Ibid., p. 69.

for men differ in their capacities, aptitudes and talents. The only meaning that can be given to such a statement is the following:

"The essential equality of all men lies alone in those depths, where to each man the road is opened by freedom to attain to God by leading an ethical life. This is the equality of the individual as an eternal soul. It means: a respect for every man which forbids that any man should be treated only as a means and not at the same time as an end in himself."¹⁸

Where does error lie here? It lies in the fact that man is apt to assure himself that he has become what he wanted and desired, what he is able to become. If this idea rules man, then he is lost, for no man can become fully and truly himself in this life. I attain my 'inner unity' when I know that I cannot reach the fulfilment of all my potentialities, but, just the same, I go on with a forward drive.

"Suffering is dignity, it is a road to godhead,"¹⁹ says Jaspers. We cannot separate ourselves from suffering, because we are guilty. The knowledge of our guilt and responsibility causes us suffering. Conflict, suffering, imperfection, failure, error, all these are inherent in man's culture and situation, and he has to face them squarely as he faces death. "The only purity I can have in the world is to recognize to the full my guilt and responsibility and to take it upon myself with an active conscience."²⁰

In order to become-myself, I have to recognize death as a fundamental part of my life. Death is a test and a trial, for it introduces the question

18. Ibid., p. 70.

19. Ibid., p. 40.

20. Blackham, op.cit., p. 54.

of survival. Does anything survive? There can be no objective answer to this question; the answer must be given by me as an individual. If I hold that nothing survives, it means that I have not attained my full liberty. In consequence, I will be immersed in the objective world and lose myself therein. When I die, it would be as if I had never lived. On the other hand, if I truly become myself, although I cannot be assured of my survival because no other world exists for me besides this phenomenal world, yet I will try to realize myself in this world and I shall will my death as my natural end. Jaspers' philosophy is not as permeated with the notion of death as that of Heidegger. There is a certain awe-inspiring feeling of death which governs the whole philosophy of Heidegger and especially his concept of man as a "Sein zum Tode" which one does not feel in Jaspers' philosophy. Moreover, although Jaspers is a Christian existentialist, yet he differs from other Christians in that he does not hold most of the Christian beliefs. For example, he says that there can be no other world except this one which is scientifically known.

Before going into religion and all the ideas that it entails, let us first end our exposition of man. Jaspers analyses man into three levels: Dasein, being-there; Bewusstsein überhaupt, consciousness as such; and Geist, spirit. The first mode of man's being is Dasein. Like all other things in the world, man is a being-there. He lives in space and time, in an environment, is an object of enquiry in his physical, psychological, hereditary forms and behavior patterns. In addition to these, he is the only being to invent languages and tools for his service for use in producing himself.

In his second mode, consciousness as such, he can understand abstract connections, such as mathematics, he grasps the idea of the world which transcends his mere environment and can think beyond the world. Man is mind whose life is ideas. The ideas are forms and can be grasped in the abstract; they are not objects.

Finally, man is spirit which strives to encompass all his life and experience and culture into a single totality. Our life is taken from a point which lies beyond the mere being-there, beyond consciousness and mind. We can know this aspect of our nature from the following notions:

1. From man's dissatisfaction with himself because of his inadequacy to his being.
2. From the notion of the Absolute to which he submits his existence.
3. From the feeling of an urge for unity: a unity in being and existence.
4. From the consciousness that he possesses a memory, as if he knew of creation or of a world before any such existed.
5. Lastly, in the consciousness of his own immortality, "that is not a survival in another form, but a time-negating immersion in eternity, appearing to him as a path of action forever continued in time".²¹

Man's being is always subject-object:

"As being-there I am: inner world and environment;
 "as consciousness I am: consciousness and object;

21. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 15.

"as mind I am: the idea that is in me and the objective idea that comes to me from things;
 "as existence I am: existence and transcendence."²²

Here is a definition of Existenz:

"Existenz is an index; it names without characterizing. It names the individual himself, as he comprehends himself, in his freedom and authenticity standing before Transcendence. It is the ultimate ground, basis, or root of each historical self; it is not the content of any concept. Existenz is but a possibility for men; it is not a property with which we are endowed by nature. It must be enacted inwardly if it is to be at all; and it need not every be. It is the possibility in men of coming to themselves, of the self rejoining itself for a moment. Existenz is only a possibility for human nature; things in the world have no such possibility."²³

If Existenz "need not ever be", then why should man strive towards it? Why should he try to fulfill himself as a being that can be more than being-there, so that he might be said to exist? Why then, all this philosophy of existence?

Each of these three modes of man's being is independent of the other and cannot be interfused with the others. They are animated by Existenz and are bound together by reason. Because of its task, reason plays an important role in Jaspers' philosophy.

"Reason is the pre-eminence of thought in all modes of the Encompassing. It can bring all the modes of the Encompassing to light by continually transcending limits, without itself being an Encompassing like them. It is like the final authentic Encompassing which continually must withdraw and remain inconceivable except in those modes of the Encompassing in which it moves."²⁴

22. Ibid.

23. Jaspers, Karl, Reason and Existenz, pp. 10-11 (introduction).

24. Ibid., p. 65.

Through reason we are forced to break with our immediate unconsciousness and are continually pushed forward. It is the impulse for philosophizing which is never extinguished. It unifies by getting existences together through communication. Nothing can awaken existence into action and its appeal to Transcendence but reason. Reason is that intangible thing which drives us to our goal, which makes us lead a philosophical life. Furthermore, reason helps man to understand the whole: not one truth, but all that is; what is beyond that which is, encompassing everything, even antinomies.

"Reason is neither a quiet realm of truth nor is it Being itself. Neither is it the mere moment of some chance thought. Rather it is the binding, recollecting and progressive power whose contents are always derived from its own limits and which passes beyond every one of these limits, expressing perpetual dissatisfaction."²⁵

"Reason enriches man by sharpening his hearing, increases his capacity for communication, makes him capable of change through new experience, but while doing all this it remains essentially one, unswerving in its faith, living in actually efficacious memory of everything that was once real to it. Reason quickens dormant springs, frees what is hidden, makes possible authentic struggles. It presses toward the One that is all, it does away with the delusions that fixate the One prematurely, incompletely, in partisanship. Reason demands boundless communication, it is itself the total will to communicate."²⁶

The third kind of Being is the Being-in-itself which is "the Transcendence of the world, manifested in the world and inseparable from it."²⁷ In the Perennial Scope of Philosophy, Jaspers writes: "Our being

25. Ibid., p. 66.

26. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 45.

27. Blackham, op.cit., p. 58.

in time is an encounter of existence and transcendence - of the eternal that we are, as beings that are both created and self-given - and of the eternal in itself."²⁸ Man can actually participate in the three realms of Being by taking care of his natural, objective self as a Dasein; by willing to be more than what he is and choosing his own situation from among the situations given to him; and, finally, by a flight into Transcendence, toward the infinite and the absolute. No other thing in the world enjoys or can enjoy such a triple participation; only man is able to partake of this enjoyment. In his book, Collins writes:

"It requires an act of personal freedom in order to direct our existence toward transcendence. This choice of a transcendent orientation of one's existence is not made on the basis of objective reasons but is a free decision to found our being in the direction of Das Umgreifende. There is no possibility of confounding transcendence and human existence."²⁹

"We should develop the attitude of transcending by keeping our existence open in the upward direction. But man's existence can be worked out only within the sphere of empirical being. His duty is to embrace his failure and sorrow, resigning himself to them as the consequence of his presence as an existing self in the empirical world of manyness, time, and objectivity. From the human standpoint, reality is to be found only here, and man's greatness comes when he accepts his placement in situations with heroic patience. The reward is great. For it is precisely within this empirical world that the resigned man finds the absolute presence of being. His simple awareness of his own existence in a given empirical setting brings him peace and rest."³⁰

We said that Jaspers is a religious existentialist; but he believes that religion, although it has social and historical importance, has been

28. Ibid., p. 36.

29. Collins, op.cit., p. 101.

30. Ibid., pp. 102-3.

changed and perverted by the religious organizations that claim power and authority. He hopes for a renewal of the sources of religion and this is why he has launched in an existential philosophy, for a better understanding of being and knowing. Religion has an educational and social importance. We do not receive truth from God; we have to create our own truth by our action and our faith. What does Jaspers understand by religion and Christianity? Here is what he understands:

"The religion of Christ contains the truth that God speaks to man through man. But God speaks through many men. No man can be God; God speaks exclusively through no man, and what is more, his speech through every man has many meanings. The religion of Christ embodies the truth of referring the individual to himself. The spirit of Christ belongs to every man. It is the pneuma, i.e. the spirit of an enthusiasm surging upward to the suprasensory. It is also the openness to one's own suffering as a road to transcendence; he who has taken the cross upon himself can ascertain the authentic in failure."³¹

Man can understand eternal truths in so far as he keeps himself open to the problems of existence, knows himself and questions all his works, and never turns away from his limitations and failures. He must reveal truth to his own self. "Our faith cannot be a plunge into the darkness of anti-reason and chaos."³²

In addition to religious faith, Jaspers believes in what he calls philosophical faith. This is the faith of the thinking man who wants to know everything that can be known. What this philosophical faith contains

31. Jaspers, Karl, The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 105.
 32. Ibid., p. 6.

is the following premises:

1. God is;
2. There is an absolute imperative;
3. The world is an ephemeral stage between God and existence.³³

The third premise has been already discussed. Let us take the first and the second.

Jaspers writes of God:

"God is: Transcendence beyond the world or before the world is called God. We have the proofs for the existence of God. The idea as such effects a transformation in man, it opens our eyes, in a sense. More than that, it becomes a fundament of ourselves, by enhancing our awareness of being, it becomes the source of personal depth."³⁴

Jasper's arguments of God's existence given on page 32 of the same book are:

1. We come to the idea of God after experiencing the external world. Our experience of the different things and riddles of the cosmos is a stepping stone towards God.
2. In speculative philosophy we think deeply and are thus aware of Being. This deep thinking and awareness of Being carry us over to the idea of God.
3. The two terms good and evil have distinct meanings, which they get from God's commandment.
4. Lastly, the imperfection we see in man together with the gaps

33. Ibid., p. 30.

34. Ibid., p. 31.

in the structure of the world, the finitude of man and the futility of his designs, the impossibility to reach his own perfection: all of these lead to two things, either to God or to nothingness. The atheistic existentialists have reached nothingness, the Christian ones God. However, Jaspers believes that God cannot be known scientifically and can never be proved. "A proved God is no God."³⁵ In order to reach God we must begin with him as a premise, for he cannot be reached by means of philosophical activity.

Man has a soul and his soul, if he is a thoughtful man, is opened to the deep truth coming from religion. The soul is in a never-ending struggle to expand its horizons. In addition, the soul is the seat or the source of the absolute imperative. What is this absolute imperative?

"There is an absolute imperative which has its source within me, in that it sustains me. That the absolute exists as a foundation for action is not a matter of cognition, but an essential element of faith. The absolute imperative confronts me as the command of my authentic self to my empirical existence, as the command as it were of what I am eternally in the face of the transcendent, to the temporality of my present life. If my will is grounded in the absolute, I apprehend it as that which I absolutely am, and to which my empirical existence should correspond. The Absolute itself does not become temporal. Wherever it is, it cuts straight across time. It erupts from the Transcendent into this world by way of our freedom."³⁶

Throughout Jasper's philosophy, one cannot help but feel that the philosopher has been playing on both sides: on the existential one and on the religious one. He seems to have tried to reconcile existentialism

35. Ibid., p. 32.

36. Ibid., pp. 33-4.

with religion, but he has not been successful, for he has fallen into contradictions himself. Some of these contradictions have already been mentioned. There are also others.

Jaspers denies the existence of any ideals for man to follow. Every individual has to create his own being, what he wants to be, and follow it; but there is no such thing as an ideal man or any abstract ideal, that all men should look up to for the shaping of their lives. Then, in the discussion on freedom, he says that man appeals to ethical laws to make his choice; his choice is disciplined and of value. Since men have to follow, or follow ethical laws, do not they in a way follow an ideal? Do not these ethical laws, in an ensemble, make up man as he should be, the ideal perfect man, which, everyone who follows these laws tries to make of himself? For the atheistic existentialists, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre, there are no ethical norms and laws; every man has to create his own laws and act individually in situations that confront him. This is why he lives in despair and fear all the time. Once man has certain laws and norms to follow, laws that are supported by an Absolute, then he can resort to them in his difficulties and be guided by them. Existential fear, forlornness and despair are absent in the life of such a man.

Another point related to the one above has to do with truth. Again, Jaspers says that every man has to create his own truth by himself. This implies that there are many truths: as many as the number of men. He asserts that truth is not imparted by God to man only to contradict himself and say, "The religion of Christ contains the truth that God

speaks to man through man."³⁷ How can these two different statements be held together? How could truths be reconciled with the truth? There must be a truth that is imparted by religion, or else what is religion? There seems to be one way out of this dilemma and that is the following: there is an eternal truth given to man through religion, but every man has the freedom of creating his own truth from this one truth. In other words, every person is free to understand the word of God in the way that suits him best, and free to create from this Word his own truth. If this is taken as the solution for Jaspers' problem, then there seems to be no need for religion and the Word of God whatsoever. What is the use of having a religion which every individual is free to shape and change in his own way?

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN SARTRE

Whenever existentialism is mentioned, it is immediately associated with the name of Jean-Paul Sartre, who is its contemporary exponent in France. His small book, L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme defends existentialism against criticisms, especially against Catholic and communist criticisms, and makes clear his existential position. In L'Etre et le Neant, Sartre expounds in detail the aspects of Being. What is Being and what are its aspects? Is man an aspect of Being? If so, what aspect is he? Where and how does he live?

To answer all these questions, let us begin with Being itself, which is the foundation of all that is. "Being is that and outside of that, nothing."¹ Being cannot be defined; it is what it is and it simply is. It includes both being-in-itself and being-for-itself. In contrast to Existence which is subjective, Being is objective and all-embracing. Sartre does not make Being clearer than this; it is left to the reader of his works to try and make out the meaning of Being for himself from what he reads.

There are two aspects of Being: Being-in-itself (en-soi) and

1. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 5.

Being-for-itself (pour-soi). The en-soi is that which is seen; it is phenomena. I can recognize an external object as soon as I see it, but this does not mean that I can know everything about it from the very beginning. The more acquainted I become with the object and the closer I come to it, the better I can understand and know it. "The Being-in-itself overflows its appearance."² My knowledge of the en-soi is carried on infinitely, for I can specify new things about it ad-infinitum. In itself, the en-soi is indifferent: neither active nor passive. It is what it is, in identity with itself, does not become and cannot be created. "The In-itself is massive, full, dense and compact; it has no history and no past, it has neither present nor future. It merely is."³ Since the en-soi is what it is, never what it was or will be, there can be no causality in nature. Sartre strictly denies the law of causality, for the en-soi has no past to influence its present. In the same way, things cannot be said to have a present either, having no past. Time cannot be predicated of the en-soi. There is only being manifested in things and objects. In addition to the being inherent in the en-soi, Sartre believes that there is motion in the world. By motion he means simply change of place, but not change in the thing itself. "Motion is pure change of place affecting a this which remains otherwise unaltered."⁴

As such, the en-soi which makes up the world has no meaning whatsoever. It is only with the coming to life of man that both the world

2. Desan, Wilfrid, The Tragic Finale, p. 11.

3. Ibid., p. 36.

4. Sartre, op.cit., p. 209.

of objects and life acquire meaning. The value of objects is the meaning man chooses to give them. We cannot speak of any other universe beside this human universe. The term 'human universe' implies subjectivity; in other words, one can say of the universe that it is a subjective universe. This is true, because without man, the universe has no meaning and no value; but, according to Sartre, a subjective universe does not mean a universe created by me as a subject: which is when I am and vanishes when I am not. The world is fully objective, that is, it is there; things in the world are also real and objective. What gives this subjective shade to the world is the fact that the objects of the world are connected one to the other as instruments, and this instrumental connection goes on until a last instrument, a center, is reached which is I. Moreover, Sartre believes that the world has always been; it was not created and it does not need any proof for its existence.

"The existence of the world is 'toujour-deja-donne' - always-already-given. Existence is there as a background in its brutal facticity; it ought not either to be proved or put between brackets, but simply clothed with meaning and signification."⁵

This is the surrounding in which man finds himself. His role is actively to give meaning to the world and to use its objects as instruments and tools. The world is one aspect of Being, the en-soi; man is the other aspect, the pour-soi or For-itself. Our main concern now is to answer the question: What is man as a pour-soi? Sartre's first and central answer

5. Desan, op.cit., p. 8.

to this question is that the pour-soi is human consciousness. Without human consciousness⁶ there can be no reality, for the en-soi does not know. When the pour-soi knows a thing, it attaches non-being to it. The en-soi is being; it becomes non-being through the pour-soi. What is this non-being that "happens" to things through consciousness? As one understands from Sartre's explanations, non-being means no other being. For example, I see a flower, and immediately, upon seeing it, I know that it is not, say, a stone. I attach to it at once not being something else. Therefore, I know a thing by knowing that it is not this or that other thing. This quality of non-being can only be imparted to things by human consciousness. Furthermore, this activity of the pour-soi is possible if the pour-soi is outside the en-soi, outside being, and, therefore, free.

"To be 'outside' being, to be isolated from being, to escape being, to stay out of the causal order of the world, means to be free. Human reality, then, is free. Human reality is Freedom. Freedom is so essential to the notion of human reality that it makes the formulation of all human essence in a static definition impossible."⁷

The pour-soi arranges the cosmos and makes it into an organized world through negation. However, this does not mean that non-being is part of the things as such; the en-soi, in itself, is fullness, with no negations and no lack of anything at all. It will be relevant, at this point, to inquire into the reality of the pour-soi through which nothingness is introduced into the world. Sartre holds that in every act of

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6. Human consciousness and pour-soi, being the same, will be used interchangeably.
 7. Ibid., p. 20.

knowledge, consciousness has the capacity of introducing nothingness. The capacity for negating is active in all modes of knowledge, and not only in negation, interrogation and destruction, which, by definition imply negation. Another important point to be noted about the reality of the *pour-soi* is that it is never and can never be determined, because there is nothing in it that can be determined. There is no relation between past, present and future in the *pour-soi*; that is, the past is not the foundation of the present, nor the present that of the future. I am what I am not because of what I was, nor shall I be what I shall be because of what I am now. "I am the one whom I shall be, without in any way being the foundation of what I shall be."⁸

Human consciousness, as soon as it is, tries to mask the truth from itself. This is what Sartre calls bad faith. In bad faith one tries to hold two opposing ideas at the same time, and masking the one, tries to act according to the other indifferently, like a machine. Besides, one can never be sincere with oneself, because sincerity has its roots in bad faith. As soon as a person sincerely admits what he is, he is no more what he is, for in his confession he secretly hopes to be delivered from what he is. This foundation of sincerity in bad faith seems unclear. Bad faith means self-deception; while sincerity is the contrary. If I am an alcoholic, I try to persuade myself that I am not one and that my being does not depend upon the alcohol; I make believe that I only drink

8. Ibid., p. 21.

occasionally; this is all in bad faith. If on the other hand, I sincerely admit that I am an alcoholic, that my whole being depends upon the alcohol, that I drink perpetually and not occasionally, am I in bad faith? It is true that in admitting that I am an alcoholic, I may wish to be a non-alcoholic, but I do not pretend not to be what I am. The phrase 'I may wish' is important because it is not the case that I must wish or hope to be other than what I am, when I am sincere with myself. In being sincere with myself, I may know that I am honest; does this mean that I wish to be dishonest? It is not clear why Sartre says that in finding himself, man loses himself. If this is the case, then why look into oneself and understand oneself? Why then take pains in an existential philosophy which is based on self-knowledge, to formulate self-knowledge, since it is all nothingness at the end?

Now we come to the structure of the pour-soi, which can be summarized in four points.

1. The pour-soi is impersonal. This means that human consciousness is always consciousness of something, of an object. As long as it is consciousness of an object, it remains impersonal; but once it reflects upon itself, then it becomes personal.

2. The pour-soi is non-substantial. In thinking, consciousness introduces nothingness or non-being into the things.

3. The pour-soi is characterized as lack and desire. As pour-soi, the pour-soi acknowledges itself as not en-soi. This acknowledgment means a lack on the part of the pour-soi. The lack is not in the en-soi, for the

en-soi is a plenum and does not know lack. Human reality is itself lack; it desires what it lacks of being. It lacks being and the en-soi in order to become a totality. The Cognito, which for Sartre is consciousness of something, shows the lack of being. This lack and desire will always be present in the pour-soi. "A Being-for-itself can never be a Being-in-itself without losing, ipso facto, its most characteristic feature of consciousness."⁹

4. Finally, values and possibilities ever haunt the pour-soi. In giving meaning to things, human consciousness gives them value at the same time. What the pour-soi continuously desires is called value. As a human being, man estimates things. Desire depends upon value; without the latter the former cannot be. "It is I who sustain values in being."¹⁰

Besides being structurally impersonal, non-substantial, a lack and a desire, and haunted by values and possibilities, the pour-soi is also temporal.

1. Past. The past turns always in to a solid en-soi and is dealt with by the pour-soi as such. It becomes external, no more as part of the pour-soi. The pour-soi was its past and is no more it; for then, it would no more enjoy its freedom and possibilities. The pour-soi is always ahead of itself; it always aims at that which lies beyond what it is.

2. Present. In leaving the past for the future, the pour-soi finds itself in the present. It is in the present, present to an en-soi. The present is the pour-soi itself as it is.

9. Ibid., p. 33.
10. Sartre, op.cit., p. 39.

3. Future. The pour-soi always goes beyond itself to the future, plans, it, waits for it and faces it, and then comes back to itself. Without the pour-soi, human consciousness, we can have no future. "Future is a relation and a position of Self to Self."¹¹ Why does the pour-soi go beyond itself to the future? Being a lack, the pour-soi projects itself in order to become a whole, a totality; but this lack is never overcome, i.e. the pour-soi never becomes a totality. Whenever it is projected the lack slips into the past, becomes an in-itself, and so leaves room for a new future to be headed towards. Blackham gives the following definition of the pour-soi as meant by Sartre:

"The pour-soi is: perpetual pure separation and denial embodied in historical existence in the world, yet not identified with that existence as a property of it nor as its totality, but perpetually reconstituting itself and having a virtual totality of its own."¹²

The pour-soi is contingent because it depends on the en-soi (Consciousness must be consciousness of something). It establishes only its nothingness in relation to the en-soi which is just what it is.

At first man exists and then tries to define himself. In the beginning man is nothing; it is only by what he makes of himself that he may be defined. Sartre disbelieves in the idea of a human nature that will encompass all men and in which every man, as a human being, will partake. The reason for this disbelief is simply his disbelief in the existence of God. Since God does not exist to conceive of humanity as such, then there

11. Desan, op.cit., p. 39.

12. Blackham, John, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 112.

can be no human nature as an encompassing entity. Man conceives himself to be and, in addition, when he pushes himself towards existence, he becomes what he wills himself to be. As an existing being, man is always transcending himself towards the future, where he can imagine himself to be. There is no creation since there is no creator. "Man is at the start a plan which is aware of itself; nothing exists prior to this plan; there is nothing in heaven; man will be what he will have planned to be. Not what he will want to be."¹³ Having planned what to be, man is entirely responsible for what he is. This notion of responsibility is a very important notion in Sartre. His responsibility is not only for himself as an individual, but for all men. This responsibility for all men Sartre explains in the following way: Man cannot transcend his own subjectivity; he has to choose himself; he chooses for himself. In choosing for himself, he also chooses for all men, i.e., he creates the ideal man as he ought to be. For example, in choosing to become a doctor, I choose at the same time that every body ought to become a doctor, believing my choice to be good. If I did not think that it was best to be a doctor, I would not have chosen to be one; and in choosing to be a doctor myself, I have at the same time chosen, or willed, that everyone should become a doctor. This is why I am responsible for everyone. Moreover, Sartre believes that man cannot but choose the good for himself. This idea of responsibility in Sartre is similar to the Kantian categorical imperative. Both believe

13. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Existentialism, p. 19.

that in deciding to do something, man must keep in mind that he is deciding for all men, and so he must bear the consequences of his decision himself. Every single act that I undertake as an individual creates an image of the ideal man, and therefore, becomes universal. "Man, with no support and no aid, is condemned every moment to invent man. Whatever a man may be, there is a future to be forged, a virgin future before him."¹⁴ Therefore, what makes up a man is his acts as a whole, taken together. He exists in so far as he acts and fulfills himself and leaves an impress on life. "A man is nothing else than a series of undertakings, he is the sum, the organization, the ensemble of the relationships which make up these undertakings."¹⁵

There are certain limits, says Sartre that are universal conditions for man's being in the world. These limits are: man must exist in the world, must work there, must be there in the midst of other people, and he must be mortal there. These conditions are a must and cannot be escaped. They are both objective and subjective conditions; objective, because they are universal, and subjective, because they are nothing if man does not live them.

One of the underlying ideas in Sartre's philosophy is the idea of freedom.

"There is no determinism, man is free, man is freedom. Man is condemned to be free. Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet, in other respects is free, because, once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does."¹⁶

14. Ibid., p. 28.

15. Ibid., p. 39.

16. Ibid., p. 27.

Freedom is based on freedom of choice. Man is free to choose, but he is not free not to choose. Putting it differently, man is determined to be free. Although Sartre plainly says that there is no determinism, it seems that there is a determinism of freedom which cannot be escaped. Our freedom depends on the freedom of others and theirs depends on ours, since we are living with others and not by ourselves.

I find myself thrown into the world; I have to make my own world and myself. The physical situation that surrounds me is nothing in itself; I have to choose it and make it one thing or another. While making my world from what lies around, I, at the same time, make myself by transcending my immediate environment into the future. So the world and the self are being made at the same time. "It (freedom) is a choice of myself in the world and by the same token it is a discovery of the world."¹⁷ My transcendence of situations is always in process and is never achieved. My freedom lies in my choice from the situations that are already there, present to me. By transcending the situations that confront me and the particulars that make me what I am, I can create the world I want and the self I want to be.

"Freedom reveals itself when we screw up our courage to see it without pretense, in the dizzying collapse of external sanctions and universal laws, in the appalling consciousness that I, and I alone, have, absurdly and without reason, brought order out of chaos; that I alone, crudely and stupidly, without cosmic meaning and rational ground, have made a world out of nothing; and with that awareness my world itself totters on the brink of the nothingness from which it came."¹⁸

17. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 461.

18. Grene, Marjorie, Dreadful Freedom, p. 52.

Our freedom lies in isolating ourselves from being, escaping it, stepping outside it. Man's freedom and reality are one and the same thing; in fact, Sartre identifies man with freedom. Man's essence is his freedom: what he makes of himself, his choice of himself. In Being and Nothingness, Sartre gives the following definition of freedom:

"Freedom means: Consciousness has the permanent possibility of effecting a rupture with its own past, of wrenching itself away from its past so as to be able to consider it in the light of a non-being and so as to be able to confer on it the meaning which it has in terms of the project of a meaning which it does not have."¹⁹

When we speak of freedom, we negate all boundaries; nothing can limit freedom except freedom: the freedom of the Other. How this is done will be explained further on in the discussion of the Other. Why is human reality said to be free? It is free because it is not what it is, an en-soi, but what it will be, a pour-soi. "Freedom is precisely the nothingness which is made-to-be at the heart of man and which forces human-reality to make itself instead of to be."²⁰ Human reality chooses itself; it neither receives nor accepts anything either from without or from within. It has to make itself by itself, without any help, to the last detail. In this connection, Sartre holds that passions cannot influence freedom; they cannot be excuses for rash actions. Passions as such are en-soi, an object, and so are unable to influence the pour-soi; they have to be transcended. Together with will, passions are attitudes towards an end,

19. Ibid., p. 436.

20. Ibid., p. 440.

but the former is deliberate and reflective, while the latter is not. "Emotion is the unreflective answer to a situation."²¹ "One must be conscious in order to choose, and one must choose in order to be conscious. Choice and consciousness are one and the same thing."²²

To summarize freedom before going on to its obstacles, we may say the following. For human reality its being is acting: "to be is to act, and to cease to act is to cease to be."²³ Man is not first and then acts; being and acting are simultaneous. Action implies an end towards which the act is directed. The end may not yet exist, but it is posited by the pour-soi. In positing an end, the pour-soi has made a choice, and unless there is choice, there can be no end. This choice of an end is nothing but freedom. In the last analysis, since being cannot be without acting, acting without an end, an end without a choice, choice without freedom, we see that free choice is inevitable.

Living in an environment of objects, I find myself confronted by many obstacles to my freedom. These obstacles to my freedom which I encounter and must transcend are: my place, my past, my surroundings, my fellow men, and my death.

1. My place - The word place has meaning for human consciousness only, because it implies a here and a there. This means that I can think of place in so far as I know myself to be here but at the same time I

21. Desan, op.cit., p. 98.

22. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 462.

23. Ibid., p. 476.

know that I am able to go beyond this spot and be there, present to some other being. My body is in place: it is here or there. In itself, place is neither a help nor an obstacle: it is neutral. Through my own decision and choice I can make it either a help or a hindrance; but it is there and my freedom has to face it.

2. My past - Choice implies a past. For example, if I choose to become a teacher this implies that I am not a teacher which eventually becomes a past. The past is always what it is, an en-soi, and it cannot be changed. When I choose the future, my choice of the future becomes a past and it can no more be changed.

3. My surroundings - The objects that are found around me are indifferent in themselves. My choice makes them either an obstacle to my freedom or a help to it. For example, if I am swimming and there is a big rock in the way, the rock in itself may either be a help to me if I choose to swim slowly and around it, clinging to it and resting upon it, or it may be an obstacle in my way if I choose to swim very quickly, straight ahead to a certain point and in a certain time.

4. My fellow men - My being in the world is not only as pour-soi, for-itself, but also as pour-l'autrui, for-the-Other. This Other limits my freedom through his freedom; this is the only limit upon my freedom. Through the Other, I lose my subjectivity and become an object. When the Other is present, I am no more master of the situation; I become an object to him, an en-soi, located in space and time. I feel nothing but shame in the presence of the Other; I am ashamed of myself for being reduced

to an object. When I first encounter the Other, my immediate reactions towards him are shame, fear and pride. Pride helps me transcend the situation once more and become myself, a subject and not an object. This spontaneous reaction towards the Other, Sartre explains so well in his example of someone being caught when looking through a key-hole. What one feels at that moment, when he feels that he is being watched, at the moment when he thought himself to be alone, is the feeling which Sartre attributes to all encounters with the Other. Moreover, Sartre believes that the existence of the Other is not necessary, but it is a fact and he is. Since as a *pour-soi* I am also a *pour-l'autrui*, I can do one of two things in the presence of the Other: either conquer him through love, his body through desire, or destroy him through hate. In Being and Nothingness Sartre goes into a lengthy discussion on Love and Desire, and Hate, which he thinks are the roots of all the complex human behaviors and attitudes of men towards one another.

Through what am I known by the Other? Sartre answers, through the body. My body imparts the fact that I am *pour-l'autrui*. The Other views me in a way which I am unable to do. There is a distinction made between two aspects of the body: the body-for-itself and the body-for-the-Other. The first aspect of body is one with consciousness; there is no distinction between them. "Being for-itself must be wholly body and it must be wholly consciousness; it cannot be united with a body."²⁴ The *pour-soi* can be

24. Ibid., p. 305.

nothing but body and senses in this world. "My body is co-extensive with the world, spread across all things, and at the same time it is condensed into this single point which all things indicate and which I am without being able to know it."²⁵ I know of my body through the things in the world of which my body is a part. Although I cannot be in the world except through my body, yet I can go beyond and pass my body.

The second aspect of body which is body-for-the-Other is a mere object, an en-soi, which I can transcend through my possibilities. When I realize that my body is a body-known-by-the-Other, I am put down as an object. As such my body becomes a tool for the Other, who constructs it into his own world. I can know it as an object acted upon and not as itself acting. This is the reason for Sartre's belief that I only know my body by knowing the Other. Blackham writes about the body:

"The body is a concrete centre of reference. The things in the world are oriented towards the body and reveal it. ... My body is not for me a tool inserted in the complex of tools and be a last term, not itself a tool, which makes sense and order of all. My body is both a point of view and a starting point, for it organizes and fixes the world which I transcend towards a new order by action which realizes other possibilities. It is also an obstacle, a resistance to my projects. It is the condition of action, that is of choice, as of the world of perception. ... I live my body: I do not (cannot) use it, as I cannot transcend and know it."²⁶

Closely connected with the subject of the Other is the idea of sin. For Sartre, sin is being-for-the-Other which reduces me to an object. He writes:

25. Ibid., p. 318.

26. Blackham, op.cit., pp. 119-120.

"Pure shame is not a feeling of being this or that guilty object but in general of being an object; that is, of recognizing myself in this degraded, fixed, and dependent being which I am for the Other. Shame is the feeling of an original fall, not because of the fact that I may have committed this or that particular fault but simply that I have "fallen" into the world in the midst of things and that I need the mediation of the Other in order to be what I am."²⁷

5. My death - The last obstacle in the way of my freedom is death.

"My death is for me so complete a non-reality as to be relatively of little interest existentially. ... My own death is more real for others than it is for me."²⁸ Sartre says that in death man reveals himself to himself from a human standpoint only. He believes that death is totally absurd because man does not know when it will come to him; he can neither foresee it nor wait for it. It is not one of my possibilities, as Heidegger believed; it destroys my possibilities. Another reason for the absurdity of death is that I cannot choose it. Whether I accept it or refuse it, it has to happen. Moreover, it takes away every bit of real sense from life. When death comes, there is an end of desire, the end of the *pour-soi* which is perpetual desire. The *pour-soi* permanently expects; death puts an end to all expectations. In reality, says Sartre, death does not belong to the *pour-soi*; it lies outside it, belonging to the Other. This means that after my death, it is up to the Other to keep me alive in his memory or forget me as an *en-soi*. My whole being after death will depend upon the Other. This would be the only kind of immortality I would have.

27. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, pp. 288-9.

28. Grene, op.cit., p. 53.

Sartre's man is a man who is not at peace at all. He feels responsible for every act in the world; he feels ill-at-ease for his future which is haunted by death; he feels ashamed because of his reduction to an object by the Other; he feels forlornness, dread, anguish and despair. All this falls upon him because there is no one to take over some of them: there is no God. "God does not exist and we have to face all the consequences of this."²⁹ To be God means to be both a pour-soi and an en-soi - pour-soi-en-soi. This means that he has to be what he is and what he is not, both at the same time; necessary and contingent all in one. Since this is impossible, then the existence of God is also impossible. The pour-soi can never be en-soi without losing its consciousness. This is why God cannot exist. As a result, man finds himself lonely, without any values to return to but what he puts for himself. "Everything is permissible if God does not exist, and as a result man is forlorn, because neither within him nor without him does he find anything to cling to. He can't start making excuses for himself."³⁰ Man's forlornness arises also because of the future he has to make for himself. He has to make his own future, depending upon himself and bearing all consequences. Forlornness means that he has to create his own being. He despairs because he has to confine himself to what depends upon his own will or on the probabilities that make his action possible. There is no ethical code to turn to, no moral law, no Infinite Being whose help he could ask.

29. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Existentialism, p. 25.

30. Ibid., p. 27.

Anguish accompanied the feeling of responsibility when I know that in making a choice I am at the same time making a law for all men. It is a part of the free action of choice. Anguish is the fear I have of myself in facing the possibilities that I alone can determine. Through anguish I am conscious of my freedom. I am not responsible either for my origin or for the origin of the world, yet I feel responsible for both, as they are, through my freedom. Once I feel my responsibility through anguish, I become revealed freedom.

"Dread is a kind of nothingness. It is the free resolve itself that is dreadful, since it carries with it the awareness that, unjustifiably but absurdly and inevitably, I must of my own single self create-or have created - the values that make my world a world."³¹

Dread accompanies the feeling of my complete freedom and hence of the responsibility of perpetually making myself other than what I am. When I come to myself, I find out that every action that I carried out was sanctioned by myself, every value given to things was given by me. Everything collapses in the face of my freedom. At such a moment, Sartre says,

"Nothing can ensure me against myself, cut off from the world and from my essence by this nothingness which I am. I have to realize the meaning of the world and of my essence; I make my decision concerning them without justification and without excuse."³²

As for suffering, Sartre believes that it is necessary. His reason for this belief is that suffering is a form of awareness and, therefore, through it we evade that which we are not, as we do in consciousness

31. Grene, op.cit., p. 53.

32. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 39.

in general. As long as I suffer I can be conscious of the world as that which I am not. Like suffering, nausea "which is the insipid, colorless, tasteless feeling of existence,"³³ is necessary for my contingent being, because it also makes me aware of what I am not.

Thus man leads a life haunted by all the feelings of despair and nausea, a life of suffering. He asserts his being by continuously projecting himself beyond himself. He is the law-maker who has to forge himself out of all the contingent, senseless and meaningless limitations and situations around him. There is no essence of humanity: man must create himself by himself. In order to be a man, he has to choose from the situation confronting him. Man's aim is to become God, *Pour-soi-En-soi*; but this is impossible.

"Every human reality is a passion in that it projects losing itself so as to found being and by the same stroke to constitute the In-itself which escapes contingency by being its own foundation, the *Ens causa sui*, which religions call God. Thus the passion of man is the reverse of that of Christ, for man loses himself as man in order that God may be born. But the idea of God is contradictory and we lose ourselves in vain. Man is a useless passion."³⁴

Taken as a whole, the Sartrean philosophy seems a very pessimistic and desperate philosophy. Sartre reduces everything into nothingness. He abolishes all value and all meaning from the world and from man. Man is left in a desperate situation in the world. In abolishing values and constructing man as an ensemble of despair, anguish, forlornness and

33. Desan, *op.cit.*, p. 80.

34. Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 615.

dread, how can Sartre build a healthy society? First of all, he leaves no place for hope in man's life, and it seems very difficult to imagine anyone living in complete despair. Man's whole life is based upon hope; it is like a natural instinct in him. Hope is part of every action that the individual undertakes. One can think of a million examples which will prove the importance of hope in the life of the human being, not only in dangerous and important matters, but in all the petty decisions as well. Sartre has completely ignored this and has reduced everything to nothingness. In such a case why should man strive and expect anything? In fact, can he expect anything? Sartre has denied both points of view, the point of view of religion and that of atheism. Religion pictures man as nothingness because God is the all-inclusive being. Compared to God, man is nothing. Atheism makes man the center of the universe, the important pivot of all that is. By rejecting both alternatives, Sartre has put himself in a critical position, which has no other way out except in nothingness. There is no third alternative for him to choose; and, if he wants to choose any of the two now, it is too late. There is no God and man is nothingness, a lack which is a failure. This is the result of his double rejection.

In dealing with Being-in-itself, Sartre says: "The Being-in-itself overflows his appearance."³⁵ What does he mean by this sentence? Does he mean that the reality of the object lies beyond it, something like the

35. Desan, op.cit., p. 11.

Platonic shadow and its idea, or the Kantian appearance and thing-in-itself? In describing the en-soi, he says that it is what it is, without temporality. How can a thing which is none other than what it is "overflow its appearance"? How could Sartre know that? He disbelieves in intuition and in thought as pure thought and reflection. He has changed Descartes' Cogito into consciousness of something, thought of an object. We cannot have thought before having the object of thought; how can we, then, possibly think of something which is not in the object, which is beyond it, which is trans-phenomenal?

When one comes to the notion of freedom, a notion which is basic in Sartre's philosophy, one may ask: What is meant by absolute freedom? For Sartre, man is complete freedom; there is no determinism whatsoever. What is choice? Choice is choice in a situation; man chooses from what presents itself to him. In other words, if there are three apples in front of me and I choose one, I have chosen one of the three. This example applies to all kinds of choice. Since choice cannot be except in a situation, how can it be said that it is absolutely free? Another point connected with freedom is the obstacles to it. Sartre cannot deny the limits that mould the individual into what he is, such as birth, heredity, environment, etc. A man born in the slums did not choose freely to be born and brought up there; a deformed child, did not choose to be deformed, he is so because of his diseased parents. Many other examples can be cited which will prove that man is not completely free in making himself what he is; he is extremely limited and dependent upon many factors that are

neither of his making nor within his reach to alter. How Sartre has completely ignored the limits set upon man is very strange. The obstacles he mentions in the way of human freedom, are all to be transcended and surpassed, according to him; while, it is the contrary, they can never be surpassed. This Sartrean absolute freedom remains an ideal that can never be putted down to earth.

"Man is a useless passion".³⁶ This last declaration of Sartre in his greatest work, drags everything towards nothingness. It kills all man's actions and deeds, and eventually kills him too. Instead of helping man, Sartre has destroyed him.

36. Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 615.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN MARCEL

Another French existentialist, Gabriel Marcel, is the opposite of Jean-Paul Sartre, for he is a devoted Catholic. He finds the world immersed in irreligion, and tries to help it back to faith. His philosophy is not systematized, owing to his dislike of all systems; it is a train of his thoughts and reflections jotted down mostly in journals, his own Metaphysical Journal and other French journals. After studying idealism thoroughly, he left it, finding out that it denatured man and the world.

His philosophy begins with a contemplation of Being. For Marcel, Being is not a problem but a mystery. The distinction between problem and mystery is important for his philosophy. A problem can be looked at by the subject, pulled down into its constituents parts and solved by some device. A mystery, on the other hand, does not allow itself to become a public object to a subject and cannot be reduced to its actual parts nor solved. The reason for this is that in mystery, the subject and the object interpenetrate and cannot be disentangled. The subject cannot free himself from the mystery and then look at it as an object, for then he would not be looking at the mystery as it truly is, but at a part of it only. Being is one of the mysteries which he calls the ontological mystery; other

mysteries are evil and death. We cannot explain why there is evil or why there is death; for if they are explained, they would be no more. I feel that they are, I am involved in them, but I can neither give them a cause nor explain them; they are ultimate. Therefore, in order to understand these realities - evil, death, freedom, love, etc. - we must open up ourselves in a second reflection to them. By a second reflection Marcel means philosophy, the first reflection being science. Scientifically and objectively, we can never reach the core of these realities. What we have to reflect upon are vital experiences lived through. It is not the case that I reach my reality by objectively reflecting upon my body or my life, for my reality is only reached in a second reflection.

In The Mystery of Being, Marcel writes: "I concern myself with being only in so far as I have a more or less distinct consciousness of the underlying unity which ties me to other beings of whose reality I already have a preliminary notion."¹ Man does not make Being, nor is he able to conquer it or subordinate it to his mind. Man grasps Being through its sensible presence which he must take care of and submit his mind to. When the data of experience are analyzed, step by step, Being is the underlying element or thing which does not permit of such an analysis. Marcel believes that analysis strips off the experience of its intrinsic and significant value. We can never know Being, because Being is primary and knowledge is secondary. Knowledge can work only within the boundary of

1. Marcel, Gabriel, The Mystery of Being, p. 17.

Being, and therefore, cannot either prove it or explain it, because it presupposes it.

"Being is - or should be - necessary. It is impossible that everything should be reduced to a play of successive appearances which are inconsistent with each other. ... I aspire to participate in this being, in this reality - and perhaps this aspiration is already a degree of participation, however rudimentary."²

Man, according to Marcel, has an essence, and his essence is to be in a situation. Man's concrete situation is the world in which he finds himself. How do I know of my existence in the world?

"My awareness of my existence is not first of all a separation of myself as a knowing subject from my body as a known object, because it is the existence of my body in the world that constitutes me a subject before it is given to me as an object to a subject."³

Therefore, the first and important condition for my existence is my body. It is up to me to decide what I want to be. I can either identify myself with my body, belonging completely to it; I can treat it as a tool, to which, nevertheless, I am a slave; or, I can transcend my body. I can experience, and I actually do, my incarnation in a body along with the other objects around me. "Incarnation is the situation of a being who appears to himself to be, as it were, bound to a body."⁴ If I choose to be my body and give up myself completely to this choice, certain results follow. First, I am given up to despair and to putting an end to my life. Everything around me invites me to such an act, because I discern nothing

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2. Marcel, Gabriel, Philosophy of Existence, pp. 4-5.
 3. Blackham, John, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 68.
 4. Marcel, Gabriel, Being and Having, p. 11.

but doubt and denial on all sides. I treat my body as an instrument to which I am obedient, and therefore, because of all the pressing evidences against me, I am able to commit suicide. In this stage, I am what I have, not what I am. Marcel distinguishes between these two aspects of human being as having, which he discusses in his book entitled, Being and Having.

What is the difference between these two aspects of being? I am what I have means that I am an ensemble of my possessions which are external to me and independent of me. I can dispose of these possessions because I have some power over them, although I am enslaved by them; like disposing of my body by committing suicide. There is an open invitation to despair which I take upon myself readily. I can either keep what I have to myself or I can give it up; at the same time I show either myself or another what I have. The notion of having is closely tied up with the notion of the other. About the Other Marcel writes:

"Not only do we have the right to assert that others exist but I should be inclined to contend that existence can be attributed only to others, and in virtue of their otherness, and that I cannot think of myself as existing except in so far as I conceive of myself as not being the others; and so as other than them. I would go so far as to say that it is of the essence of the Other that he exists. I cannot think of him as other without thinking of him as existing."⁵

To go back to the concept of having. Possession presupposes anxiety: anxiety before possessing the object - how to get it - and anxiety after possessing the object - how to keep it without losing it. Marcel believes

5. Ibid., p. 104.

that to desire something is the same as to want to have it; it is a form of having, of possession, and so mere desire will also entail anxiety. Although I have the power over the things possessed, yet I am penetrated into the relation of having and thus, cannot step aside. The things which I possess seem to possess me; for example, in having my body, I am nevertheless, possessed by it in living for it and identifying myself with it. "Thus to live on the level of having (or desiring to have) is to lose the height proper to the position of the I, to abandon what I am and become what I have, to be reduced to a thing."⁶

The continuation of the preceding quotation reads something to the following effect: According to Blackham, Marcel believes that man cannot stand superior to the world of having, or the world of objects and things. He finds that the world has been denatured by Christianity. "The material world is itself the Being in which we are invited to participate, and to have hate or contempt for it is blasphemy."⁷ The world has been created and man must participate in it. To go back to religion, to renew Christianity, we must return to nature and see in it all the manifestations of God. God has not created the world and then set Himself against it; no; in order to know Him and understand His message, we must be helped by what He has created. Through the human body, which is the middle region between the transcendental I and the created world, we can come into closer contact with the world. There is no mystery in the physical world. "It should

6. Blackham, op.cit., p. 72.

7. Ibid., p. 73.

be noted that this world is, on the one hand, riddled with problems and, on the other, determined to allow no room for mystery."⁸

The second aspect of Being, I am what I am, is man's authentic existence. This aspect is not a transcendental phase, standing aloof from the world and from having. It deals with objects in the world, and transforms them into being. I am not pulled down by my body to an object; I transform having into being. I live creatively; both I and the objects are active. Neither am I reduced to an object and therefore made passive, nor is the object thoroughly transformed into being and so made passive. There is always a tension between being and having which is very necessary. Here, in this tension, we have human freedom. Man is free either to become what he has or to open up himself to being and become what he is. Our response to being is not determined; it is left free. "Freedom does not exist for its own sake but is a way of achieving our fuller participation in being."⁹ This is the opposite of Sartre's notion of freedom which was conceived as existing for its own sake - absolute freedom. As was said above, freedom is not a problem to be solved; it is above the problematic - it is metaproblematic. We are simply conscious of it and experience it. Besides, man performs his free actions on his own responsibility, although he both originates his free actions and receive them. This means that man is both free and determined. He is free in so far as he is a being who shares in reality; he is determined in so far as he is created to be in

8. Marcel, Gabriel, Philosophy of Existence, pp. 3-4.

9. Collins, James, The Existentialists, p. 145.

a situation, in a world already there. There is no such thing as the Sartrean absolute freedom to Marcel.

"My freedom is not and cannot be something that I observe (constater) as I observe an outward fact; rather it must be something that I decide and that I decide, moreover, without any appeal. It is beyond the power of anyone to reject the decision by which I assert my freedom, and this assertion is ultimately bound up with the consciousness that I have of myself... Freedom can in no way be thought of as a predicate which somehow belongs to man considered in his essence. ... We must once and for all break with the idea that freedom is essentially liberty of choice - the latter, moreover, being conceived as indetermina-tion."¹⁰

Elaborating a little on the notion of body, we read in Grene's book:

"Marcel stresses the importance of the body in the analysis of the human individual. ... In so far as the human individual lives by and of the flesh, his life centers in possession - in having, first, his body, with its perfections and imperfections, its cravings and fears, and then, through flesh and fleshly desires, the other possessions that dominate his scattered and unceasing dreams and disappointments."¹¹

Through my body that participates immediately in the world I can have a notion of the existential fullness of being. Moreover, my body asserts my own existence in the midst of the other existences. Existence and body are associated. I call existent whatever has relation with my body. That which determines both my existence and the mode of my existence is my body. My body reminds me of the sort of being that I am. Through my body,

10. Marcel, Gabriel, The Mystery of Being, pp. 113-115.

11. Grene, Marjorie, Dreadful Freedom, p. 129.

I am given my proper condition as a corporeal being, placed in the world. Finally, the body is that through which man gives his own personal value to the objects in the world, so that they represent some additional meaning to what they have in themselves. In other words, Marcel is understood to mean by this that created objects are not utterly without meaning, but man may add personal meanings and values to them.

Man has no possible existence outside Being. He is assured of Being in the moment of self-recollection, when he is separated from himself and decides against his life. At such a moment he is disposed to open up himself to Being and allow it to permeate him. Man's self is defined by its freedom, in facing life, either to accept it or to refuse it. This freedom for acceptance or refusal, Marcel calls the subject-object relation. As a subject, man is related to the objects around him when he decides either to become an object himself, or to remain as a subject who will, nevertheless, have to do with objects. Is this choice continual? or is it decided once for all in some moment of man's life? Marcel does not make this point clear. The reality proper to man is his participation in Being. Furthermore, man is the only being who can determine his future, and that by abstraction from the causal world over which he is powerless. He can make promises, remaining indifferent to the changes which will occur in the course of his promise. I should never try to cut myself loose from the world, for then I will lose the meaning of my existence.

What is authentic existence? How must man best live? Naturally,

as a religious philosopher, Marcel's answer is through faith. Man must transcend the world through faith. How does man acquire faith? The answer to this question is very subjective and cannot be proved. When man opens himself to Being, he is ready to receive the message which is to be delivered to him. Once he is called and hears the call, he transcends this world into the world of faith. His experience is completely subjective and cannot be communicated; he has powerfully had the experience by himself and alone and can neither objectify nor justify it. Grace has a part to play here; it seems that Marcel believes that faith comes by an act of grace on God's part. Not everyone who opens up himself to Being may end up in faith, but whomever God chooses. One may ask, why does God choose some and leave some? When faith is received, the individual becomes disposable, that is, he will be ready to give himself, to spend it and make it available at all times. Here lies the difference between the martyr and the one who commits suicide, which will be discussed in connection with death. In disposability, the other is taken into account as necessity for self-realization. "The more I am present to another the more I am present to myself, the greater my destiny, my realization, my plenitude of being; and in the mutuality of love, belonging to one another, is an exchange of being."¹²

Now we come to an important idea in Marcel's philosophy, the idea of fidelity. Fidelity is one of the intense experiences which help in

12. Blackham, op.cit., p. 77.

the exploration of Being. Marcel does not consider fidelity as an act of will; it is merely faith in the presence of the other to which the individual continues to respond. The structure of Being is revealed in this continual response which makes up the individual's life and permanence. This response must necessarily be towards a person and not towards an idea or an ideal, because the idea or ideal has no power over the individual; their reality depends upon the interpretation of the individual himself.

"Fidelity is considered as something permanent... Fidelity can only be shown towards a person, never at all to a notion or an ideal. An absolute fidelity involves an absolute person."¹³

What is expressed in fidelity? Fidelity expresses a vow that one has made to keep intact and unflinching a certain relationship. This vow can either be made in the presence of another person, or it may be made in privacy in the presence of God. The vow cannot be made in complete seclusion, it has to be made in some presence. Naturally, man cannot guarantee the future states or bent of his sentiments, but the vow has nothing to do with sentiments as such; it is attached to the principle of existence as a whole. Man can, to a certain extent, transcend his immediate situation and submit himself in loyalty to God and to his fellow men. Whenever any promise is made for the future, it is made in God's presence. "Fidelity is an appeal to God for strength and constancy amidst temporal changes and uncertainties."¹⁴ As is apparent, fidelity and faith are the same thing.

13. Marcel, Gabriel, Being and Having, p. 96.

14. Collins, op.cit., p. 147.

Marcel says: "Faith is essentially fidelity, and in the highest possible form."¹⁵ In another place in the same work, he says: "There cannot be faith without fidelity. Faith in itself is not a movement of the soul, a transport or ravishment; it is simply unceasing attestation."¹⁶ In faith, the individual recognizes God's existence and adores His perfection. The result of faith is love and hope which will permeate the individual's existence.

"Without such faith the very idea of a projection of self into the future is meaningless; for the self of desires, of momentary pleasures, of having, cannot depend on itself to feel tomorrow as it does today. Only by God's support is such permanence and such loyalty possible. By nature we are all traitors; only divine grace can make us true."¹⁷

The highest level of human life is the transcendence in faith, where there is continual presence with the Absolute Other who helps and supports the life of the individual. To affirm its being on the highest level, man must commune with others and with God in prayer. To Marcel, prayer is very important, as it is the only means of helping man to the presence of God and, to communion with Him.

"The ontological order can only be recognized personally by the whole of a being, involved in drama which is his own, though it overflows him infinitely in all directions - a being to whom the strange power has been imparted of asserting or denying himself. He asserts himself in so far as he asserts Being and opens himself to it; or he denies himself by denying Being and thereby closing himself to It. In this dilemma lies the very essence of his freedom."¹⁸

15. Marcel, Gabriel, Being and Having, p. 22.

16. Ibid., p. 215.

17. Grene, op.cit., p. 130.

18. Marcel, Gabriel, Being and Having, pp. 120-121.

Nothing has, so far, been mentioned about the soul, which has to be discussed before enter upon the subject of death and immortality. "It is one of the essentials of the soul thus conceived that it may be saved or lost, precisely in so far as it is a hazard. ... The soul is not an object and can by no means be regarded as an object."¹⁹ Moreover, possession or having cannot be applied to the soul. The way in which we respond to being and the trials that our bodily life undergoes determine the saving or the perdition of our souls. All through the individual's life, the soul searches after its own salvation. In Philosophy of Existence, Marcel writes:

"In contrast to the captive soul, the soul which is at the disposal of others is consecrated and inwardly dedicated; it is protected against suicide and despair, which are interrelated and alike, because it knows that it is not its own, and that the most legitimate use it can make of its freedom is precisely to recognize that it does not belong to itself; this recognition is the starting point of its activity and creativeness."²⁰

The existence of the soul is dependent upon hope. In hoping, the soul refuses to despair; it will therefore see order and value in the universe, and will feel its integrity.

Closely connected with hope is death. "Death considered as the springboard of an absolute hope. A world where death was missing would be a world where hope only existed in the larval stage."²¹ Without death to give the human life a tragic meaning, Marcel feels that life would be

19. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

20. Ibid., p. 28.

21. Marcel, Gabriel, Being and Having, p. 93.

a mere "puppet-show". In death man hopes for another world, for existence in another world. "To hope is to carry within one the private assurance that however black things may seem, my present intolerable situation cannot be final; there must be some way out."²² Death is not the ultimate reality of the human being - his reduction into nothingness.

"Value is the mirror wherein it is given us to discern, always imperfectly and always through a distorting mist, the real face of our destiny, the "truer than ourselves". What it shows us certainly reaches its full development in another world - a world which it seems to be the property of our earthly experience to open or half open to us, or in extreme cases, to prevent us from entering. ... Perhaps a stable order can only be established if man is acutely aware of his condition as a traveller, that is to say, if he perpetually reminds himself that he is required to cut himself a dangerous path across the unsteady blocks of a universe which has collapsed and seems to be crumpling in every direction. This path leads to a world more firmly established in Being, a world whose changing and uncertain gleams are all that we can discern here below."²³

The immortality that Marcel speaks of comes about through love. In love the lover can live in his beloved, the father in his child, the individual in the other.

There is a difference, to Marcel, between suicide and martyrdom. A martyr is a person who has opened himself to Being. He lives in faith, believing in God and loving Him, and so loving his fellowmen. This love for his fellowmen makes him disposable, i.e., ready to give up himself at any time. His aim is to help mankind, even though the demand may be upon his own life. Therefore, when he gives up himself to death, it is for the

22. Marcel, Gabriel, The Mystery of Being, p. 160.

23. Marcel, Gabriel, Homo Viator, pp. 153-4.

help of others and for the hope that by his death, the others may be made more comfortable. The basic element in martyrdom is the love of the other and the hope for providing his comfort. Suicide, on the other hand, is completely the opposite. A man who commits suicide has no faith. He ends his life in despair. His body is used by him like an enslaving instrument. Being closed to himself, having no love for man, he looks around and sees nothing to give him hope. The word hope is absent from his vocabulary; that is why he finds everything around inviting him to despair.

Marcel's philosophy is permeated with hope. Man is not left absolutely free to choose, so that eventually he may reach nothingness. Still there are some points for criticism in his philosophy. First and foremost, faith is a subjective experience and therefore cannot be proved. How can we explain it to others? How can we help the non-believers to open up themselves to Being? How can we teach them faith? Being subjective, it is true only for the individual and therefore cannot be universalized. His views can best fit under religion instead of philosophy. The same thing holds for freedom, Being, evil, love, death. They are all experiences to be lived through and therefore, personal and only subjectively valid.

Since Being is a mystery and cannot be known, how can I participate in it? Marcel says: "I aspire to participate in this being, in this reality - and perhaps this aspiration is already a degree of participation, however rudimentary."²⁴ Man's whole aim is to participate in Being, if he wants

24. Marcel, Gabriel, Philosophy of Existence, p. 5.

to live authentically, i.e., be what he is. Therefore, how can he know that he is participating in it, or be sure that what he has opened himself to, is Being proper? Can he be sure through his feeling only? If so, which is the case in Marcel, then it is a poor assurance, for feelings cannot be depended on; they may give the wrong picture.

Is the Other really necessary so that I may exist? Marcel believes that existence belongs to the other and that I cannot exist, or think of myself as existing, except when I am conscious not to be the other.²⁵

The other exists, it cannot be denied; but his existence does not seem to be necessary for my existence. I can be conscious of my existence by simply being conscious of the objects around me. I know that I am not this or that object, I am not a table or a wall or an animal or a flower, and therefore I know that I exist as not any of these. Moreover, the other is conceived to be a necessity for my self-realization.²⁶ Do I realize myself fully in giving up my life for the other? As it was said above, death is not the ultimate reality for man. What justifies martyrdom, then?

Finally, there is this belief that man by nature is sinful, or is a traitor, which most religionists hold, Marcel being one of them. The only way they prescribe for man's release from his sin is by the grace of God. This term, "the grace of God" blocks the way to man's active transcendence. He may think: what if, after all the difficulties to bear, God's grace does not descend upon me and I am not saved? There is no guarantee for safety. Man is left once more to his own decision.

25. Quotation 5, p. 123 of this thesis.

26. Quotation 12, p. 128 of this thesis.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

All through the short history of Existentialism, the stress has been on the individual and on his decision. Although every existentialist differs considerably from the others, yet we can divide them generally into two camps, the Christian existentialists - Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Marcel - and the atheistic existentialists - Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre. In order that the comparison and contrast of the two groups may be consistent and thorough, I shall take up the notions related to man separately and discuss each briefly.

Beginning first with man as he finds himself in the universe, we find both groups agree that man opens his eyes to find himself in the world; but they part ways in the explanation they give to man's coming into the world. How and from where does man come into the world? The atheistic existentialists hold the view that man is thrown into the world from nowhere, that he is not created, but finds himself in the world; the Christian group, on the other hand, believe that man has been created by God who has put him in the world. The atheists¹ reject the notion of God because it is impossible; they avoid Him in order to avoid an inexplicable

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notion. Naturally, the God of religion is not a Being who can be proved philosophically without self-contradictions, because He cannot be logically conceived. The atheists reject him because they cannot prove Him; the Christians² accept Him upon faith, without trying to prove Him, because they believe that He is beyond human reason and can never be thought of or grasped by any human mind. Every group has its own reasons for accepting or rejecting God; but have the atheists solved their problem and secured their beliefs by rejecting God? They claim that man is thrown into the world from nowhere. Does this solve the problem of Man's origin? They have not solved the problem; they have introduced an inconceivable alternative - this is all what they have done. If the notion of God is absurd and self-contradictory, the notion of "nowhere" is equally absurd and self-contradictory. They frankly admit that man has not created himself, nor has he been created; but they stop at this point and do not explain further.

Now we come to man as he finds himself in the world. He must make himself what he wants to be. There is practically no disagreement on this point between the two groups. Man is always projecting himself into the future, trying to be what he is not, trying to shape his own life himself. Nevertheless, here again there seems to be a general difference between the two groups as to how man decides what he wants to be. The atheists claim that he has to create his own values for himself; there are no ethical norms, no values that he may turn to, because there is no God to conceive

2. By Christians or Christian, in this chapter, I mean existentialist Christians.

them. On the other hand, the Christian claim is that there are values and ethical norms which man must follow, although he has to do great thinking and deciding for himself. The burden borne by the Christian is somehow lighter than that borne by the atheist. Whenever he finds himself in great despair and indecision, the Christian has something to turn to and be guided by, although he is completely responsible for his choice and his act; while the atheist, in addition to his responsibility for his choice and act, has nothing to turn to and no one to appeal to. Both the Christian and the atheist are on a never ending journey; they never reach their destination. The Christian's aim is to perfect himself to the last possible degree to be able to stand in God's presence. The atheist endeavours to reach the subject-object stage, where he will be, according to Sartre, God. The whole aim is to form oneself in the future as one wants. Their endeavour is all in vain, because none will reach it. This is why they both feel that man's life is not much of a success.

Freedom, a basic idea in Existentialism, has been considered by the Christians to be determined freedom, freedom in a situation. Man has to choose, he cannot not choose, but he has to choose from something given. This notion of freedom is equally held by the atheists with the exception of Sartre, whose freedom is absolute and is not bound by any situation. Man is free means that he can choose alone and by himself. Why he has made this choice and not that depends upon him and no one can either determine it or inquire about it. One can only guess at the possibility of choices made from the situations by which the individual is confronted.

Freedom is one of the things Existentialism has stressed and brought to the surface, as it were, directing all attention towards its importance in human life.

Man cannot avoid despair, anguish, dread and forlornness. The atheist feels them all because he is lonely, having to depend upon himself and by himself bound to forge the unknown future. He especially feels forlorn because there is no God in his system to whom he can turn for help. The Christian has also the same feelings, but for slightly different reasons. He does not feel forlorn, for he has God whose help he can ask when in distress; but he feels despair when he turns away from faith, and anguish when he ponders upon his sinful nature, and is uncertain of his salvation. He has to be saved from his sin by God's grace; his salvation depends on the grace of God. This uncertainty is cause enough for his anguish. The difference which exists between the two sets of despair, anguish, and dread, although they are the same feelings in both cases, is that there is a ray of hope to be discerned shining from this thick cloud upon the Christian: the hope of salvation. There is no such hope in the case of the atheist, for he does not wait for salvation nor for redemption.

The concept of death can be examined in the same way. To the atheistic group death is the end of everything; it takes away the meaning of man's life, if such a meaning exists at all. There is no other world, no immortality, no soul to remain after death. The only immortality is in the minds of others, that is, if others remember the individual's

existence; or it is in the begetting of children. The opposite view is held by the Christian who sees in death a hope for a more perfect kind of life. There is a meaning attributed to human life which is a preparation for his complete fulfilment after death - a notion which is denied by the atheistic group.

In general, what Existentialism has imparted to the world of thought and to human life can be summarised briefly as follows. First and foremost, it has made man conscious of his responsibility towards himself and towards his life as a whole. He has to go on creating himself, that is depending upon himself in active endeavour, whether religionist or atheist. Man has to begin with himself, probe into himself and then proceed outwards. Existence is in a state of becoming; so is man as an existent being. There is flux in being; it is not static. Existentialism has brought out, more than any other philosophy, the importance of man in the world and his freedom. For does not man possess consciousness, perception and ideality that make him capable of discovering the mysteries of the universe and understanding its intricate structure? Is not man the only being who has power of intellectual investigation and scientific acquisition?

Another stress has been laid by Existentialism on Man's freedom of choice. Disregarding Sartre's extreme notion of freedom, we find man as the only being capable of making a decision and changing what is around him to suit his conditions. Because he is free, he is more responsible for his actions, whether Christian or atheist. He must feel this responsibility and so try always to make the best choice possible. If in

choosing, every individual will keep in mind and feel that he is choosing for every human being under the sun, then, I think, we would not have reached the stage of discord and disharmony in which our world is today. Man seems not to see further than his own nose; this is why our world is in such a confusion.

Existence precedes essence is another notion professed by Existentialism. Man first is and then he is defined as what sort of man he is. Before his existence, no one can predict what he will be; in any case, no one can ever predict what he will be, because man is always in the making. Here the stress is laid upon acts and not upon thoughts. The existentialist does not believe in latent abilities in man; if there are any, they should be translated into acts.

In short, Existentialism has laid stress on man, his freedom and his responsibility. Although subjective, this philosophy has not retreated into solipsism. It is a call to man to examine himself thoroughly and know himself. There is no harm in trying; so why not try out this philosophy, which begins with man who is the cause of all the problems in the world?

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