

1. By "existentialism" we shall understand the types of method and doctrine exemplified by K. Jaspers, M. Heidegger, J.-P. Sartre, Gabriel Marcel.

The name is admitted by Jaspers and Sartre; it was admitted for a while by Marcel who after *Humani generis* and, perhaps, to disassociate himself from Sartre, rejected it; Heidegger says he is concerned with *Ek-sistenz*.

Jaspers is Kantian and Lutheran; Heidegger an apostate and agnostic; Sartre an atheist; Marcel a convert to Catholicism.

2. They are concerned with what it is to be a man, not in the sense of having a birth certificate, but in the sense employed by President Eisenhower last fall when, asked whether it was not risky to send the fleet into the Mediterranean during the Egyptian crisis, answered "We have to be men."

"Being a man" in that sense results from a decision, ~~x~~ is consequent to the use of one's freedom, makes one the sort of man one really is, involves risk (in the present instance, the risk of nuclear warfare and all that implies).

3. It is anti-positivist: "being a man" is not any set of outer data to be observed, any set of properties to be inferred from the outer data, any course of action that can be predicted from the properties; it springs from an inner and "free" determination that is not scientifically observable.

It is anti-idealist: the various transcendental ego's are neither Greek nor barbarian, bond nor free, male nor female; they don't suffer and they don't die; we do.

Positivism and idealism have been major determinants in producing the contemporary world; in the measure that the contemporary world is found unsatisfactory or, frankly, disastrous, existentialism has a profound resonance.

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~~Sein und Zeit~~ quickly ran through 5 editions; Jaspers' *Geistige Situation der Zeit* was through 5 editions in about a year and has been translated into six languages including Japanese; Sartre was a cafe hero in Paris.

This contemporary resonance fits in with existentialist concern for time and for history.

Since "being a man" is not a fixed essence with which we are endowed from birth but the result of the use of our freedom, and further since "being a man" is not a property that necessarily remains with us but is maintained by us precariously in the continuous use of freedom, "time" is an intrinsic and necessary component in "being a man." Hence, Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, Marcel's *Homo Viator*. However, concern with history on the grand scale appears only in Jaspers, e.g., *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*.

4. It is unconcerned with propositional truth and with man's per se capacities for truth or anything else.

This unconcern arises in Heidegger, Sartre, from phenomenological concentration on the sources, grounds, whence spring concepts and judgments.

It arises in Jaspers from Kant who is believed to have shown that any objective statement deals only with appearance.

It arises in Marcel from his concern with being a good man as ~~man~~ opposed to mere existence as a man, and the common sense attitude (buttressed by dissatisfaction with idealism) that technically correct propositions have little or nothing to do with what you really are.

In all it arises from a turning away from the universal, necessary, abstract, per se, to the unique individual, the contingent, the concrete, the de facto.

Jaspers repeatedly insists that freedom is not definable; Sartre establishes the fact of freedom by asking whether you have been in the torture chamber with the ~~Nazi~~ Nazis and made the experiment of freedom by not giving your comrades away; none of them would dream of discussing "man" as what is common to mewling infants, people sound asleep, and the mature man facing a crisis in his life.

Gabriel Marcel: "Plus il s'agit de ce que je suis et non de ce que j'ai, plus questions et reponses perdent toute signification. Quand on me demande, ou quand je me demande, en quoi je crois, je ne puis me contenter d'énumérer un certain nombre de propositions auxquelles je souscris; ces formules, de toute évidence, traduisent une réalité plus profonde, plus intime: le fait d'être en circuit ouvert par rapport à la Réalité transcendante reconnue comme un Tu." Quoted by R. Troisfontaines, De l'existence à l'être, II, 352.

5. This unconcern with propositional truth and this distaste for the per se is de facto connected with an incapacity to provide foundations for either propositional truth or the per se.

It is my firm conviction that, while there is much in existentialism on which we should practise the patristic maxim of despoiling the Egyptians, still we cannot simply take existentialism (even Marcel's) and incorporate it within Scholasticism. Marcel (in a private conversation with F. Copleston) intimated that he had little or no idea how one could go about proving the existence of God; the statement quoted above, taken in its concrete context, eliminates the possibility of any evolution of dogma or any dogmatic theology in the traditional Catholic sense; in other words, while it fits in with the requirements for a Biblical theology, it has no room for the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon, to say nothing of Trent and the Vatican.

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6. Existentialism is concerned with the human subject qua conscious, emotionally involved, the ground of his own possibilities, the free realization of those possibilities, the radical orientation within which they ~~emerge~~ emerge into consciousness and are selected, his relationship with civilization, other persons, history, God.

7. G. Marcel is not a systematic thinker; in his preface to R. Troisfontaines' *De l'existence à l'être*, he congratulates the author on having done for him what he could not do for himself.

G. Marcel is a penetrating thinker and an extremely effective writer; he can put a concrete idea, orientation, ~~xxx~~ criticism of life, across with extraordinary brevity and skill.

He reviews his intellectual history in "Regard en arrière", a paper added to the collection "Existentialisme chrétien: Gabriel Marcel", introd. by E. Gilson, contributors include Delhomme, Troisfontaines, et al. See Bocheński.

His *Journal métaphysique* was published in 1927, the date of *Sein und Zeit*. His background is idealism (including Bradley) and Bergson; Kierkegaard is acknowledged to have influenced him indirectly.

8. K. Jaspers began with abnormal psychology of which he became professor and wrote various technical articles; he has a profound respect for science and is a mordant critic of scientists; forty years ago he was ridiculing the mythology of the brain and the mythology of the unconscious in the psychology of his time.

He is a Kantian with the Critique of Practical Reason brought to life by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

He is the most broadly cultivated of the existentialists and with the widest range of interests; he writes very intelligibly, explains exactly what he means, strikes one as very balanced and sane.

In his *Philosophie* (1932) he explains that Existenz and Transzendenz correspond roughly to what are named by mythical consciousness the soul and God. *by phors.*

Since then he has developed the notion of das Umgreifende (which corresponds roughly to the notion of being in insight) and has come to place a great deal more emphasis and reliance on reason (more perhaps to disassociate himself from Sartre and similar tendencies than from assignable grounds) and to speak openly of God (as a necessary philosophic postulate).

9. M. Heidegger is perhaps the most original and profound of the lot; his immediate source is Husserl; from Heidegger by way of a strong dose of French clarity and logic comes Sartre, who figures as the reductio ad absurdum of the movement.