

Reprinted From: JOURNAL OF EXISTENTIALISM  
VOL. VII, NO. 26 WINTER, 1966/67  
LIBRA PUBLISHERS, INC.  
1133, BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

## HAPPINESS IS FOR THE PIGS: Philosophy versus Psychotherapy

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### *Introduction*

In a Danish Encyclopedia, published around the turn of the century, a highly esteemed scientist wrote an article on "Flying Machines." "It is quite obvious," he concluded, "that none of these fantastic ideas shall ever materialize. Everybody knows that nothing heavier than water can ever float in water; by the same token, it is logically impossible that anything heavier than air can ever fly in the air." And while he jubilantly arrived at his unmistakable conclusion, outside his window birds sailed through the sky (TI, p. 198).\*\* Analogous, and similarly ludicrous, so it has often been argued, was the situation of the dogmatic negativists who, until recently, denied the possibility of human space travel: the deniers were already on board a space-ship, soaring, whirling through an immense, absurdly indifferent vast vile void, totally vacuous, except for homeopathically sparse excipients of inconsequential motes of dust and specks of light: all blindly blank, deadly deaf, frigidly glaring with sublime apathy . . .

This image has now become commonplace (appearing even in the inaugural speech of a U.S. president). It is most frequently employed homilectically: to foster and promote human gregariousness. "We are all in the same boat," etc. More intriguing, however, seems to me a question, implicitly suggested in the metaphor: What wondrous mechanisms have permitted Man to remain deluded about his own cosmic conditions, and, in face of all the evidence to the contrary,

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\*\* In view of the great many bibliographic references, notations have been simplified.

maintained a basically Ptolemaic (if any) "Weltanschauung"? The shortest, if not simplest, explanation offers a reference to the (a) cognitive and (b) empathetic "disintegrity" of human insights (or) "disintegratedness" of Man: the ability (a) to hold cognitively incompatible views or positions, or (b) to prevent knowledge from penetrating "volitional" (etc.) personality layers and thus permitting it to remain purely "intellectual."\* One of the, in this respect, most effective ontological and eschatological hebetants, is, according to Heidegger (H3, 1 & 2, sections: 27, 34-38, 71): Man's knack for extracting intervals out of his total term of Being and filling them with work and other pastimes, external sensations ("Neugier"), chatter and small-talk ("das Gerede"), etc. This, to return to the analogy, empowers the crew and passengers in the space-ship to go on, polishing brass and playing bridge, blissfully unaware of their "cosmic situation." They are all psychologically healthy, content, well adjusted and accommodated: ontologically secure. They have a feeling of integral selfhood, of personal identity, and of the permanency of things. They believe in their own continuity—in being made of good, lasting stuff—and in meaning and order and justice in life and in the universe (e.g., Laing, L1!). In the most fortunate cases, there is a good, healthy unconditional surrender and submission to the norms of nicety and normalcy of the average, square-headed, stuff-shirted, sanctimonious, middle-class North-American church-goer and bridge player, with his pseudo-intelligent, quasi-progressive, simili-cultured, platitudinal small-talk. Happy days! in this the best of all possible worlds. One doesn't notice until too late. In short: *All is well* (since nobody notices the end of "all that is well") until one night: the day's work is well done and all the ship's crapulant fools frantically engulf themselves in a deadly serious game of bridge (till it is time for the night-cap and the tranquillizer). One of the "dummies," a champion brass polisher, suffering from an acute case of uncaused depression, goes to lie down for a while; he doesn't have a dime for the juke box; the room is painfully satiated with embarrassing silence. Instantly and unexpectedly he is struck

\* See, for a variety of approaches to this problem cluster: A1, Ca, C4, F3, H3.1 & 2, J1.1-4, K1.1, L3, R3.1 & 4, R6.1-3, R7, S5, T.1, a.o.

by an execrative curse of inverted serendipity. He suddenly, in unbearable agony, sees *himself* as an upholstered pile of bones and knuckles, with the softer parts slung up in a bag on the front side, and his whole life as a ludicrously brief interlude between embryo and corpse, two repulsive caricatures of himself (Z1.1 p. 112). As for this flying farce, this nauseatingly trivial burlesque in a whirling coffin, and its aimless, whimsical flight through the void: "What is it all about?" The question permeates him with dread and anguish, with "ontological despair" and "existential frustration" (U1 p. 18ff). "Angsten" (Kierkegaard) constrains out of him all his puny, piddling hatreds, and petty ambitions in brass and bridge, and fills him with care and compassion for his fellow travellers. In other words, he has become a philosopher, an alienated, nostalgic "cosmopath," and, *eo ipso*, a case for psychologists and psychotherapists, some of whom want to study him and label his "*Daseinsweise*," others to "unsick" him as well.

This is, in a metaphorical nutshell, the background for the tragicomic encounter of clinical psychology and existential philosophy.

## 2. *Why Existential Philosophy?*

"What is it all about?" Mitja (in *Brothers Karamazov*) felt that though his question may be absurd and senseless, yet he had to ask just that, and he had to ask it in just that way. Socrates claimed that an unexamined life is not worthy of man. And Aristotle saw Man's "proper" goal and "proper" limit in the right exercise of those faculties which are uniquely human. It is commonplace that men, unlike other living organisms, are not equipped with built-in mechanisms for automatic maintenance of their existence. Man would perish immediately if he were to respond to his environment exclusively in terms of unlearned biologically inherited forms of behaviour. In order to survive at all, the human being must discover how various things around him *and in him* operate. And the place he occupies in the present scheme of organic creation is the consequence of having learned how to exploit his intellectual capacities for such discoveries. Hence, more human than any other human endeavour is the attempt at a *total* view of Man's function—or malfunction—in the Universe, his possible place and importance

in the *widest conceivable cosmic scheme*. In other words it is the attempt to answer, or at least articulate whatever questions are entailed in the dying groan of ontological despair: *what is it all about?* This may well prove biologically harmful or even fatal to Man. Intellectual honesty and Man's high spiritual demands for order and meaning, may drive Man to the deepest antipathy to life and necessitate, as one existentialist chooses to express it: "a *no* to this wild, banal, grotesque and loathsome carnival in the world's graveyard." (Z1.1 p. 503)

Philosophy and suicide have always been typical upper-middle-class phenomena. Both presuppose some minimum amount of leisure time and a certain level of education. The recent desperate need among psychologists and psychotherapists for a "*Philosophy of Man and his Fate*" arises from the general improvement of living conditions and education. As David Riesman puts it (R3.4, p. 3f): Fifty years ago there was no problem as to what would constitute a *cure* or at least a step in a more "healthy" direction. Freud's patients were largely suffering from heavy hysteria, dramatic paralyzations, inability to talk or move. The more advanced countries today have caught up with many Utopian ideals concerning economic poverty and unquestionably psychopath-creating authoritarian family structures, while at the same time beliefs in gods and devils, heaven and hell, angels and immortality have almost vanished. In these countries people suffer less from nightmarish misery than from the more subtle disorders previously buried by the harsh and bitter struggle for existence. The clinical psychologists are unexpectedly confronted with patients who by all *social* criteria are tremendously successful and well adjusted. They have just—prematurely, as it were—anticipated the dying groan, Ivan Ilyitch's three-days-long shriek (T2): *what is it all about?* Thus what once was an obviously commendatory endeavour to abolish poverty and ignorance, is slowly raising before us a problem, the severity of which will increase in correlation with increase in leisure time and socio-economic and educational "progress," viz., the most humanly relevant question of all: *What does it mean to be Man, what is the Lot of Mankind in cosmos?* What once was an object of idle contemplation, has recently become a concern for economists and theologians, for scientists and creative artists, psychologists, psychiatrists and educators.

## 2.1. *Via Historica ad Existentialismum.*

The earliest idle contemplators, the so-called "Ionian philosophers of Nature," were rather naïve and optimistic. ". . . they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties," says Aristotle\* "then advanced and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e.g., about the moon and the sun and the stars, and then about the genesis of the whole universe." The first severe criticism sets in with Heraclitus who, as everybody knows, became rather frightfully obsessed by the insight that everything changes; and some of his successors even more by the alleged consequences of this observation: "Nothing exists!" (in Parmenides' sense of "exist"). Take for example the oil-capital of Canada, the city of Edmonton. I want to make a statement about Edmonton; but before I have managed to utter or even think "Edmonton," that to which I intended to refer by "Edmonton" has already changed. And since I don't want to use the same proper name to designate different objects, I might as well desist from making use of it altogether, throw up my hands and admit that there is no such thing as Edmonton. The ingenious counter-question is this: "But *what is it then*, this Edmonton of which you say: it does not exist? Clearly you must have had something in your mind." And the answer is: "Yes. That is precisely where I have it: *in my mind*. The 'Edmonton' in my mind, the concept, the form, the *idea* of 'Edmonton,' that is the Edmonton, the only Edmonton that exists with an endurance (invariance) that permits a classification." It is quite easy to see how such an attitude, with the assistance of Pauline Christianity, might predispose the philosophers for that radical devaluation of all earthly sense-experiences which characterized so many of the most predominant trends of thought during the Medieval Ages and the first centuries thereafter. I shall refer to this type of philosophizing as "*brain-philosophy*." To a brain philosopher sense experiences are either of negligible significance, totally irrelevant or represent a more or less serious obstacle to knowledge perfection. Already Zeno of Elea may be used to illustrate a rather typical form of brain philosophy when he *proved* the fundamental impossibility of motion. "You claim that you can move?" asks Zeno. "Tell

\* *Metaphysica* A2, 982b 13-17.

me then: *where* does this alleged 'movement' take place?" It seemed to Zeno that there were only two possibilities: (1) Either you "move" *where you are*, in which case you are *not* moving, you are standing still; (2) or you do this "moving" *where you are not*. But how can you do anything, let alone moving, where you are not? Diogenes from Sinope is said to have reacted to this lecture by silently leaving his seat, strolling around for a while and then sitting down again. He undoubtedly meant by this to introduce a counter-argument to the Zenoist standpoint. But Zeno's response is obvious: "Thank you, my dear Diogenes," he would reply, "for this convincing illustration of my point of view. I take it that you all observed Diogenes perform what we have here called a 'motion' which *I* have just shown to be in principle impossible. So let this be a lesson to you. Don't ever believe your own eyes or any other sense-experience! They are bound to deceive you." The paradigm brain-philosopher is traditionally pictured: blindfolded in his ivory tower, meditating on absolute and eternal forms in a world of abstract ideas.

Diogenes, on the other hand, may be seen as representing an alternative philosophical attitude, what we shall here call "the *eye-philosophy*."

Hippocrates, the "father of medicine," is usually mentioned as its first most typical exponent. And this is no pure coincidence. It is commonly accepted as advisable for a physician to *observe* the patient before diagnosing. Few of us, I am sure, would have much confidence in a brain surgeon who performed his operation blindfolded, concentrating on eternal forms. This truism drove Hippocrates to the other extreme. He warned against almost any form of theorizing and advised his students to confine themselves to taking down in their protocols all the observed symptoms of the patient *and nothing more*. These *protocol sentences* are the only things that can be known: 10:35 A.M.: Skin pallid, urine colorless, feces grey.

What a distance to the noble meditator in his ivory tower! And yet, they have *one* thing in common, their detachment from the external world, their attitude of "objective," non-commitment, their lack of emotional engagement. The doctor continues unruffled with his protocol: 10:45 A.M.: Pulse and respiration almost imperceptible. 10:48 A.M.: The death struggle has begun. 11:02 A.M.: No pulse, no respiration. The patient is dead. The undertaker can take over.

What thus seems to permit the eye-philosopher to take an equally detached attitude to what he perceives *visually*, as does the brain-philosopher to absolute forms, is the uniqueness of the vertebrate eye: It is not really a sense organ, as it were. It is part of the brain. Already Augustine points to this exceptional position of our eyes in relation to our more peripheral sense organs. And he goes on to show how all the other senses imitate vision! "*Ad oculos enim proprie videre pertinet. Ultimur autem hoc verbo etiam in ceteris sensibus cum eos ad cognoscendum intendimus—Dicimus autem non solum, vide quid luceat, quod soli oculi sentire possent, sed etiam vide quid sonet; vide quid oleat, vide quid sapiat, vide quam durum sit.*"\* The whole brain-eye-distinction as an indication of two different epistemological attitudes and two different approaches to knowledge perfection—rationalism and empiricism—have thus been reduced to a mere matter of degrees. The brain-philosophy dominated up to the Renaissance, in Descartes, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Hegel and others; the eye-philosophy breaking through with the Renaissance (and its stress on bodily lust and sense-experiences) with Leonardo da Vinci, Galilei, etc., and later the British empiricists from Bacon to Locke, Hume, Mill.

## 2.2. *Existentialism as a "Heart Philosophy."*

More conspicuous than the brain-eye-distinction is the ethical and epistemological distance from brain-eye-philosophy on one hand, to, what one on the other hand might call "*heart-philosophy*." Generally speaking, heart-philosophy presents itself as a romantic reaction to the "existential lethargy" which allegedly characterizes the attitude of brain-eye-philosophers. It is a plea for a dynamic, Heraclitean world view in which human life is more than a mere puppet show, and is a plea for freedom, initiative, decision, responsibility, novelty, adventure, risk, chance, romance—a world which, with effort, we can fashion to our purposes and ideals, a world where *anything is possible*. The existential "heart" philosopher refuses to submit to any external or internal forces demanding his obedience, such as: "logical laws," "laws of nature," "scientific laws," "ethical laws," "logical truths," "factual truths," "sense-data," "the structure of lan-

\* *Confessiones*, Lib. X, Cap. 35.

guage," etc. They may all be worth considering, but *the choice, the decision* is the individual's alone. And he must be thoroughly deprived of any pretext to avoid this responsibility.

I once gave a course in logic for high-ranking NATO officers. I suggested a possible procedure according to which one first has to make clear what the choice is all about, then evaluate (in some systematic manner) the consequences of various possible decisions, and then make the choice. I took a concrete example of a commander on board a Norwegian torpedo boat, who, in a war with Russia, discovers a huge Russian battleship helplessly cooped up behind a neutral tanker in the end of a narrow fjord in Greenland. I asked the officers first to map out the various possible choice-alternatives. But, to my surprise, they protested violently. I had, they claimed, attacked the problem from the wrong end. It turned out that what they resented was that they were going to make the choice. They did not like it a bit. And here is how they managed to avoid decision and responsibility: (1) There are, it seems, such things as "militarily relevant data." (2) With each torpedo boat follows what one might call a "direction for usage."

What the commander is trained to do, is just to compare direction and data, and the only correct course of action emerges more or less automatically out of this activity.

The commander was, the existentialists may contend, a victim of brain-eye-philosophy. It is the task of the existential philosopher to break this spell, and awaken us all to come out and face our choice situations instead of cowardly hiding behind natural and logical "laws" and ratio-empirical "data."

An important obstacle here, however, is the ordinary language, the everyday prose. The heart-philosopher needs an extraordinary language, a poetic-dramatic transmitter in order to adequately convey to himself or fellow beings what the choice is really about. Ordinary language, "*die Umgangs-sprache*," "*das Gerede*," represents "the public worldliness," "the intersubjective world," "*das Man*" (in Heidegger's terminology). It lulls us in to this platitudinal world of small-talk where everything is taken for granted: life, death, the world, and man's fate in it, the society, the language. No reason to wonder or worry; everything is what it is and not another thing. The world is what it seems to be to a dry, unimaginative, down to

earth, square-headed stuffshirt about mid-morning after a good night's rest. And as for such questions as what it *means* to live and die—there's nothing to it, it is commonplace, almost everybody does it. We are thrown into an absurdly indifferent world of sticks and stones and stars and emptiness. Our "situation" is that of a man who falls out of the Empire State Building. Any attempt at "justifying" our brief, accelerating fall, the inconceivably short interlude between our breath-taking realization of our "situation" and our inexorable total destruction, is bound to be equally ludicrous; i.e., whether we choose to say: (a) "This is actually quite comfortable as long as it lasts, let us make the best of it," or (b) "Let us at least do something useful while we can," and we start counting the windows on the building. In any event, both attitudes presuppose an ability to *divert* ourselves from realizing our desperate "situation," to abstract, as it were, every single moment of the "fall" out of its irreparable totality, to cut our lives up into small portions with petty, short time-span goals.

So much for the heart-philosophical concepts of "true" and "truth." As for "value," we are confronted with the chasm between an authentic life worthy of man, lived in clear and penetrating awareness of its utter absurdity, and a fraudulent, illusory life, lived in pleasant self-deception, essentially indistinguishable from the life of any other self-complacent, giddy-witted pig with some sense of cleanliness and indoor plumbing. The choice implies the unconditional acceptance of the value of *human dignity* at the cost of traditional, axiological objectives such as *adjustment, success, happiness, peace of mind*, etc. (M1.1, 02, Ch. 1)

### 2.3. *Existentialism and Knowledge-Perfection.*

Another question, independent upon the acceptance of heart-philosophical truths and values, but of obvious didactic significance, is the question whether such insights *can be taught*. In other words, we are approaching the concepts of understanding and knowledge-perfection.

It has been usual to distinguish between a perfection of knowledge "in width" and "in depth," and so well known are these expressions that any further explication is hardly necessary. They reflect the elementary, psychological relationship between attention span and

attention concentration, between the man who knows almost nothing about almost everything and the man who knows almost everything about almost nothing. A two-dimensional space analogy will suffice to illustrate this relationship and the kind and degree of knowledge within such a *non-engaged* field of discourse. The so-called "engaged" discourse introduced in heart-philosophy admits of a third component which we may tentatively designate *the degree of integration of knowledge*. An example will indicate what may be meant by the expressions "integrated" and "integration" in this connection.

During the Finnish-Russian War of 1939, the Finns caught a Russian spy behind their own lines. It was an obvious case. The spy confessed and was to be immediately executed. He knew that he would be shot at dawn, knew it as well as anything can be known. Therefore, he appeared stoically in court. He knew the outcome. There was not the shadow of a doubt. The court scene was a theatre, a bureaucratic performance, demanded in every community founded on the rule of law, but ridiculously superfluous in his case. And still the stage does not leave him entirely untouched. Against his own will he gradually gets involved in the proceedings. When finally the death sentence is pronounced, he collapses completely. What on earth had happened? He knew the outcome with absolute certainty. We should want to say the spy *knows about* his imminent death now, in a new and terrifying way. He has suddenly obtained an insight, a knowledge which *penetrates* him, goes through bones and marrow and violently shakes up the total personality structure into its deepest and darkest labyrinths. This difference, this change in the attitude of the accused is what according to a heart-philosophical suggestion for language, may be described as "an increased integration of the spy's knowledge of his imminent death." (*K1.2, 3*)

By the same token we should probably all answer the heart-philosopher's demand for facing up to our fate by saying: "Sure I know I am going to die! All men are mortal you know," and all that. When confronted with a questionnaire asking: *Are you going to die?* —we should, most likely without exceptions, all cross the box for "yes," and not for a moment consider "no," "I don't know," or "refuse to answer." But this question remains: Do we know about our death the way the spy knew it *before* or *after* the death sentence was pronounced. Unfortunately this "integration" (or "interiorizing,"

"internalization," "empathizing") of knowledge *cannot be taught* in any ordinary sense of teaching. The educator should have to resort to poetry and drama in order to *break through* the barrier of everyday prose, platitudinal small-talk and superficial chatter. And only if this is didactically possible shall I ever see myself as I am.

A priceless example of man's unwillingness to accept his fate in general, and his ephemerality in particular, is offered in Giradoux's *Amphitryon* 38 (*G3*, Act I. Scene V, pp. 41, 42). Jupiter desires to seduce Alcimène, not as a god, but in the flesh, as it were, as a man. Mercury examines him to ensure that the metamorphosis actually has taken place.

Mercure: "Avez-vous le désir de séparer vos cheveux par une raie et de les maintenir par une crème de Bryl?"

Jupiter: "En effet, je l'ai."

Mercure: "Avez-vous l'idée que vous pourrez mourir un jour?"

Jupiter: Non. Que mes amis mourront, pauvres amis, hélas oui! Mais pas moi."

Mercure: "Alors vous voilà vraiment homme!—Allez-y!"\*

#### 2.4. *Who knows, what, how?*

The heart vs. brain-eye-philosophical controversy is in one respect a rather interesting one. The analytically oriented philosophers accuse the existentialists of not knowing what they are talking about because of their exotic, imprecise language (*cf.* Carnap's famous critique of Heidegger). The existentialists return the compliment; analytic philosophers do not know what they are talking about, because of their lack of engagement, commitment. . . . And this dimension of knowledge imperfection not only prevents the analytic philosophers from realizing what "man's lot" is like, etc., but has a direct ethical relevance. A brain-eye philosopher, so say the existentialists, may have worked out the clearest, strictest set of moral rules and norms, and they may have no impact whatsoever on the philosophers' moral behavior.

A professor may not feel ethically obligated to follow his norm system. It does not engage him except in the most exterior cortical

\* The paradoxical fact that man "knows" that he must die, but not *in bones and marrow*, has been repeatedly pointed out by both philosophers and psychiatrists.

centers which in his case have little or no communication with the deeper, action-determining mechanisms. His ethical convictions are not interiorized, internalized, not sufficiently integrated. They have no *existential* validity.

The existentialists, however, may be said to be in another predicament. They overemphasize existential validity, the exotic, poetic-dramatic, through-bones-and-marrow-conveyance of their messages, to such an extent that they lose sight of, or ignore the tenability, the "objective truth," if one wants, of the cognitive, epistemic content of these messages. Thus, during the reading of say Sartre's celebrated *Le Mur*, one can become deeply impressed by the wasteland and extreme distance between human minds, which often has occupied authors and dramatists through the years, and not least in the twentieth century. One is possessed by a terrible vision—"the loneliness of man," "lonely as a ship in a starless night"—and by a prophetic premonition—"and thus it will always be. . . ." Until one day one renews one's acquaintance with Leonid Andrejev's "The Seven Who Were Hanged," and the mind is suddenly opened to a new insight, one diametrically opposite, it might seem. One feels forced by Andrejev to conclude that human beings are indeed able to understand each other, feel with each other, identify themselves with each other and this to such an extent that Andrejev's seven rebels cannot, as it were, be hanged apart and individually on the gallows.

If such types of literary descriptions as Sartre's and Andrejev's are persistently emaciated by rational and ruthless analysis, the ready-peeled, objective skeleton will say something about the impossibility or possibility of human contact in stress situations or during extreme circumstances of all kinds. It is clear that these dry, peeled-off formulations make it simpler for the cool and detached analyst to find effective methods for controlling the rules which apply to interhuman contact, the identification with other people, people-orientation, etc., and even enable the analyst to draw practical inferences of value for applied psychology—the "counseling" psychologist. However, the dilemma remains, not as a logico-philosophical paradox, but as a mere heuristic-didactic predicament: Is it practically possible to communicate in a useful way the course-of-life-suggestions which such "precise" formulations may have been intended to transmit,

without lowering the level of preciseness, and stressing empathy rather than clarity? Rather than "precising" language, we may have to "break through language in order to touch life," and turn the communicants involved into "victims, burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames" (A5). This may account for, say, Sartre's resort to drama for an empathetic transmission of his contentions. It is a question however if it vindicates (or can even be said to excuse) the general continental grandiloquence and the particularly pompous teutonic turgidity in Heidegger's high-flown, glutinated, conglomerate of bombastic neologisms. In the context of German philosophy, Heidegger's stylistic rhythm has the peculiarly mesmerizing effect of kettle-drums, finding a short-cut, as it were, from the receiver's tympanum directly to his volitional layers.

### 3. Why Clinical Psychology?

"Clinical (Psychology)" is here used in a wide sense, including theory, observation and examination for diagnostic as well as for therapeutic purposes. In this sense of "clinical" there is hardly anything written that can plausibly be said to be "existential" or "phenomenological," and, at the same time, "non-clinical psychology." True enough, after the two first expressions became such a fad, quite a few articles have appeared claiming to be both within non-clinical psychology and within existentialism or—now, more and more often—phenomenology. But in no case are "existentialist" and "phenomenological" used in a clearly philosophically relevant sense. On the other hand, there are works, like the early Sartrean essay: "*La Transcendance de L'Ego: Esquisse d'une description phénoménologique*."\* This is not psychology, but basically "*eine Auseinandersetzung*" with Edmund Husserl whom Sartre accuses of self-contradiction. Or better: Sartre defends the early Husserl (*Untersuchungen*) against the later Husserl (*Ideen*). The essay is only psychologically interesting insofar as it throws light on Sartre's concept of "consciousness," which is commonly considered incompatible with whatever Freud is referred to by the same expression. However, (a) in the above indicated wide sense of "clinical," Sartre should be seen as concerned with clinical psychology, insofar as he is interpreted to

\* *Rescherches Philosophiques*, VI, 1936-37. The American translation (1957) has as subtitle: *An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness*.



attempt to settle an account with Freud; (b) What Sartre is doing to "conscious(ness)" is neither philosophically nor psychologically exciting. A banal rhetorical device; viz., dilution of the concept, is employed to permit Sartre to speak a language where the possibility of "making sense," as it were, of "unconscious" human actions is clearly ruled out. In two other publications (SI.2 and SI.3), supposedly dealing with "imagination," Sartre "proves" that *eidetism* in the Jaenschian (JI.1, 2 & 3), not the Husserlian, sense, is logically impossible! It is a hair-raising example of extreme, dogmatic, brain-philosophy with a contempt for empirical evidence not surpassed even by Zeno in his (fictitious) disputation with Diogenes.

### 3.1. The Diagnostics.

It has often been considered the major turning point in the history of psychoanalysis when Elizabeth von R. reproached Freud for urging and pressing her to remember, instead of permitting a free flow of associations. This started the non-directive, client-centered analysis; never clearer, more succinctly expressed and accentuated than in Freud's own works. He warns, in *Ratschläge für den Arzt bei der psychoanalytischen Behandlung* (1912), against the understandable ambition to make something particularly excellent out of the client, and prescribe for him the highest aims in life. In *Wege der psychoanalytischen Therapie* (1919) the purpose of psychoanalysis is described in terms of the clients: self-completion, self-fulfilment, self-actualization. The analyst, says Freud, should chime in with the old French surgeon: "Je le pensai, Dieu le guérit."

The trends within clinical psychology, where this Freudian *epoché* vis-à-vis the clients has been emphasized or furthered, shall here be referred to as *diagnostic* (clinical psychology).

Sartre's analyses, from his early enquiry into Baudelaire, till his more recent *magnum opus* on Genet, are typically diagnostic (in this sense of "diagnostic"), i.e., there is no criticism, no blame, or judgment, just a presentation à la Maupassant's *Une Vie*.

The most extreme diagnostics among modern psychiatrists are Ludwig Binswanger and his followers, who are describing their activity as "Daseinsanalyse" (an analysis of the patient's "mode of being" or "beingness"). They seem by and large uninfluenced by Sartre, and descend more directly from Husserl and Heidegger—in

particular from the Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit*, i.e., the existentialist position which, popularized, is sought to be conveyed in the introduction to the present paper. The most conspicuous Heideggerian influence on the diagnostics is, unfortunately, his thundering style. Heidegger's "hermeneutics of man," his "*Daseinsanalytik*" or "*existenziale Analytik*" is by Binswanger defined as "*die philosophisch-phenomenologische Erhellung der apriorischen oder transcendentalen Struktur des Daseins als In-der-weltsein*." In spite of the fact that the literature available on *Daseinsanalyse*, or ontoanalysis, is usually fascinating, often also ghastly and grotesque, one cannot help wondering if the apparent indifference is as genuine as it seems on the surface. There is a nagging suspicion that the diagnostics are exploiting Heidegger's exotic language in order to "keep talking," and thus keep calm and unaffected by the horror of the bottomless *abyssus humanae conscientiae* with which they are incessantly confronted. The Freudian passivity, patience, and tolerance have in *Daseinsanalyse* been extrapolated into the phenomenological "reduction," "bracketing"—the *epoché*, the complete abstinence from judgment, by means of which the absolute truth is revealed (*àletheia*). Binswanger takes an attitude to the suicide, committed by his most famous patient, Ellen West, which was once described by Kierkegaard as characteristic of the esthetic stage in life. He seems like a Linnaeus, anxious only to find out what kind of plant he has at hand and to give a thorough description and diagnosis. Sometimes the case is fairly obvious; the specimen is subsumed under a certain known class. But not too rarely does this Linnaeus find a plant so unique it deserves its own name.

One of the rather unconventional cases described by one diagnostic is Roland Kuhn's *Rudolf*. It turns out that what Rudolf really desires, is a life in thrills ("*ein Leben in der Spannung*"). He has "*eine vertikale Daseinsache*" which permits him to oscillate between "*die verwesende Welt des Kellers*" and "*die glänzende Welt der Strasse*," or, it is also said: between *necrophobia* and *necrophilia*. When Rudolf is at his best he copulates with hogs in the moment when they are butchered. And it is quite clear that this is by no means a cause for raised eyebrows. On the contrary, what Kuhn's presentation seems to convey is rather a: "So what? Doesn't everybody?" This makes for a not too overly conventional, petit bourgeois psychotherapy.



Recently a Swedish psychiatrist of this school, Lars Ullerstam, was touring Europe, in an attempt to reduce the shortage of corpses for necrophiles by persuading his audience to bequeath, not just eyes and kidneys, etc., but the whole body, to Necrophiles Anonymous. The underlying assumption is, of course, that we should not give in to the middle-class, puritanistic prejudice, according to which certain conventional forms of (say, sexual) life are in any way preferable, "healthier". . . .\*

Medard Boss extends the total ethical indifference of existential analysis "both to psychotherapeutic techniques and to practical consequences and aims." This may look most impressive as a phenomenological program (with its "bracketing" and "epoché"), but is certainly not consistently carried out in practice.

### 3.2. *The Prelatics.*

Even the most extremist diagnostics (Binswanger, Boss, Buytendijk, Kuhn) cannot be said to be completely freed from hortatory tendencies. The frequent references to "resoluteness," "authenticity," etc. (laudatory), and "*Alltäglichkeit*," "*mauvaise foi*," "despondency," etc. (derogatory) are unerring indications in this direction. However, the whole scene changes completely, when we turn from any dubious diagnostic to typical exponents for what I shall here call "*prelatics*."\*\*

During the first few years after the Second World War, a tendency was vaguely detectable among psychotherapists to secede from the orthodox Freudian passivity and all-understanding tolerance, and return to a more expostulative old-fashioned Victorian attitude: "Ah, don't give me that. Pull yourself together young man and save your

\* For examples of predominantly "diagnostic" clinical psychology and its existentialist-phenomenological genealogy, *vide e.g.*: A7; B1 Part III, 1; B5.1-3, and "Der Fall Ellen West," *Schweizer Archiv für Neurologie u. Psychiatrie*, 1944 Vol. 53, pp. 255-277; Vol. 54, pp. 69-117, 330-360; 1945, Vol. 55, pp. 16-40; B7, B9.1 & 2; C4; E2, E3; K7; L1; M2; M3.3; R2 (appendix); S1.5; S6 & S7.

\*\* Again it is by no means easy to draw the line. The bibliography in the back suggests some more or less typical examples of "Prelaticism": A3.1 & 2 (?), Arnold M. B., & John A. Gasson: *The Human Person* (N.Y., 1954), F4.1, 2 & 3, and Frankl: *The Doctor and the Soul, An Introduction to Logotherapy*, (N.Y., 1955), F7.1 & 2, M1.1 & 2, M2, M3.4, N2(?), U1.

silly excuses! You know you can if you want. . . ." It wouldn't be too surprising if this psychotherapeutic metamorphosis were in fact rooted in some early (mis-)interpretations of post-war existentialists, whose main incentive, so it often seemed, was to fire a rocket in the rear of their fellow beings and shock them out of their "existential lethargy." Frankl (F4.3, p. 152) popularizes the difference between classic, Freudian, psychoanalysis and his own so-called "logotherapy" as follows: "In psychoanalysis the patient lies on a couch and must tell things that are disagreeable to tell. In logotherapy the client sits erect and must hear things that are disagreeable to hear." This, of course, is not anything entirely unfamiliar to psychologists. The earliest Reicheans were perhaps less verbose, but certainly more viciously aggressive in their attacks on patients' "character armour" and "neurotic equilibrium" than any of the rather nice and amiable prelatics—from Horney, Rogers, Maslow, Jourard and Jahoda, to Ungersma and Viktor Frankl. In point of fact, they all seem rather anxious to please. They have—more so than any philosopher—really taken to heart McTaggart's famous line: "The utility of metaphysics is to be found in the comfort it can give us." When, for instance, a patient is found to be uncomfortably aware of *his* finitude—suffering from "sickness unto death" or "*Sein zum Tode*"—then, maintains Frankl, psychodynamic interpretations (!) simply will not do to "tranquilize away" his dread and anguish ("*Angst*"). The only thing that can help here is "philosophical understanding" (F4.3, p. 193). The task of the clinical psychologist is to determine the "beingness," the "mode of being," the "*Daseinsweise*" proper to the patient in question. It is then up to the therapist to prescribe the myths or metaphysics that will "unsick" (M2, p. 5) this particular "cosmopath," and to couch him into his metaphysic, his "philosophical" understanding, with such satanic cunning and deceiving finesse ("pull rather than push"!), that it gives the patient the pleasant illusion of having discovered "the meaning of his life" himself. In other words this alleged "new approach in pastoral psychology" (U1) is in theory and practice indistinguishable from the applied psychology of Dr. Relling in Henrik Ibsen's *Wild Duck*, who furnished all his friends and acquaintances—of whom he suspected that they were liable to crack up, were they to face the horror of truth—with carefully selected, tailor-made "life-lies." The only difference is this. Dr. Rell-

ing is pictured as a disillusioned, sophisticated high-brow, a warm-hearted, sentimental cynic, a "knight of infinite resignation" (Kierkegaard). The prelaties are completely devoid of this air of sophistication (which, incidentally, the Husserl-Heideggerian thunder-language to some extent seems to lend to the diagnostics). With open, unsuspecting enthusiasm do the prelaties devote themselves to their undisputably commendable mission—to save their fellow men from such pernicious views of life that cause "ontological uncertainty" and "existential despair (frustration, vacuum)" by providing them with an impregnable metaphysical armour. The fact that a patient is classified as mentally or emotionally sick prevents the psychotherapist from enquiring into the possibility of whether, or to what extent, his patient may be cognitively right. It is perfectly possible that a person with "existential frustration," "ontological despair," or simply "sub-clinical depression" may, because of his abnormal condition, be in a better position to look through the camouflage of life that still is deceiving the "healthy" psychotherapists.

### 3.3. *On Susification in General.*

Among the most impressive existentialist writings, are those of Peter Wessel Zapffe (*Z1.1* & 2). The lucidity of the presentation is only surpassed by the ruthless consistency in his existentialist position, his so-called "Biosophy." He sides with the other existentialists in considering self-awareness—awareness of one's own existence and its conditions—the differentiating earmark of man, that which sets the human animal out from all other beings. Man's predicament is this: On the one hand we have man's high spiritual demands for justice, order and meaning; on the other hand his, in principle, unlimited capacity for insight and knowledge—perfection, *plus* his intellectual honesty, constantly sharpened by increased sensibility of the most refined mechanisms of human self-deception, all combined to drive man to face his own desperately incorrigible fate of futility, satiating him with the most sickening aversion against life in general, human existence, and his own "*Dasein*" in particular. Man—if he desires *some* degree of psychological health—must either give up his high spiritual demands, or his unlimited capacities for knowledge-perfection. *Or* he must overcome his inhibitions against deceiving himself. In short, he must resign vis-à-vis any attempt towards "self-realiza-

tion" (Jourard), "self-actualization" or "full-humanness" (Maslow), and seek himself a happier idol—the happy-go-lucky pig, grunting with wholehearted contentment and a complete peace of mind, with no demands beyond the garbage, a "vital" and "useful" life in unawareness of his existence and destiny. This is man's dilemma: this is his existential choice in biosophic perspective. The ordinary, "healthy" man tries to evade this choice. He may be paying lip service to the idea of humanization while at the same time surreptitiously practicing *susification*\* by exploiting the traditional ontological hebetants: work, religion, metaphysics, alcohol, drugs, lobotomy, everydayness, noisiness, external sensations, ordinary language prose, platitudinal small-talk or chatter, role-playing, role-expectancies, social norms, rigidity, insanity or conformity.\*\*

There cannot be much doubt that among the many means of susification, the safest long-time ontological hebetants are labor. ("useful") physical or mental exertion, and non-integrated religion (like, say, Kierkegaard's contemporary Danish Lutheranism). Either one may be used as opium for the people. "Work," reads the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. (1936), "is the duty of every citizen, according to the principle: 'He who does not work, neither shall he eat. . . .'" The day is not far away† when two per cent of the U.S.A. population will be able to produce more than the other ninety-eight per cent can possibly consume. The Americans shall have to kill 600 billion more free hours. Leisure counselors will have more than petty week-end neuroses on their hands. Aristotle said that a society, unprepared for true leisure, will degenerate in good times. "Too much leisure with too much money has been the dread of societies across the ages. That is when nations cave in." (William Russell, in *B10*). Robert Jungk (*J5.1* & 2) has recently devoted a series of TV programs to a study of work addicts and their "leisureosis" in more advanced societies (Scandinavia)‡ where "the future has already begun." His solution is to form quartets, repair or build one's own TV sets, or better still,

\* Of *sus*, swine.

\*\* *Vide*, p. 1 of Stanley Palluch's enlightening comparison of existentialist (particularly Heidegger's) and modern socio-psychological theories in this area. Compare also: *A2*, *A6*, *F5*, *G2*, *I1*, *L3*, *R4.1* & 2, *S4*, *T2*.

† According to Rich, Bellman of Rand Corp. quoted after *B10*, p. 21.

build *completely useless* machines—something like Calder's "mobiles" with built-in motor. Whether this may be a "better answer" than anything prelatric psychotherapists can offer, seems to me a toss-up. The time is close when professional baseball, football, hockey, wrestling and roller-skating just won't do to keep the labor force under a sufficiently permanent sedation. An increasing number is seeking higher thrills—or more thrilling "highs."

"Someone said he had a friend who liked to shoot model airplane glue. No one else had heard of that. Sniffing glue, yes; but not shooting it. They had heard of people doing something to paregoric and shoe polish and then shooting it, but the high was reported to be no good. Heroin, of course, was the best. Heroin and a *bombita*. It gave the best high, completely relaxed, not a problem in the world."

"'But that's not really the best high,' one addict said. 'Do you know what the best high *really* is?' The voice was serious. Everyone turned and stayed very quiet to hear, maybe, of a new kind of high that was better than heroin, better than anything else. 'The best high'—the voice was low and somber—'is death.' Silence. 'Man, that's outta sight, that's somethin' else. Yeah, no feelin' at all.' Everyone agreed. The best high of all was death."\*

Even more unfortunate is the suificating impotence of religious myths. Atheism is extinct in the more advanced parts of the world—for lack of opposites. A serious atheist is considered in Scandinavia a slightly ludicrous bore. The myths are neither pompously condemned nor solemnly repudiated, but rather conceived as sweet and charming subjects for art and poetry—like old fashioned steam engines and antique hot-water bottles. Needless to say, the myths have in this form totally lost all consolation potentialities. They have ceased to serve as suificators.

On the other hand, an excessive stress on logico-rational knowledge-perfection may in itself serve as an effective means to hebetate the death-awareness in man and prevent the courage for dread and anguish to arise. A case in point is Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*; a most impressive demonstration of the fact that the only decisive, crucial criterion for true insight in, and understanding of, one's own

\* James Mills: "The World of the Needle Park," *Life*, February 26, 1965.

fate is the inwardness, the internalization of the awareness—and *not* tenable evidence or crystalline clarity. Ivan was thoroughly convinced of the logic of the syllogism: "Caius is a man, all men are mortal, therefore Caius is mortal."

That Caius—man in the abstract—was mortal, was perfectly correct, but he was not Caius, not an abstract man, but a creature quite, quite separate from all others. He had been little Ványa, with a mamma and a papa, with Mitya and Volódya, with the toys, a coachman and a nurse, afterwards with Kátenka and with all the joys, griefs, and delights of childhood, boyhood, and youth. What did Caius know of the smell of that striped leather ball Ványa had been so fond of? Had Caius kissed his mother's hand like that, and did the silk of her dress rustle so for Caius? Had he rioted like that at school when the pastry was bad? Had Caius been in love like that? Could Caius preside at a session as he did? Caius really was mortal, and it was right for him to die; but for me, little Ványa, Iván Ilych, with all my thoughts and emotions, it's altogether a different matter. It cannot be that I ought to die. That would be too terrible.

Such was his feeling.

If I had to die like Caius I should have known it was so. An inner voice would have told me so, but there was nothing of the sort in me and I and all my friends felt that our case was quite different from that of Caius. And now here it is! he said to himself. It can't be. It's impossible! But here it is.

Finally the truth filtered through to Ivan; and suddenly he realized in bones and marrow that his malady was not merely a matter of a diseased kidney, but of leaving behind him as pointless a life as any other life, and facing the ultimate and total annihilation. "For the last three days he screamed incessantly."

The major "welfare" problem facing modern man, and bewildering the clinical psychologists, is the fact that the enormous expansion of mass-education plus the explosion-like increase of leisure time will permit present and, not the least, future generations to anticipate Ivan Ilych's shriek with a margin of possibly thirty to sixty years, which will make for an awfully long shriek. Clinical psychologists in general, and prelatrics in particular, are taking it for granted that it is

both psychologically possible to forearm man against such pernicious insights, and that it is morally right to permit, or even tempt or lure man into some sort of more or less attractive, sophisticated, high-brow suifications, even at the expense of full "humanization" and intellectual honesty, notwithstanding that it may mean deliberate personality aberrations and distortions of intellectual processes and evaluations.

### 3.4. *Biosophy and Prelatic Psychotherapy.*

In a recent, popular, scientific non-fiction book, an amateur anthropologist observes that *Homo Sapiens* has matured as a species by accepting reality unconditionally, how awful or uncertain it may be, "by the capacity to absorb each disillusionment and still keep going." "Nonetheless," he concludes in his chapter on The Romantic Fallacy, "should man ever attain a state of total maturity—in sum, ever achieve the final, total, truthful disillusionment—then in all likelihood he would no longer keep going, but would simply lie down wherever he happened to be, and with a long-drawn sigh return to the oblivion from which he came."\*

It is the view of Peter Wessel Zapffe that this is the only decent, dignified thing for man to do, provided man neither intends to give up his intellectual honesty nor his demands for meaning, order and justice in the world.

One of the simplest forms of suification (offering happiness and peace of mind through the most comfortable evasions and illusions) consists in nothing more than just the lowering of the levels of such "meaning demands." A modern man may find satisfaction of his ontological needs in a combination of experience and imagination in a *pia desideria* for "victory of the supreme good," "eternal peace," "a superior culture," "health and happiness for all men," "longevity," "liberation of undreamt-of physical forces," "intergalactic space flights," etc., one more unbearably exciting than the other. Or he may merely refuse to resent "the haphazard contingency's inanely bizarre value destruction" (Z2, p. 86) and thus reduce the power-draining, energy-exhausting, exasperating tension between nature and the human mind. It becomes increasingly apparent, as time goes by, that an ethically and ontologically obtuse or indifferent character shall tend

\* Robert Ardrey in *African Genesis* (N.Y., 1963), p. 145.

to generate more viability, vivacity and zest for life, a richer, more spontaneous *joie de vivre*, than shall a sharper, keener, more sensitive and sagacious ethical consciousness and ontological awareness. Man's ability to "stand out" (*ek-sistere*) and, while still breathing, examine himself and his "total situation," is, from a biosophic viewpoint an insanely haphazard "short-circuit" in nature, a prerogative with which no other being hitherto has been blessed or cursed. The suification of man may thus be regarded as a romantic, back to nature, back to the unadulterated, ontological innocence and security *before* the great short-circuit! A popular suificating metaphysical hebetant is often found in man's tendency to concentrate all energy and awareness on concrete objects, like the Company, the University, the Community, the Fatherland, Humanity, Culture, Civilization, etc. Other consolations may be sought in the existence of future generations: "My child is my immortality!" The latter position becomes particularly ludicrous, in light of its unescapable implication: One is committed to see oneself and one's own life as "the answer" to hundreds of generations' dreams, struggles and painful renunciations. Such simple "life lies" are less and less likely to succeed. Modern men shall have to seek refuge in more solid metaphysical resorts. Typical cases here are the millionaires who, after a lifelong unceasing struggle to amass their millions, can finally settle down in California to enjoy their *otium cum dignitate*, and find neither enjoyment nor dignity but realize in tormenting panic that "this was your life." They have become a case for psychedelics (B6). "pastoral" psychologists (U1) and other prelatic psychotherapists. Their task will be to retard or, if possible, reverse their clients' development towards "full-human-ness" (M2) and "self-realization" and rather save them from the vertiginously pernicious, insufferable insights into the monstrous absurdity of Human Life. In a near future I envisage whole generations who will have reached the millionaires' level of disillusionment at a much earlier age. They will shiver in their nakedness under the white, indifferent stars and cry to psychotherapists for a solid and cozy metaphysical armour. But again there may be some, the true existentialist philosophers, who will rather risk to remain in the chilly outdoors than to give up a jot of the noble privilege of human "ek-sistence." Here prelatic psychotherapy is ludicrously out of place. Were (say) Frankl to attempt to cure (say) Zapffe from his "existential frustra-

tion," "ontological despair" or "metaphysic-melancholic clairvoyance," the chances are that Zapffe (rather than "cured") would be baffled by Frankl's sophomoric philosophizing. "You may be psychologically healthier than I," Zapffe would gladly admit, "but I must insist that I am a better philosopher. A lifelong search for a meaning of life in general, and of my life in particular, has led me—reluctantly, but with cataclysmic consistency and sleepwalker's certainty—to realize that it's all fantasy and delusions, divinely subsidized to put us at peace with our 'situation.' You are certainly right that psycho-pathological explanations of my biosophical pessimism would be totally irrelevant; but I also fail to see what you can possibly accomplish with your naïve, maladroit metaphysics, behind which—if you will permit me to speak your language for once—I see but the profoundest, most fundamental trauma, and that great universal repression which prevents all fatal insight into man and his 'cosmic conditions,' the mysterious, grotesquely absurd origin and genesis of body and mind, their inalienable interests, and their final and complete obliteration, the return of the synthesis to the absolute zero." The biosophist is fully aware of the many marvellous metaphysics (V1) offering "peace in heart," "reconciliation with the world" and "atonement with the almighty," or the like, to anyone who is willing to join this or that suificating sect, and replace intellectually honest experience with fictitious world views. The spiritual vacuum is often so painful that if the fiction is sufficiently permanent, it does not seem to matter much if it should turn out not to be so terribly pleasant (EI, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 47, 48).

Prelatics are psychotherapists and not philosophers. Their "pastoral psychology," "logotherapy," etc., are based upon philosophical illiteracy in themselves and in their clientele. No one, of course, would ever object to "pastoral" and other counseling psychologists taking up amateur philosophy as a hobby. The situation becomes farcical only when the hobby-man attempts to "unsick" the lifetime devoted philosopher, to cure him, as it were, of being so insalubriously pessimistic!

#### 4. Conclusion.

I have concerned myself with theories of psychological treatment of "abnormal" behavior in general and mental "disorder" in particu-

lar, insofar as phenomenological and existentialist key notions or general perspectives have been employed within the total explanatory system of these theories. Psychologists are themselves uncertain as to where the line should be drawn between "normality" and "abnormality" (TI, pp. 79, 80). Similarly controversial is mental "disorder." This does not imply that there are no obvious cases where "cure" or "treatment" is clearly suggested. If a student has difficulties in getting to the university because of fear of stepping on cracks in the pavement, this is not a problem to be taken seriously on the cognitive level; in other words, it doesn't raise the problem: "Is it really dangerous to step on cracks in the pavement?" It is quite a different story if the student has "working inhibitions," because he has struck up against the stark problem of death and annihilation. His stomach is clawed to shreds, his breathing throttled by the anguish of nothingness, the dread of being no more. His behavior, his feelings and emotions may deviate so far from what is presently considered customary that there is no question of their abnormality, in at least one possible sense of "abnormality." But the reasons for his "deviation" may *not* be troubles in adjusting to narrow "social" aspects of his environment, as in the case with our first student, but caused by an unusual awakening to a clear and penetrating awareness of a vast "cosmic" environment *to which there is no adjustment possible*. Max Scheler observes that what insulates most modern men against the terrifying insight into their conditions, is their safe and busy way of life, which pushes back from their consciousness the intuitive certainty of death, until what is left is a mere rational knowledge of it. They constitute the "average," "normal," mentally "healthy" person, given the stage of human maturity presently prevalent in most civilized communities. This is the person who finds life enjoyable at least within the limited environment of which he is aware, and to which he has so splendidly adjusted. The clinical psychologists want him to remain that way and, in point of fact, make it one of their major endeavors to try to get back into the cozy fold, the comparatively few who presently have transcended the narrow "social" environment, and therefore are incapable of enjoying and adjusting to it. The existentialists, on the other hand, find a life lived in utter unawareness of man's *cosmic* conditions to be a life void of human dignity, a life not worthy of being lived. Every human being should be forced to mature beyond

what is biologically advantageous, mentally "healthy," forced to face his fate, and open his eyes and mind to the unbearably agonizing insight into "the wild, banal, grotesque, loathsome carnival in the world's graveyard" (Z1). What the man then wants to do about it, if anything, is irrelevant, as long as he has in all honesty, sincerity, authenticity, been confronted with the choice and made his decision. He may choose to suicicate, and select any means of suification, from lobotomy to LSD, from conformity to insanity, from hockey to religion, from brass to bridge. To Peter Wessel Zapffe, the fact that man is in this way overendowed with insights into his own preposterousness, is exactly what raises his lot to qualify as a genuine tragedy (in the old Attic sense of tragedy), and the answer is clear: The only dignified exit for man is to die out, not through a messy, unsavory and unworthy suicide, but by deciding to abstain from propagating and to leave the earth deserted behind him. Not in despair, but in triumph over finally having realized "what it is all about," and saying his final "no more."

This eschatological position, however, is unfortunately epistemologically unwarranted. It is rather optimistic and naive in its presupposition, that knowledge can so readily and finally be reached. Men are not angels, living in an eternally stable paradise where their eyes are opened to all possible mysteries of the world. Human beings, on the contrary, are only on the threshold of the most preliminary steps to the mysteries of man and cosmos. There is not a single sentence among what we today should look upon as adequate transmitters of our most important, surest and most indisputably significant assertions, which may not at another stage of our insight become an object for ridicule and painful shame. Thrown into an eternally changing universe, human beings cannot be tied by a set of rigid rules for language, thought or action. Assuming that we, and most of our fellow beings, choose to exist, and to increase our insight, perfect our knowledge about ourselves, our fate and our cosmic situation, we should never express any judgment of value or truth without carefully considering the status of present relevant research. It seems that the only incorrigible knowledge we have ascertained so far is the fact that there is no incorrigible knowledge. Let's grant the existentialists that, given all available insights, anno 1967, it is hard to see that man's lot in the universe is not totally absurd. It is clearly important

that we realize this and do not intend to small-talk us out of our insight. However, we may most certainly still improve our language, our conceptual tools, our methodological approach and add to the quantity and quality of our present information about the mechanisms within and around us. It is hard to predict today what we may *not* be able to predict within the coming millennia. This seems in itself fascinating. Without man in the universe, any later state of the universe might at any given time be predictable with a maximum of certainty to a Laplacian superscientist—at least on the macroscopic level. With man in the world anything is possible. There is no conceivable cosmic catastrophe which could not either be produced or prevented if man put his mind to it for a million millennia or so. Hence the battle cry sounds: Man, let's go on!—not because we have a mission in the world, not because it makes us happy or proud, but merely because we are different. We are accidentally thrown into this world as its sole principle of uncertainty. That's all. (TI, pp. 304, 305).

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